

Whipton Barton Infants and Nursery School

Hill lane, Whipton, Exeter, EX1 3JP

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2013

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 has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The headteacher has focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, both of which are now good.
- The drive and ambition for improvement is shared by the whole school team and is well supported by the governing body.
- Leaders at all levels within the school relish their increased responsibilities and make a positive and effective contribution to school improvement.
- Pupils throughout the school are keen to learn, and make good progress from starting points that are often well below those expected for their age.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle quickly and do well because learning is so well tailored to their individual needs.
- Teachers plan activities that are interesting so children throughout the school want to learn more.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school, are well cared for and feel safe. Attendance has been improved well and now matches the national average.
- The individual learning and pastoral needs of all the pupils are met very well. The care shown to the pupils and their families is a real strength of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough. Occasionally, when the whole class is being taught together, teaching does not take enough account of the different abilities of pupils, with the ideas and explanations being too difficult for some and too easy for others.
- There is some inconsistency in the extent to which pupils are expected to respond to teachers' marking.
- Although all pupils make good progress, attainment in reading and writing is not yet high enough.

Barton Infants and Nursery School

6-7 March 2013

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 2, members of the governing body, members of the senior leadership team and the literacy, numeracy, Early Years and special needs coordinators. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, observed morning playtime and lunch breaks.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised, including the 'learning journey' records of the youngest children. Displays around the school and class 'scrap books' were also examined.
- Note was taken of the 10 responses made to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the response to the school's own survey of parents' and carers' views.
- Inspectors met some parents and carers informally at the start of each day. The views of 28 staff, as expressed in the staff questionnaire, were also considered.
- A range of documents was looked at, including the school's information on pupils' progress, improvement planning, the school's self-evaluation, information on the quality of teaching and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anne Wesley, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Tom Morrison

Additional inspector

Marian Marks

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized infant and nursery school.
- The Nursery class is open throughout the school day; parents and carers can use the facility flexibly.
- It has a Nursery class, three Reception classes and five Key Stage 1 classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families, is well-above-average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- There is a Children's Centre on the site. This is subject to separate inspection arrangements.
- The school has recently become part of the Ted Wragg Trust, which provides opportunities for teachers and support for the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - using assessment information to ensure that all parts of the lessons are closely matched to the different abilities, especially when the class are all being taught together, including the introductions to lessons
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to respond to their teachers' marking in order to make improvements.
- Improve standards in literacy further by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write longer pieces of work
 - encouraging more parents and carers to hear their children read at home regularly.

Barton Infant and Nursery School

6-7 March 2013

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- Children enter school with skills and knowledge much lower than is typically seen for their age. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children make good progress in their personal and social development, learning to be independent as well as to cooperate, and play very well with other children.
- Teaching phonics (the link between letters and sounds) has a high priority throughout the school; consequently, achievement is improving. In the first national phonic screening check for six-year-olds held, the results were just below the national average, but this represented good progress from pupils' starting points.
- Throughout the school, pupils are taught to read well, and inspectors saw groups of pupils enjoying books together. Teaching assistants ensure books are changed frequently. However, many pupils only read at school and the school information clearly shows that the pupils who read best are those who practise their skills at home as well.
- Mathematics lessons involve a lot of practical activities which help pupils understand the ideas and promote good progress. In Year 1, pupils quickly understood halves and quarters through much paper cutting, folding and sticking.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is good and attainment is rising, reflecting the improved teaching. Standards of work observed in the classroom and in pupils' books are better than those reflected by the 2012 end of Key Stage 1 assessments, which were below the national average. Pupils in the current Year 1 and 2 are producing work which is much closer to the levels expected for their age.
- Gaps in the achievement between different groups of pupils are closing more quickly than at the time of the previous inspection. Boys still do less well than girls in reading and writing, but are making good progress and the gap is closing.
- The pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding make good progress; they make better progress than similar pupils nationally and the gap between their attainment and other pupils in the school continues to close.
- The teachers' thorough scrutiny of pupils' individual records during 'professional surgeries' ensures that additional help is targeted to those who need it most. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making faster progress than they have in the past and their progress is as good as others in the school.
- Although improving, progress in writing is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics. Teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- Teachers continually set imaginative tasks to try to widen the pupils' experiences. For example, using a real plant to examine its parts inspired investigation in a Reception class as a group of boys were intent on seeing if all the plants in the garden had roots!
- The development of language has high priority as many children start the Nursery with a very limited vocabulary. A 'talking table' in the Nursery is used well to encourage children to learn new words and to speak in longer sentences.
- Teachers continually take into account the pupils' low starting points; a well-taught lesson in Reception comparing heavy objects with lighter ones gave the children lots of chances to feel and judge the differences for themselves. Good progress was evident as the children gradually realised that the larger objects were not necessarily the heaviest.
- A particularly strong feature of the best teaching is the close match of group tasks to the pupils'

ability. For example, in a particularly good story-writing session, the good match of task to ability ensured all the groups made good progress. The least able were well supported by a teaching assistant while the more-able pupils were challenged to write fuller descriptions.

- However, when whole classes are taught together, the teachers do not always take such careful account of different abilities. Occasionally, therefore, an introduction to a lesson might be too difficult for some and too easy for others.
- Teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that motivate pupils to learn. Pupils in Year 2 were keen to write their own 'runaway story' based on the Gingerbread Man and discussed with each other what might happen if their toy was made of ice or chocolate instead of gingerbread.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and some feedback explains clearly what pupils need to do in order to improve their work further. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to follow up on the suggestions given.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well and benefit from good additional support from well-trained, capable teaching assistants. Where children with special educational needs are in receipt of free school meals pupil premium funding is used to support them. The school checks up carefully to make sure that the extra help is improving the progress of these pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a very welcoming atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and get on well with each other and adults. They enjoy school and are keen to learn. They are expected to behave well, and the large majority do.
- Parents, carers, teachers, governors and professionals working with the school say that behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. There is a consistent approach to managing behaviour throughout the school, with a positive reward system, based on Golden Time, which is appreciated by the pupils.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn the rules of good behaviour quickly. They show maturity as they concentrate, persevere with activities and choose their own resources, which they are happy to share with their friends.
- Teachers and teaching assistants establish good relationships with their classes and manage pupils' behaviour very effectively. As a result, pupils are happy to contribute to lessons and listen well to each other. However, a few pupils contribute little and are content to let others take the lead.
- The school ensures pupils are safe. They have a good knowledge of all forms of bullying that could possibly occur at their age and have great trust in the headteacher to solve any difficulties that may arise. They are taught to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with class resources and outdoor play equipment.
- The school has close working relationships with a number of outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average, reflecting the effective work of the school's support arrangements.

The leadership and management are good

- The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well through very systematic and rigorous checking of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching by the school leaders. The headteacher has a very clear picture of what must be done next.
- Effective performance management provides support, constructive criticism and appropriate training for the teachers' work in the classroom. Actions to bring about improvement are always followed through to see if they are successful. As a result, the quality of teaching is now consistently good.

- The headteacher has established an effective leadership team; the roles of the senior leaders and subject leaders are clearly defined, and they have become more accountable for different aspects of school improvement. This shared team approach puts the school in a good position to continue its rapid improvement. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to enable middle leaders to develop their monitoring skills further.
- The partnership with parents and carers is strengthening and many are becoming more involved in the life of the school. The 'daily challenge' at the start of each day when parents and carers come to the first 10 minutes of the morning is becoming more and more popular and is an effective way of showing parents and carers how they can help their children.
- Adult and family learning classes, parenting classes and liaison with the children's centre as well as the Parents' Council are all helping the school reach a wider group of parents and carers.
- The range of subjects and topics offered by the school contributes effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learning is enriched through a wide range of visitors to the school.
- Leaders have introduced a much wider range of interesting topics and learning activities specifically aimed at stimulating the pupils' interest, curiosity and motivation. The topic on cars was particularly appreciated by the boys, who were very keen to show off the work they had done.
- The school works effectively with its adjoining junior school; close cooperation has ensured pupils' transition between the schools operates smoothly and that there is consistency in teaching and learning methods.
- The school has received appropriate support from the local authority. It is beginning to benefit from its membership of the Ted Wragg Trust, which is strengthening the way governors support and challenge the headteacher.
- Equality of opportunity is well promoted and teachers ensure that there is no discrimination.
- The school provides very high-quality care and guidance, resulting in most pupils' positive attitudes towards school and learning, underpinning their improving achievement. The school also deals sensitively with their families and the difficulties that some of them face.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has developed clear procedures to hold the school to account and is increasingly questioning and challenging the headteacher as it focuses more effectively on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. Together with the headteacher, governors have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and establish a team of good teachers whose performance is clearly assessed and whose training needs are met. As a result, salary progression is becoming more dependent on how well pupils achieve. Governors ensure that the income received through pupil premium is spent to raise the attainment of the pupils for whom it was intended. They are becoming increasingly effective through a programme of training and the support of the Ted Wragg Trust which oversees their work. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding.

Barton Infants and Nursery School

, 6-7 March 2013

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>

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School details

Unique reference number	113092
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	405449

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

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Purvis
Headteacher	Joanne Davis
Date of previous school inspection	30–31 March 2011
Telephone number	01392 467556
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