

Homelands Primary School

Westhill Road, Torquay, TQ1 4NT

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress has been too variable and at the end of Year 6 in 2011 and 2012 it was significantly below that expected nationally, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some teachers do not use their accurate assessment of pupils' learning to plan lessons. As a result, the pace at which pupils learn is sometimes too slow, especially for higher-attaining pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to experiment with their own ideas because teachers do not check their learning regularly enough in lessons in order to reshape the tasks accordingly.
- Pupils are not developing their communication, writing and mathematical skills across a range of subjects.
- Senior leaders do not analyse teachers' assessments of pupils in enough detail to give them a precise understanding of where improvement is needed.
- The targets to improve pupils' progress, set by senior leaders, are not challenging enough for all groups of pupils.
- Actions proposed in the school's plans to improve teaching are not precise enough to ensure improvements are monitored accurately.

The school has the following strengths

- The drive of senior leaders and the appointment of experienced teachers have led to better teaching than previously and pupils' now accelerating progress.
- The governing body is effective. Governors know how the school must improve and have been trained to monitor its progress.
- Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They behave well and thrive on having responsibility for helping other pupils and planning improvements to the school's facilities.
- The school has a deserved reputation within the local community for the way it supports pupils with specific learning and behavioural needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other teachers and a teaching assistant. A discussion was held with a member of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the views of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection and responses to the school's own parental survey.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the plans for improvement and policies on how the school keeps pupils safe. The minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour and attendance were also examined.
- Inspectors analysed the school's own data on pupils' current progress and evaluated work in pupils' books. They also examined teachers' plans for lessons and documentation on how the leadership team monitors teaching and the performance of teachers.

Inspection team

David Howley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Wendy Marriott

Additional Inspector

Helen Prince

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is average. Presently, there are no children who are looked after by the local authority or from service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- About half the present teaching staff were newly appointed to permanent posts in September 2012 after a two and a half year period of short-term and temporary appointments.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all pupils make at least good progress, by ensuring that teachers:
 - help all pupils to learn at a good pace by setting work based on an accurate assessment of their levels and what they need to do next
 - regularly check pupils' learning in lessons and reshape tasks so that they can experiment with ideas and learn more rapidly.
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise their achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring senior leaders set challenging targets for teachers to increase the rates of progress of higher-attaining pupils
 - increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to develop their communication, literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.
- Build the capacity of all leaders and managers to improve the quality of teaching by expecting them to:
 - carry out a detailed analysis of teachers' assessments of pupils' learning so that senior leaders can identify, more precisely, the improvements that are needed
 - include more precise actions and measures in the plans to improve teaching so that their impact can be accurately monitored.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the rate of pupils' progress has been inconsistent. The progress that pupils had made by the end of Year 6 in 2011 and 2012 was significantly lower than that seen nationally, given their starting points. Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below the levels expected for their age. Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is variable and their good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not built upon effectively.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in writing and mathematics because these basic skills are not practised often enough in a wide range of subjects.
- Their average point scores show that the attainment of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below that of other pupils by the end of Year 6, in both English and mathematics, despite attainment in reading being above the national average for all pupils.
- Pupils' rates of progress at Key Stage 2 have improved since 2012 because the drive of senior managers has increased the proportion of good teaching and the cohort of new teachers is helping to improve pupils' learning. Pupils presently in Year 6 are on track to make overall progress at least in line with that expected nationally, although this is still not uniformly the case in all Key Stage 2 classes.
- Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teachers and other adults provide experiences that rapidly build children's communication and social skills through a range of interesting and engaging activities. As a result, pupils start Year 1 with levels of attainment similar to the national average.
- Pupils achieve better in reading than they do in writing and mathematics because they have regular opportunities to practise and improve their reading skills in a variety of ways. Similarly, well-paced and interesting lessons that cover the sounds made by the different letters and groups of letters (phonics) enable pupils to progress more rapidly at an earlier stage in their reading development. The way in which subjects are now taught, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is introducing more practical ways for pupils to practise their writing and numeracy skills.
- Increasingly effective use of pupil premium funding is closing the gap between eligible pupils and others by providing support that meets the different needs of individual pupils. As a result, the attainment of eligible pupils presently in Year 6 is already above the normal level expected for all pupils nationally by the end of Key Stage 2, in both English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in providing well-tailored support that meets the needs of individual pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Some teaching does not have high enough expectations of the pace at which pupils learn. Consequently, some weaker teaching prevents pupils from making the rapid and sustained progress that they should, especially higher attainers.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and assess pupils' learning accurately. However, not all teachers use this information well enough to set tasks that sufficiently challenge pupils according to their ability. As a result, the pace of learning is often too slow and pupils say that the work is too easy. Similarly, pupils do not have enough opportunities in lessons to experiment with their own ideas because teachers spend too much time on explanations and do not check pupils' learning regularly enough to reshape tasks so that pupils can progress more rapidly.
- Teaching has improved in quality since the last inspection. When teaching is most effective, teachers challenge pupils and have high expectations of them. In such lessons, tasks are based upon the teacher's secure understanding of pupils' previous learning and pupils are able to

develop their skills and understanding and take more responsibility for their own learning.

- Pupils say that the new range of subject topics makes learning more interesting because teachers provide more time and practical ways for them to experiment with their own ideas. However, teachers are not providing enough opportunities for this in all subjects.
- Well-planned programmes of support and teachers' effective use of well-trained teaching assistants ensure that pupils with barriers to learning have an equal opportunity to learn and make progress. As a result, in many classes, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those eligible for the pupil premium make the most rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. They say Homelands is a happy school because the teachers are always there to help them. Pupils thrive on the opportunity to take responsibility. For example, playground buddies take great pride in helping other pupils and the school council has met with an outside consultant in order to suggest improvements to playground equipment.
- Pupils feel safe in school and they confidently say that there is no bullying. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as 'picking on others' and cyber bullying. They know how to manage risks and how to stay safe when using the internet, because this is reinforced by teachers in a variety of ways. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about learning about fire risks from a visiting fire officer.
- Pupils have a high regard for the school's values. They say that teachers are consistent in how they encourage good behaviour in lessons. On occasions when lessons do not provide enough challenge, pupils' attention can drift, although without them behaving badly or disrupting one another's learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and religions and how to be good citizens because their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through lessons and other activities, such as assemblies. This ensures there are happy and harmonious relationships within the school.
- All of the parents and carers that responded to Parent View said that their children are happy at school. The very large majority think that pupils are safe and well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. The overall rate of attendance is below the national average because it is affected by pupils with long-term illnesses. However, the quality of support for these pupils ensures that they make good progress in their learning.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Senior leaders' analysis of teachers' assessments of pupils' learning is not detailed enough to give them a precise picture of where improvement is needed. Similarly, the actions proposed in the plans to improve teaching have not always been sharp enough. Consequently, senior leaders have not always been able to check with enough precision the impact that these actions are having on teachers' classroom practice.
- The headteacher's determination to improve is shared by senior leaders, governors and the staff. The recent appointments of experienced teachers are helping to address past inadequate achievement and teaching. This new stability and clear vision have contributed to the recent improvements in teaching and pupils' progress, and bolstered the school's capacity to improve. Senior leaders have a better and mainly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The regular and systematic monitoring of lessons has also helped to increase the proportion of good teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2. Senior managers are accurate in evaluating pupils' learning in lessons, and recognise that there is a need to go still further in improving teaching.

They are already making use of more experienced colleagues to demonstrate good practice to others and have forged links with a school where teaching is outstanding.

- The deputy headteacher, along with more experienced teachers, is leading initiatives that are rapidly improving pupils' learning in both English and mathematics. However, the targets set by senior leaders to accelerate the progress of all pupils are not always challenging enough.
- The school communicates effectively with parents and carers and is rapidly increasing the range of opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning. Parents and carers who talked to inspectors could not speak highly enough about the school's care for pupils with particular learning or behavioural needs and how swiftly these pupils become confident and successful learners. The school strives to ensure there is no discrimination among the pupils and is increasingly effective in helping pupils to achieve as they should.
- The local authority is determined that the school should improve and is effectively supporting the efforts of senior leaders, for example by helping the school link with experienced consultants and schools with outstanding practice.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body understands that the school needs to improve rapidly. Governors have intensified their scrutiny of pupils' progress and the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. They know the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. Regular training has helped them to see how to challenge the school further and their well-organised action plans enable them to be more demanding in terms of moving the school's effectiveness to good or better. They ensure that procedures for performance management, including those for the headteacher, are rigorous and that teachers' progression through pay scales relates to their levels of responsibility and pupils' outcomes. They have been effective in ensuring that those pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding are achieving increasingly well and that pupils' behaviour and safety are good. The governing body ensures all statutory requirements are implemented to a high level and governors have a good overview of the school's finances.
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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	113231
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	405458

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	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maurice Codd
Headteacher	Stephanie Colegate
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 February 2011
Telephone number	01803 328264
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