

# Priory Roman Catholic Primary School, Torquay

St Catherine's Road, St Marychurch, Torquay, TQ1 4NZ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 December 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils make good progress in each year group.
- Standards in mathematics are not high enough. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply basic skills and reasoning to practise problem solving.
- Over time, teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that pupils achieve well and reach or exceed expected national standards at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils, including the more able, are not always challenged sufficiently to make faster progress by being given more difficult work.
- Teachers, particularly in mathematics, do not consistently ensure learning activities are matched closely enough to and build on pupils' differing levels of ability. Pupils' misunderstandings in learning are not picked up quickly enough.
- Suggestions for improvement in pupils' work are not sufficiently followed up to ensure that the number of those making good progress is increased.

### The school has the following strengths

- Good relationships with parents and high quality support ensure that the personal needs of pupils are met very well.
- Senior leaders, including governors, know exactly what areas need to be developed.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength.
- Staff provide high quality care and safeguard pupils' welfare extremely well. Pupils say they feel safe and their behaviour is good.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has significantly strengthened leadership at all levels to quicken the pace of improvement recently.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the school’s senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to observe small group work and support.
- Inspectors sampled pupils’ work and reviewed displays around the school.
- Observations were made of pupils at break times, lunchtimes, at the breakfast and after-school clubs, during assembly and around the school generally.
- A variety of documentation was examined, particularly that related to information about the achievement of pupils, the school’s self-evaluation and development planning. Inspectors also reviewed the safeguarding arrangements of the school.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body including the chair of governors and the Diocesan Director of Schools. The inspectors also informally met a wide range of parents before the start of the school day.
- A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of readers from Years 1 and 2.
- Discussions took place with a range of senior and middle managers and with pupils from Years 3 to 6.
- Responses from 41 parents to the Parent View online questionnaire were analysed. A letter from a parent and a parental phone call were also considered.

## Inspection team

David Nebesnuick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Banting

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Priory Roman Catholic Primary School is a smaller than average primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few are from minority ethnic backgrounds; a small number of these are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. This is additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority and children known to be eligible for free school meals, or children of parents who are in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the normal times is above average.
- A number of new teachers have joined the school in the last two years.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs, which are managed by the governing body and which formed part of the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure consistently good or better teaching by:
  - ensuring that tasks and support more closely match pupils' differing abilities
  - ensuring that there is a consistent approach to marking and that pupils follow the teachers' advice about how to improve their work.
- Raise achievement by the end of Year 6 by:
  - making sure more pupils make good progress in each year group
  - making sure that all pupils are challenged and supported, especially more able pupils, so that they make faster progress.
- Improve standards in mathematics by ensuring that:
  - pupils are given more opportunities to apply basic skills and reasoning to practise problem solving
  - teachers observe and listen to pupils carefully as they work and adjust tasks as needed to help correct any misunderstandings in mathematical concepts and calculations or to add additional challenge.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement, especially in mathematics, where pupils' progress still lags behind that in English by the end of Key Stage 2. This has been the case for some time, although there are secure signs of recent improvement.
- More able pupils are not achieving well enough because the tasks they are set are too easy and do not extend their thinking sufficiently.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are average, although below in mathematics. This is an improvement on 2012 when results were significantly below average. At Key Stage 2, standards are broadly average but the proportion reaching the higher levels remains below average.
- Progress is good in some year groups, for example Year 6, and including for those who speak English as an additional language or who join the school partway through the school year. However, pupils' progress is inconsistent across the school. Pupils underperform in reading, writing and especially in mathematics in different year groups. The gap in attainment is not closing quickly enough.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding benefit from extra in-class support and from small intervention groups. In 2013 gaps remained for pupils in Key Stage 1, being one and half terms behind in reading and writing and over one term behind in mathematics. In 2012 attainment in writing was six weeks behind and mathematics one week behind. The gap between them and others at Key Stage 2 narrowed to four terms ahead in reading, the same in writing and about a week behind in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make slower progress than their classmates although they benefit from focused adult support. A few of these pupils in the last year have made good and rapid progress as the result of the one-to-one or small group support.
- Pupils read regularly and at home use an online reading scheme which is popular with parents. Progress of the learning of letters and sounds (known as phonics) in Reception is good.
- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. The strongest areas at entry are 'understanding the world' and physical development and the weakest is mathematics. Children are in line with national expectations by the end of Reception.
- In 2013 pupils made good progress in reading by the end of Year 6, expected progress in writing and below expected progress in mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher levels remains below average. Overall all subjects reflect a much improved outcome from the previous year.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because is not yet consistently good across the school. Nevertheless, examples of outstanding practice are seen in Reception and Year 6.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise basic skills and reasoning to solve problems in mathematics. As a result the learning outcomes in mathematics have not improved sufficiently over the last three years.
- Misunderstandings in mathematical concepts and calculations are not always identified in lessons. Teachers do not review the situation quickly enough and/or change tasks to closely match pupils' individual learning needs.
- Where teaching is really effective, as in the Reception class, thorough planning and delivery enable children to become completely involved in their learning and make considerable gains in their understanding. In the bear hunt story-telling lesson, children demonstrated an excellent understanding of the story and were able to illustrate, write and discuss the story in an exciting and informative way.
- Where teaching is less effective, work is not pitched at the right level, particularly for more able

pupils; suitable challenge is lacking and pupils' progress is hindered.

- Teachers carefully mark pupils' work, especially in literacy. There are many examples of good teacher advice for improvement in pupils' books. However, sometimes the advice is not followed by pupils, or checked by the teacher. This can slow the rate of improvement in pupil's learning as gaps, mistakes and improved practice are not systematically picked up.
- Learning support assistants are well deployed. All adults skilfully manage pupils' behaviour and sustain encouraging relationships to lift pupils' self-confidence and to develop their basic skills.
- Staff are diligent in making sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in all activities with often exemplary care for those pupils with complex needs.
- Overall teaching is improving. Teachers benefit from regular lesson observations and feedback by senior leaders. The impact of this focus is seen in the increasing number of good or better lessons. Recent staff changes have led to an increased focus on improving the progress that the pupils make.
- Positive relationships help to ensure that pupils want to get involved in their learning and are motivated to do so. This was seen in an effective geography lesson where pupils were working on posters which identified ways of saving resources.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils, staff, governors and parents all agree that behaviour is good. This is a friendly, calm and welcoming environment in which to learn. The vast majority of pupils are polite, courteous and behave well, showing positive attitudes to learning.
- Very positive relationships reflect the high quality care provided. Pupils are very appreciative of the support given to them and there is a great empathy for pupils with complex special needs who are fully included in all the school's activities.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and know how to stay safe. They are very aware of cyber bullying and the danger of social networking sites. This is a 'walking school' and pupils are well aware of the dangers of road traffic. There is a strong focus on safety around water and all pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim as part of the curriculum.
- At lunchtime the two play areas are buzzing with activities. Pupils play together in a friendly and supportive way. Hula-hoops, skipping ropes, small apparatus and footballs contribute to the enjoyment the pupils feel in each other's company.
- Pupils' responsibilities in school and in the wider community include supervision of the snack shop, developing class questionnaires and leading school assemblies. They welcome these opportunities and flourish as a result. Year 6 pupils are currently working towards a Civic Award. The Pupil Voice makes a strong contribution towards developing the pupils' confidence and wider social skills.
- Attendance is in line with the national average, a result of the school's focus and breakfast club that make a good contribution to improving pupils' attendance.
- A good range of support, such as mentoring, counselling and the 'Paradise' centre, helps pupils who may find relationships difficult thus ensuring that there is no disruption to learning.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is an ambitious and very effective leader. She is clear that mathematics teaching needs to improve and that more pupils secure higher outcomes by Year 6. In the last two years, new middle leaders have been appointed, and the staffing structure reorganised with a sharper focus on improving pupils' progress. This has led to accelerated pupil progress particularly in the last year.
- Regular meetings are held with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and attainment. In

particular, pupils identified as underachieving have extra support. This strategy is resulting in rising standards.

- The school has a strong partnership with parents. They are most appreciative of what the school is trying to achieve for their children. One parent said that the school 'knew every family well'.
- The high staff morale, evident in staff questionnaires, and discussions with governors and parents confirm the full commitment to the senior leaders' drive to raise standards further.
- The school actively and very successfully promotes inclusion and equal opportunities; any discrimination is not tolerated. Its support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is particularly effective and much appreciated by parents. However, the drive to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed is not fully successful, and progress still requires improvement in mathematics and for more able pupils.
- The well-planned creative curriculum engages and motivates pupils. There is a wide range of visits, including the Year 5 visit to Slapton Sands, to develop writing skills based on pupils' own experiences. The many opportunities for pupils to reflect upon different ideas and cultures make a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is a strength of Priory. Pupils actively support the local parish by fund raising for local charities.
- The additional sports funding has been well used to employ a sports apprentice to strengthen the opportunities for all pupils to participate in a wider range of sporting activities and to train Year 5 pupils as play leaders. Leaders are monitoring the impact of the provision on pupils' health and well-being.
- Safeguarding meets requirements and the training of staff and governors is up to date.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support, with the school improvement work commissioned from the Torbay teaching school alliance.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Governors have supported the many recent changes and are aware of the strengths of the school and the areas still to be developed. Governors have supported senior leaders and continue to challenge them, for example with mathematics development and the improvement of more able pupils' progress. One governor said, 'broadly in line is not good enough'. They ensure that performance management systems are effective and that the targets set each year are clearly linked to improvements in pupils' progress. They ask probing questions when reports are presented and alter the recommendations when they feel they can be improved. They ensure that the extra pupil premium funding is used effectively and are very aware that they must focus on the impact of the funding on the learning experiences of the pupils. Governors have undertaken safer recruitment training so that they can appoint effective new staff to contribute to the focus on raising standards.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113474
<b>Local authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	426841

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Cronin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Barreto
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 September 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01803 328480
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