

Homelands Primary School

Westhill Road, Torquay, TQ1 4NT

Inspection dates 24 – 25 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's relentless determination has been pivotal in rapidly improving teaching and achievement across the school. As a result, the school has significantly improved since the last inspection.
- Senior and subject leaders share the ambition and drive of the headteacher. They have a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and provide effective support for all staff.
- Teaching has improved to be good across the school. When the best learning occurs, teachers motivate and inspire pupils with well-planned activities which challenge and excite them.
- Pupils' achievement has improved significantly and is now good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start. They are well taught in a nurturing environment. Consequently, they settle quickly into school life and make good progress.
- Pupils are typically well behaved and have positive attitudes to their learning. They value their school and enjoy making a positive contribution to it. Pupils of all ages know how to keep safe.
- The range and quality of activities available for pupils prepare them particularly well for life in modern Britain.
- Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable about the school; they challenge leaders and share their ambition for the school to be the best that it can be.
- Most parents are extremely supportive of the school and are pleased with the education and care their children receive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are occasional inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics so that not all pupils make the very best progress in their learning.
- School development plans do not have targets which can be measured easily to check the success of their impact.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons, of which five were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made short visits to two lessons and observed one assembly.
- Inspectors scrutinised the quality of work in pupils' books, accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school and listened to the views of many other pupils during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, governors, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took into consideration the responses of 28 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: the school development plan; the school's view of its own performance; data relating to pupils' attainment and progress; governors' minutes; information on attendance; records about behaviour and safeguarding; and school policies.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online Parent View survey and spoke with parents at the start and end of the school day.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Judith Long

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Homelands Primary School is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small minority of pupils use English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in a Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school runs a Nursery which is managed by the governing body and was evaluated as part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is typically outstanding and further raise pupils' achievement by ensuring teachers:
 - plan activities that will challenge all groups of pupils
 - improve the consistency of written feedback in mathematics to increase the rate of pupils' progress
 - increase the opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to solve problems in mathematical activities.
- Improve whole-school planning so that it makes clear how and when leaders and governors will check to make sure that actions taken have improved the achievement and progress of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has been instrumental in rapidly improving teaching and achievement across the school. As a result, the school has significantly improved since the last inspection.
- Senior and subject leaders share the passion, ambition and drive of the headteacher to make the school the best that it can be. They have a clear focus on improving teaching and learning and provide effective support for all staff. As a result staff are strongly committed, as shown by the following response on the staff questionnaire, 'the senior leadership team have a clear drive for the school that the whole team has bought into.'
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's work is accurate. Improvement plans reflect their evaluation and are focused on the right priorities. However, they do not always make clear how and when leaders will check to make sure that actions taken have improved the achievement and progress of pupils.
- Leaders make effective use of regular, detailed checks on teaching, linked to teachers' performance targets, to help teachers improve their practice. As a result, teachers' subject knowledge has improved, particularly in the teaching of English.
- Leaders give very constructive and detailed feedback to teachers on how to improve their teaching. As a result, teachers now have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and the rates of progress that their pupils should be making.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It covers a wide range of subjects and provides good quality activities that promote enjoyment and a love of learning. A wide range of clubs, school trips, and artistic and cultural events enhance learning. For example, pupils contribute to community events such as the Torbay Schools' Poetry Slam and the Christmas nativity which was held at the Princess Theatre. These experiences enable them to develop their speaking and develop their self-confidence in the presence of a wider audience.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and is embedded throughout the curriculum. Pupils are able to talk about different faiths and cultures other than their own. Work displayed shows pupils' developing understanding of different faiths, for example, 'everyone different, and everyone special' linked to Diwali in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Learning opportunities support the active promotion of fundamental British values. For example, pupils have an understanding of democracy through the process of voting members onto the school council which they equate to being a Member of Parliament. Following a stringent selection process, Year 6 pupils proudly received a civic award for citizenship after promoting and raising money for a chosen charity.
- The promotion of equal opportunities is an integral part of the school's ethos and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. This approach ensures that equality of opportunity and good relationships are fostered very effectively.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. For example, additional teaching assistants focus well on targeted activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- Sports funding to develop pupils' ability in physical education is having a good impact. A programme of training to support teachers has resulted in greater confidence in the teaching of sport. A wider range of sports clubs, including golf, tennis and gymnastics, are well attended by pupils.
- The school meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. There is a tight and robust culture of safeguarding pupils across the school. This is monitored by the headteacher and governing body ensuring the safety of pupils.
- The local authority has provided some effective support to the school, specifically working with the headteacher to tackle weaknesses in teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors have a good and accurate understanding of how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. Through visits to classes, talking to pupils and meeting with leaders, they have a good awareness of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. They use the information provided by senior leaders to ask challenging questions about the improvements being made to teaching and pupils' achievement. However, this level of challenge is not formally captured in minutes of meetings as well as it should be. Governors oversee the performance management of leaders closely. Governors support the headteacher in ensuring that good teaching is rewarded and also support the withholding of pay rewards where performance does not meet the expected standard. Governors closely monitor the finances of the school to ensure financial stability and good value for money. For example, they have a good knowledge of how the pupil premium funding is

spent so that it improves the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Regular monitoring by governors ensures that the school meets its statutory duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In most lessons pupils are polite and cooperate well with each other and with adults. This good behaviour helps pupils learn well in lessons. However, on the rare occasions when activities are not sufficiently challenging, a minority of pupils do not focus and low-level disruption occurs.
- Pupils in Year 6 are trained as peer mediators, a position of responsibility. These mediators work successfully with other pupils providing them with peer-to-peer support in finding ways of sorting out playground disputes and behaviour logs show a reduction in the number of incidences occurring.
- The improving attendance levels reflect pupils' enjoyment of school. They speak enthusiastically about all aspects of school and welcome the opportunities that broaden their experience and learning. Pupils are proud of their school, telling inspectors, 'we would advise other children to come to Homelands.'
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying. They know that name-calling, inappropriate language or any form of discrimination is not acceptable. They told inspectors that on the few occasions bullying occurs, it is quickly dealt with by staff. The majority of parents, staff and pupils talk positively about behaviour in the school. Of the small number of parents who completed the online questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors, there were a very small minority who raised behaviour and bullying as a concern. Inspectors viewed a range of evidence which shows that bullying and racist incidents are rare.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The policies and procedures for safeguarding are fully embedded in all aspects of the school's work. Staff take good care of pupils by keeping vigilant and ensuring their safety is never compromised.
- Pupils speak confidently about personal safety, including the dangers of fire, keeping safe on the internet and dealing with strangers. They receive guidance through lessons and assemblies to develop skills that will keep them safe in and out of school. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage had learnt about road safety and were able to tell inspectors how to keep safe when crossing the road.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and this is reflected in the consistently high quality of work viewed in books by inspectors. Examples of pupils' good quality work are celebrated and displayed in classrooms and corridors to show other pupils what can be achieved.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan exciting activities which inspire and motivate pupils, promoting good learning and sustained progress. For example, in a science lesson pupils had to think deeply about the impact of force as a result of the probing questioning of the teacher.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' books. Feedback on pupils' writing is well developed with regular opportunities for them to respond to teachers' comments. However, feedback to pupils on how they can improve their work is not as well developed in mathematics. As a result, pupils do not always know how to improve their work or learn from their mistakes.
- The teaching of English is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons across a wide range of subjects and topics which is helping pupils to make good progress in their writing. For example, Year 5 pupils had used masks created in their art lessons as a stimulus for improving sentence construction. The writing clearly demonstrated the good progress pupils made particularly in their vocabulary choices.
- In mathematics, pupils are not always provided with enough problem-solving activities to help them apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts. Consequently, not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels in the national tests.
- Teachers occasionally do not provide enough challenge for more able pupils, especially in mathematics. This means that these pupils do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable. The school has begun to tackle this and is increasingly ensuring that work suitably challenges this group of pupils.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics and the impact of additional help for those pupils at risk of

underachievement have improved pupils' reading skills.

- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs are well supported. The special educational needs leader ensures that one-to-one sessions and other support are well matched to the needs of individual pupils, giving them the confidence to tackle activities in other areas of learning.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They provide effective support, helping pupils to learn through targeted questions and well-planned activities.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and so get off to a good start.
- Although the proportion of pupils reaching the national average in the Year 1 phonics check is improving, it still remains below the national average.
- Most pupils at the end of Year 2 achieve above the nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. In the 2014 national tests for mathematics girls did not do as well as boys. Leaders are determined this will not be repeated and are making specific checks to ensure that there are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls through careful assessment tracking of pupils' progress.
- Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is much stronger since the last inspection and is now good as a result of good teaching. Leaders have taken rapid action to tackle previous underperformance. Although in 2014 the Year 6 pupils did not achieve as well as their peers nationally in reading, writing or mathematics, their current work shows that they are making good progress and standards are rising quickly. For example, pupils write with confidence across a range of subjects demonstrating good skills in sentence construction, use of vocabulary and writing stamina. These skills were seen in longer pieces of extended writing by pupils in Year 3 about Percy Shaw and in the letters of complaint written by pupils in Year 6.
- In 2014, the most-able Year 6 pupils achieved higher levels than their peers nationally in reading and mathematics but not in writing. The most-able Year 2 pupils did not achieve as well as they could in the 2014 tests and, as a consequence, leaders improved provision for this group. The books of the current most-able pupils show an improving picture and these pupils are on track to achieve their targets.
- The school has effective procedures and robust monitoring to ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn and develop their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is accelerating and most are making good or better progress in all subjects, in line with their peers in school. This is as a result of the improvements in the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of targeted support. This current progress is a considerable improvement from 2014, when the small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 did not achieve as well as their peers nationally in reading, writing or mathematics. When compared to all pupils nationally at that time, disadvantaged pupils were six months behind in reading and writing, and 12 months behind in mathematics. They are now catching up as a result of their improved progress; for example, some disadvantaged pupils are already achieving the highest levels in writing.
- The majority of parents agree that their children make good progress. In a typical comment one parent said, 'staff are fantastic and I am delighted with the progress my child is making.'

The early years provision

is good

- Children start school with skills below that typical for their age, especially in speaking, listening, and recognising letters and sounds. Leaders are beginning to work successfully with local nursery providers to develop ways of securing firm foundations for learning letters and sounds on which the school can build. As a result of good and sometimes better teaching, most children are well prepared for Year 1 because they make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage including the Nursery is well led and managed. Staff have a clear understanding of what each child can and cannot do. Accurate and detailed action plans ensure activities planned improve children's skills.
- Relationships between staff and children are strong and, as a result, children settle quickly and experience a good start to their education. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the progress their children make. They appreciate the care they receive and feel involved in their children's learning. They particularly like the 'wow' displays in the classroom where children celebrate the achievements they make out of school.
- The learning environment inside and outside is well planned and exciting. Children access a good range of

activities in a safe and secure environment. They choose activities with interest and quickly develop a wide range of skills. They also develop their ability to be independent and co-operate with each other. For example, a group of children played a game of skittles with great enthusiasm. They demonstrated high levels of social skills when they took turns in the game and also listened carefully to each other. They made good progress, clearly demonstrating their mathematical skills in subtraction.

- Record keeping of children's progress lacks sufficient detail. The records kept by staff of children's progress in their profiles do not always reflect sufficiently well the good progress children make in all areas of their learning.
- Behaviour in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and there are well-established routines which are consistently applied. The high quality care and nurturing by staff allow children to thrive in this environment.

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	453467

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	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maurice Codd
Headteacher	Stephanie Colegate
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 March 2013
Telephone number	01803328264
Fax number	01803325244
Email address	admin@homelands.torbay.sch.uk

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