

Victoria Road Primary School

Trelawney Road, St Budeaux, Plymouth PL5 1RH

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| Inspection dates | 3–4 February 2016 |
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a school which is well led and managed by a highly organised senior leadership team that knows exactly what to do to raise standards.
- Together with a fully involved and well-informed governing body, senior leaders have ensured that teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching across the school, including in the early years, is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to plan activities that develop pupils' core skills.
- Pupils' skills in phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) are good. The proportion of pupils now secure in their phonics skills is in line with the national average.
- Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection. They are courteous, conscientious, and enjoy coming to school to learn with their friends.
- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. As a result, all children make good progress and are well prepared for moving to Year 1.
- The school's work to promote British values is good. Pupils are well aware of their citizenship rights, as well as their responsibilities.
- In 2015 almost all pupils in Year 6, including those eligible for support through the pupil premium, made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards have significantly improved this year in Year 2. Pupils now make good progress. This includes in both English and mathematics.
- Most parents are highly complimentary about all aspects of the school. They feel well informed and are of the view that their children are well looked after.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils are not always challenged and stimulated to apply their skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils do not always have the resilience to plan and take risks with their own learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to secure consistently rapid rates of progress for all pupils by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan activities that are well matched to the needs of different pupils, particularly the most able
 - consistently provide pupils with opportunities to plan their own learning and challenge themselves in order to help them build their resilience
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their learning of English and mathematics across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school is well led and managed by a highly organised senior leadership team. With the support of a fully informed governing body, they have systematically tackled weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.
- Inspection evidence, including discussions with pupils and parents, school assessment information and work in pupils' books, indicates that most pupils make at least good progress and that the quality of teaching is good and improving.
- Core subject leaders are well trained. They regularly brief their colleagues on the latest developments in their respective subject areas, and meet with pupils to discuss their learning and assess the quality of their work. However, their role in developing pupils' mastery of the curriculum is yet to be fully developed.
- Senior leaders' use of the pupil premium in raising standards for disadvantaged pupils is highly effective. The performance of all pupils is closely checked to ensure that none fall behind, and that support is provided when it is needed. This helps sustain disadvantaged pupils' rapid progress, which is as good as that of their peers.
- The performance of teachers and teaching assistants is regularly monitored. They are set challenging targets, all of which are linked to improving their teaching practice and raising pupils' levels of achievement.
- Pupils benefit from an exciting curriculum which engages their interest and supports their good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils enjoy learning about Neil Armstrong, Christopher Columbus, and the impact of the Second World War in Plymouth. They regularly visit local places of interest. Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy carrying out a variety of practical activities such as making ice creams.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils celebrate various cultural and religious festivals, visit different places of worship and learn about the major world faiths. Pupils raise money for different charities and enjoy writing to pupils in their partner school in France.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values. They enjoy making decisions and 'having their say' through the school's 'Pupil Parliament'. They know how to be responsible citizens. Pupils demonstrate mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and have a good understanding of the culturally diverse nature of British society. This prepares pupils very well for life in modern Britain.
- Senior leaders and governors ensure that the primary school sports fund is well spent to improve pupils' health and well-being through exercise and dance, and to increase their participation in competitive sports. Funding is also used to develop teachers' coaching skills in various physical education activities.
- The school's work to foster good relations with parents is effective. The overwhelming majority of parents who spoke to inspectors were highly positive about all aspects of the school.
- The school has a highly productive relationship with its school improvement partners. This has helped to ensure that action plans are clearly focused on addressing the school's needs.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are highly effective. They know the school very well and are fully aware of its strengths, and what it needs to do to improve further. They know that the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2015 was below average, even though the support they received ensured that most made good progress. Governors understand data and assessment information. They check on pupils' performance and challenge senior leaders if they have any concerns.
 - Governors know that the quality of teaching is good, because they come into school regularly and have first-hand experience. They talk to pupils and children in the early years and look at the quality of their work. Governors are happy to reward teachers for their good work, but only if they reach their targets.
 - Governors know that pupil premium funding is making a difference to the lives of the pupils that it supports, ensuring that they can, for example, participate in educational visits. They know that one-to-one support, and support with spelling and handwriting, is boosting pupils' progress, and ensuring that they attain well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders exceptionally well to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching is good, and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers are trained well and have good subject knowledge. They meet regularly to assess how well pupils are learning, and use information on pupils' performance to plan different engaging and stimulating activities.
- Pupils learn in well-resourced classrooms which are thoughtfully organised to enable pupils to find information to help them with their calculation activities and their reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Teachers follow the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. As a result, they regularly check pupils' work. The feedback that they provide is of good quality and usually indicates to pupils how they can improve their work. Teachers are careful to check that pupils follow their advice and improve their work as a result of it. Almost all pupils who spoke to inspectors could talk about what they were doing well and what they needed to do to improve their reading, writing and mathematics further.
- Teachers regularly check on the quality of pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling in English. Work in pupils' books reveals that most are secure in their basic skills and are ready to express their ideas more creatively across the curriculum.
- Teachers make learning interesting and are beginning to encourage pupils to think more deeply. This was the case in a Year 2 class where pupils were eager to share their views on space travel. All hands were up when the teacher asked pupils how the astronauts, about to be blasted off into space, might be feeling about their impending mission. All agreed that they would be 'tense', 'nervous' and 'excited' about the prospect of travelling to the moon.
- Teachers give pupils regular opportunities to read in class and develop their comprehension skills well. Pupils are skilled at scanning texts for information, picking out the most important information and discussing this with their classmates. This was evident in a lower Key Stage 2 class where pupils were correctly answering comprehension questions on their electronic tablets.
- Phonics is taught consistently well by skilled teachers and teaching assistants. This was shown in a Key Stage 1 class where pupils were practising using sounds to correct spelling mistakes. The teacher demonstrated these sounds clearly and pupils showed a strong knowledge of prefixes.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils with different abilities are well supported in class. This was exemplified in an upper Key Stage 2 mathematics class where pupils were learning about fractions. The teacher was careful to ensure that all pupils appreciated the importance of being able to convert fractions to the same units before giving them different subtraction problems to solve. However, teaching is not always as effective as this, and such good practice is yet to be fully shared across the school.
- Most teachers ensure that pupils are fully engaged in their learning. They set pupils different targets in English and mathematics and make sure that they understand them. However, discussions with pupils and work in their books reveal that, occasionally, teachers' expectations of what the most-able pupils are capable of achieving are not quite high enough. These pupils are not always fully challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils, including children in the early years, are polite, welcoming, and respectful towards each other and adults. They ensure that their school is well looked after, wear their uniforms with pride, and usually make sure that their work is well presented.
- Pupils enjoy coming together for assemblies and sharing a sense of occasion. This was the case when pupils gathered to celebrate achievement in their 'Times Tables Travels'.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating each other's achievements because of their good personal, social and emotional development. This was exemplified during a 'Pupil Parliament' meeting where pupils enthusiastically applauded a Year 6 girl who had supported the reading of a youngster who had recently arrived from Syria.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after at all times. Regular visitors from the fire, police and ambulance services help develop pupils' understanding of safe and unsafe situations. Older pupils learn how to ride their bikes safely and have a good understanding of the potential dangers of being on the road.

- Most older pupils have a good understanding of cyber bullying, and know how to stay safe while using the internet. They know never to share personal information with strangers, including phone numbers and email addresses, and never to text, or talk to, strangers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of racism, which they say is when someone makes fun of someone else because of their skin colour or the way they look, and other forms of discrimination and prejudice, such as homophobic bullying. They are adamant that no discrimination or prejudice of any kind happens in school.
- The before- and after-school clubs promote pupils' improving attendance and punctuality, and good achievement.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good most of the time. Governors, teachers and most parents are also of this view. Inspection evidence, including a check on the school's behaviour logs, confirms that behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils move around the school considerately, and behave sensibly during lunch and playtimes. This was demonstrated during visits from 'Neil Armstrong' and 'Christopher Columbus'. Even though pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were very excited, they followed the school rules and gave due consideration to those not engaged in the activities.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is never less than good. They listen carefully, follow instructions well and are usually eager to answer questions.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Historic data show that in 2015, at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling was in line with national averages. As a result of this cohort's below-average data on entry to Key Stage 2, leaders provided tailored support where it was needed. Consequently almost all pupils made good progress in all subjects.
- Pupils' overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been below average for the last four years. However, low attainment on entry data for the school's cohorts shows that progress throughout Key Stage 1 has been above average in all subjects during this time.
- Current assessment data show that almost all pupils across the school are making good progress in all subjects, and across all classes. The leadership of the school are aware of the need to further accelerate progress for the most-able pupils.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the national phonics screening check in 2015 was below average. However, these data were distorted by the late arrival of three pupils into the year group who had a high level of special educational needs. Inspection evidence shows that pupils love to read, and read regularly. Older pupils read confidently and fluently and enjoy poetry, plays, and fiction and non-fiction books. Younger pupils use their phonics skills exceptionally well to sound out and read unfamiliar words. All pupils know that their reading helps them to learn new words and improve their writing.
- The vast majority of pupils progress well in mathematics and have well-developed calculation skills. This is because of teachers' good subject knowledge and their recent focus on helping pupils to apply their skills, and develop a full appreciation of the importance of mathematics in everyday life.
- Pupils progress well in writing. Work in pupils' books reveals that they have many opportunities to learn a range of texts and then innovate them. They also have opportunities to write at length about their educational visits and field trips, and are developing their writing skills in a range of different styles.
- Staff know their pupils who have special educational needs or disability, and those with lower prior attainment, well on an individual basis. Support and help with learning enables these pupils to progress as well as their classmates in most areas.
- Work in pupils' books shows that the most-able pupils are often making good progress because they are given harder work. However, these pupils are not always confident to apply their learning of English and mathematics in other subject areas. Leaders have rightly identified the need to increase progress for this group by developing additional opportunities to help pupils think about, discuss and deepen their learning across the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. They are progressing in line with their classmates in all areas across the school and, as a result of well-targeted support funded by the pupil premium, gaps in attainment between them and other pupils nationally are closing rapidly.

Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are good. Early years staff have exceptionally high expectations of what children are capable of achieving. They work well to develop the children's sense of wonder and curiosity about the world around them, and ensure that they learn and develop in a caring and stimulating environment.
- Accurate assessment information indicates that children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities which are significantly below those expected for their age in all areas of learning. Good teaching and an engaging curriculum ensure children progress well as they move through the Reception class. The proportion on track to attain a good level of development is in line with the national average. Almost all children are also becoming well equipped with the skills and abilities for the next stage of their learning in Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good. Early years staff are trained well and know children well. They keep detailed records on the children's performance and tailor activities to ensure that they fully develop their creative, reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Children behave safely and are well supervised at all times. They move around their indoor and outside learning and playing areas sensibly and enjoy taking turns. This was exemplified during 'Get Busy Time', where children enthusiastically engaged with independent learning activities. They listened carefully to their teacher's instructions before pursuing their various interests which included playing in a fire engine, experimenting with water, siphoning liquids through a tube and mixing coloured paints.
- Indoor provision is well organised, with attractive displays of children's work. There are areas for children to measure and explore different shapes and textures, opportunities for them to engage in role play activities, and quiet places for them to read.
- Parents are kept informed about their children's progress, and often come into the Reception class to participate in their learning. Parents are happy that their children are safe, cared for, and developing well.
- Senior leaders know exactly what to do to move the early years provision from good to outstanding. They have made it a priority to ensure that boys continue to be engaged with their learning, by continuing to introduce topics, such as 'Superheroes', and strengthening children's communication skills.
- Staff ensure children's safety by applying the same good safeguarding procedures in operation in Key Stages 1 and 2 in the early years provision.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113289 |
| Local authority | Plymouth |
| Inspection number | 10009224 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 177 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Geoff Nelder |
| Headteacher | Kevin Duggan |
| Telephone number | 01752 365411 |
| Website | www.vrpsp.co.uk |
| Email address | victoria.road.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21–22 January 2014 |

Information about this school

- This school is a slightly-below-average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above that found nationally.
- The children in the early years attend full-time and are accommodated in a designated Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 16 lessons and the inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher and deputy during several of these observations.
- The inspectors observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes. The lead inspector met with governors and had telephone conversations with a representative of the local authority and a national leader of education who has worked with the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspectors took account of 23 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors also took account of the 11 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. Both inspectors also spoke informally with a number of parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own data on pupil progress, school improvement planning, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, local authority checks of provision and pupils' progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Stuart Busby, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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