

Kings Ash Academy

Pimm Road, Paignton, Devon TQ3 3XA

Inspection dates	12–13 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Not enough pupils make the progress in writing they are capable of. This is because opportunities to develop these skills across all subjects are limited.
- Teachers do not always have the highest expectations of the way that pupils present their work, particularly their handwriting. This contributes to a lack of fluency in their writing.
- Teaching in key stage 2 is not as strong as it is in other parts of the school. Consequently, it does not always meet the needs of pupils' learning and slows the rate of progress.
- The newly introduced assessment system is not being used consistently in key stage 2. Teachers do not always know how to assess pupils' work and achievement is not recorded accurately. As a result, teachers do not consistently pitch the learning to meet the needs of their pupils.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of. Teaching does not consistently challenge them to extend their thinking or deepen their learning.
- The feedback given to pupils in key stage 1 and 2 is inconsistent. It does not always follow the school's policy which means that pupils do not understand how to improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The vision and determination of the headteacher has generated a strong, caring ethos. Pupils' learning is improving quickly and there is now a culture of higher expectations.
- Leaders are being rigorously challenged and supported by the Bay Education Trust to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders are tackling weaknesses in teaching in a determined way and this is improving pupils' outcomes.
- The leadership and quality of teaching in the early years is good. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in classes and around the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their improved attendance.
- Pupils are well cared for. Leaders ensure a high standard of welfare for pupils and work well with external agencies.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well-supported by adults.
- Parents feel positive about their child's education because they now feel that leaders involve them in the life of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing, by:
 - developing pupils' language and spelling so that they can write to a consistently high standard in all subjects
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length
 - ensuring that pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work is of the highest quality.

- Improve achievement for the most able pupils, by:
 - giving pupils time to think more deeply about what it is they are learning
 - questioning pupils effectively to probe and extend their learning.

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in key stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that planning is of a consistently high quality across classes in the same year group
 - developing a common understanding of the standards pupils should achieve by different ages
 - accurately assessing pupils' work and using this to plan learning which challenges them
 - having the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - providing pupils with feedback so that they know how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Over the past two years, the headteacher has demonstrated a robust drive and a clear vision for the school. She is determined to provide high-quality learning opportunities for all pupils and has already successfully created a strong caring ethos throughout the school.
- Senior leaders and governors accurately evaluate the strengths of the school and areas that need developing further. They have creatively tackled difficult financial decisions to make best use of the resources they have. For example, strong, effective middle leaders have been appointed to take on wider responsibilities and specialist expertise has been used well to improve the early years provision.
- The high expectations of the headteacher are reflected in the determination of her senior and middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching. High-quality in-school training, coupled with organised visits to other schools to observe strong provision, is starting to improve teaching. For example, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning has been strengthened by observing good practice. Impressive improvements have also been made in the early years and the attitudes to learning of the pupils have vastly improved.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching well and teachers are clear about the aspects of their teaching that they need to improve. Leaders link pupils' progress closely to the effectiveness of teaching. However, they are fully aware that not all teachers assess pupils' work accurately, especially across key stage 2.
- The special educational needs coordinator successfully identifies the specific educational needs of pupils so these pupils do well. Well-trained adults are deployed effectively to meet pupils' learning needs.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced which not only develops pupils' key skills but also offers them good opportunities to develop their linguistic, musical, artistic and sporting skills. This enables the pupils to take part in activities within the wider community such as music festivals, outdoor learning on Dartmoor and events with the local football team. The wide range of activities on offer outside the school day is well-supported and very much appreciated by pupils.
- Leaders spend and monitor the impact of the pupil premium and primary sports funds carefully. As a result, disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 make good progress and their progress in key stage 2 is improving slowly. The sports funding has helped teachers to develop their coaching skills and widened the range of different sports that pupils can try.
- British values are well developed within the school curriculum. For example, the week dedicated to discussing British values has meant that pupils are able to explain what they are and what they mean. Pupils develop a strong understanding about other cultures and experience learning that develops their reflection well. Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils knowing what is right and wrong and behaving cooperatively.
- Leaders have recently developed a set of values which promote good learning habits that pupils and staff know and support. Pupils use these values for reflection in assemblies and think about them as they try to be better learners. For example, pupils describe using the values successfully when they need to improve their behaviour.
- Leaders communicate well with the community, families and parents and take every opportunity to talk to parents. They run a successful programme for parents and pupils to learn together. This has resulted in parents' growing confidence in the school.
- Parents told inspectors about how grateful they are for leaders' dedicated and detailed work in caring for their children. In some difficult circumstances their children were effectively integrated into school life as leaders had planned well for their arrival. This resulted in their children learning well. One parent said, 'the head and deputy always have their doors open whenever anyone needs them'.
- **The governance of the school**
 - A recent reorganisation of governance has strengthened the support it gives to school leaders; governors now hold leaders rigorously to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
 - The Bay Education Trust Board's chief executive officer has played a key role in supporting the headteacher during the reorganisation of the senior leadership team.
 - Trust board members have a strong vision for high-quality learning and family involvement.

- Board members carefully ensure that extra government funds such as pupil premium and sports funding are used appropriately to improve pupils' learning.
- Board members effectively monitor safeguarding arrangements and are quick to challenge any patterns of pupils' behaviour.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Records are well maintained and safer recruitment procedures are rigorous. Leaders monitor safeguarding arrangements meticulously and work very well with external agencies. Staff are regularly updated to recognise any signs of maltreatment. They know how to keep children safe from radical or extreme views. Staff understand and carry out the school's safeguarding, child protection and related policies and procedures well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement in key stage 2. It is good in the early years and key stage 1 because teachers understand what they need to do to help their pupils make good progress.
- Teachers in key stage 2 do not expect enough of their pupils. Consequently, progress is slower in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers do not plan well enough to extend the most able pupils' knowledge or to deepen their understanding. They do not use questions effectively to challenge and extend pupils' thinking.
- Good teaching in key stage 1 helps disadvantaged pupils to make strong progress. This is because teachers plan learning well and understand what motivates disadvantaged pupils. However, this is less successful in key stage 2 where progress for disadvantaged pupils is not as strong because teachers do not plan their learning as effectively.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is skilfully planned and meets their needs well. Together with the effective support they receive from their teachers and well-trained support staff, this enables the pupils to make good progress.
- Assessment systems are used well in the early years and key stage 1 to accurately monitor progress and hold the teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. However, the new system for monitoring pupils' progress in key stage 2 is not yet producing accurate information. This makes it difficult for leaders to judge overall progress accurately.
- Feedback to pupils in key stage 1 and 2 is inconsistent. When the school's agreed marking policy is used appropriately, pupils' misunderstandings are challenged and this helps them to learn effectively. However, timely feedback is not always given and this means that pupils do not always have the opportunity to improve their work.
- Teachers do not always have the highest expectations of the way that pupils present their work, particularly their handwriting. Opportunities to undertake longer pieces of writing are limited and spelling is not always corrected according to school policy.
- Teaching in mathematics is too variable in key stage 2 because teachers do not always have high expectations of what pupils can do.
- Science is taught well. During science week, pupils had the opportunity to actively experiment and investigate – which they did with enthusiasm and interest.
- Well-trained adults effectively improve pupils' learning because they know when best to intervene and adeptly ask questions to develop pupils' understanding. This is especially so for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff care a great deal about pupils' personal development. Teachers and leaders know pupils' emotional needs and so can help them to be successful learners. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were keen to explain how thoughtfully leaders work to integrate their children into school life so that they 'thrive'.

- Pupils' welfare has a high priority. Leaders are relentless in making sure that pupils' individual emotional needs are met so that they settle happily in school. Leaders work well with other organisations for the benefit of pupils, for example, with those responsible for children looked after.
- Leaders have developed effective programmes to support the emotional development of children. With the family support worker, leaders work well with families so that children's learning is understood and supported at home.
- Pupils are safe and secure in the school. They know who to talk to if they need to and learn how to keep themselves safe online and from the influence of radical views.
- Despite some reservations from a few parents, pupils did not feel bullying was a concern. Incidents of bullying have reduced since the last inspection and are now rare. When bullying occurs, leaders involve parents in resolving problems and use the school's values to help pupils to reflect on the impact of their actions.
- In order to improve the way pupils play together, older pupils are trained well to be play leaders and be vigilant in the playground. They look out for, and work with, pupils who need support to play happily together.
- Pupils successfully develop skills so that they reflect on their learning. Pupils can discuss matters concerning society, such as the European Union referendum, and can understand different cultures.
- Pupils are self-disciplined, polite and respectful of each other.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Since the previous inspection, behaviour has improved in classrooms and around the school. Pupils are keen to learn and willingly work together, supporting and challenging each other. Lessons flow smoothly because pupils respond quickly to instructions.
- Generally, pupils feel that behaviour around the school is good. They know that there are high expectations and that teachers usually deal with lapses in behaviour well.
- Pupils respond well to rewards for good behaviour. They are proud to show their reports where good attitudes to learning are praised.
- Attendance, including by disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, has improved this year; it is now close to the national average. Leaders are rigorous in working alongside parents whose child's attendance is weak. The family support worker and attendance officer have successfully helped some parents to improve their child's attendance. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has significantly declined.
- As behaviour has improved, there has been a reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions this year. Pupils' behaviour is monitored well and for those who struggle to concentrate, helpful, extra support means pupils are able to stay in class and learn well.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes are better at the lower end of the school with impressive progress being made in the early years. This year, a broadly average proportion of children, a third more than in the previous year, reached a good level of development. More of them were prepared well to move up into key stage 1 than previously. This was because they had grown in confidence and acquired the skills they need for Year 1.
- Many of the pupils start school with poor levels of communication skills. They make good progress in their phonics (the sounds that letters make) during their time in the early years and in Year 1. The proportion of pupils who met the expected level in the phonics screening check has been increasing year on year with the most recent results indicating an impressive improvement.
- Pupils make good progress in key stage 1. This is reflected in the most recent national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 with a high proportion of pupils achieving age-related expectations.
- Progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 is slowly improving but gaps in pupils' learning are not yet fully closed.
- Overall, Year 6 outcomes are well below age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. This is as a result of a legacy of weak and inconsistent teaching over time. Although the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard for grammar, punctuation and spelling was in line with age-related expectations, their ability to write fluently, accurately and neatly is weak.

- The most able pupils do not make enough progress. This is because teachers do not give them work which stretches their thinking or deepens their understanding. Too often, the work expected of them is not demanding enough.
- Outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving. Teachers and other adults use the information that leaders provide about these pupils' specific learning needs well. In all year groups, teachers modify work for these pupils so that they make good progress.
- The most recent test results at the end of key stage 1 show that disadvantaged pupils achieved well and there were no differences in the outcomes between them and their peers. However, the most recent test results at the end of key stage 2 indicate that disadvantaged pupils have made less progress than their peers and the gap is widening.
- Pupils at the lower end of the school read confidently and can explain what they are reading. Using their knowledge of phonics, they can read unfamiliar words accurately. Teachers provide additional support to broaden pupils' vocabulary so that they can read more widely.

Early years provision

is good

- Changes in the early years leadership in April 2015 have resulted in children making much better progress and having improved outcomes. This is because the new leader has accurately identified what needed to improve. A highly effective team of teachers and additional adults have rigorously implemented the early years leader's vision for the best-quality provision.
- Teaching and learning are consistently of a good standard and phonics is taught well. This has contributed to improved phonics test outcomes at the end of Year 1.
- Children enjoy questioning and experimenting as they learn. One three-year-old boy asked for harder counting activities to be put on an interactive board. When he made mistakes counting, an adult questioned him carefully so that he developed a system that enabled him to be successful.
- Staff update records of children's progress regularly and these give a clear and accurate view of each child's development. The teaching team is consistent in their understanding of how to judge progress and children are increasingly involved in thinking about how well they are doing.
- Children behave well at all times, feel safe and are safe. They play and learn cooperatively and respond well when teachers prompt them to listen and change activity.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures and practice are effective and have a high priority.
- Teaching staff are knowledgeable about the development of two-year-olds emotional and physical needs. They provide a good range of varied activities that encourage children to learn on their own, in pairs and as a group. The development of children's language and communication skills is very successful because it is given a high priority.
- In the Nursery and Reception there is a vibrant learning environment where children are encouraged, with subtle guidance, to choose what they want to do and their progress is monitored well. The robust teaching of language skills is again well developed as a priority and supports the effective learning of phonics.
- Leaders use the additional funding for two-year-olds and those who are eligible for free school meals well. These children make strong progress, expanding the language they use and developing skills to learn.
- Leaders have successfully gained the confidence of parents. Those parents who contacted the inspection team praised the quality of teaching in the early years and explained how well their children had done. This satisfaction is demonstrated by the recent high levels of parental involvement in the range of activities provided for them.

School details

Unique reference number	138773
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10012376

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Livesey
Headteacher	Suzie Franklin
Telephone number	01803 555657
Website	www.kingsashacademy.org
Email address	admin@kingsashacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	18–19 June 2014

Information about this school

- Kings Ash Academy is larger than most primary schools.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2014 and the academy became part of the Bay Education Trust in December 2014.
- In April 2016, Kings Ash Academy welcomed its first group of two-year-old children into the Nursery; these pupils attend part time.
- The school takes pupils from the surrounding Paignton estates and from across Torbay.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by pupil premium funding is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- In 2015 the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school meets the requirements for publishing information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning through short visits to lessons and by scrutinising pupils' work. Many of the lessons were observed jointly with school leaders. Inspectors also observed the breakfast club and the playground in the morning, at break and at lunchtime.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, other leaders and teachers, representatives from the Bay Education Trust, a representative from the local authority, and parents.
- The inspectors received letters and emails from parents and grandparents.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation; its improvement plan; minutes of meetings; records of behaviour incidents; the single central record; monitoring of the quality of teaching; and assessment of pupils' progress.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and considered a wide range of pupils' work in books and displayed around the school.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures.
- Inspectors took account of 20 responses to the pupil questionnaire, 27 responses to the staff questionnaire and 19 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online survey).

Inspection team

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