

Morecambe and Heysham Torrisholme Community Primary School

Low Lane, Torrisholme, Morecambe, Lancashire LA4 6PN

Inspection dates

4–5 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Children in early years get a great start to their education. Excellent transition arrangements with parents and nursery schools, together with high-quality teaching, ensure that pupils settle into school quickly and make strong progress from their starting points. Higher proportions than average achieve a good level of development.
- High proportions of pupils consistently achieve the required standards in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Pupils make strong progress in many subjects, particularly in reading and mathematics. They are well prepared for their move to secondary school.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge which they use to inspire pupils' learning. Their highly effective use of questioning probes and deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders at all levels share a passion for educational excellence and reflect deeply on their practice. They continually and successfully seek to improve teaching and have begun appropriate work to refine and enhance methods by which teachers measure pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Governance of the school is strong. Governors use their high levels of professional skill assiduously to hold leaders to account.
- This is a highly inclusive and welcoming school because pupils and staff actively promote respect and tolerance for all.
- Pupils have impeccable manners. They are courteous and polite to each other and adults, including visitors.
- The school's curriculum is exceptionally well developed and managed to provide a wide range of experiences, which nurtures in pupils a deep love of learning.
- Parents overwhelmingly support the school and strongly appreciate how it includes them in their children's learning.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is consistently above the national average for primary schools.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and recognise the opportunities it provides for them. However, pupils occasionally do not demonstrate this through the quality of presentation in some of their books.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Refine current practices so that teachers can more readily identify and measure pupils' progress consistently in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Ensure that the presentation in pupils' books consistently reflects pupils' excellent attitudes to learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides the school with strong and focused leadership. She is held in high regard by her staff, who share her commitment to providing excellent education. She has successfully created an orderly and hard-working community in school, where pupils and teachers can flourish. The headteacher uses her expertise effectively to challenge and support local schools through her role as a local authority associate advisor.
- Senior leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school owing to their regular and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and pupils' outcomes. They work closely together as a team and share their good practice through close partnerships with other local schools.
- Senior leaders and governors have high ambitions for the school. They have developed a vision for continued improvement that is shared with staff. Their commitment and swift response to any concerns that they identify has resulted in sustained and rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils since the last inspection.
- Leaders' excellent use of the small amount of pupil premium grant the school receives ensures that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, make strong progress from their starting points and achieve well. The school's learning mentor provides high-quality support for pupils both in school and at home.
- Leaders' excellent use of the sports premium funding provides a wide and varied physical education curriculum. Pupils have access to an extensive range of sporting activities through attendance at before- and after-school clubs. These include fencing, table tennis and football. Additional activities, such as kayaking and participation in adventurous outdoor learning, complement physical education lessons and competitive sport. Some funding is used very effectively to enhance the skills of teachers so that physical education lessons are taught extremely well. As a result, pupils have high levels of commitment and participation in sport and adopt healthy lifestyles.
- Leaders' frequent and highly effective communication with parents, including online, ensures that parents are not only well informed but also are encouraged to play active roles in their children's education throughout their time in school. Parents are informed regularly about how they can help their children deepen their knowledge and understanding. They are able to contribute to curriculum planning through information events hosted by class teachers at the start of each new topic. Nearly all parents who returned questionnaires or who spoke with inspectors overwhelmingly support the school. They appreciate the wide range of opportunities provided for their children during their time at the school.
- This is a caring school where pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well. Some pupils who attend the school have significant medical needs. However, they are fully included in all aspects of school life because adults and pupils treat them with respect and care, as friends and equals. This was illustrated by a pupil who commented: 'Some people are made differently than others, but in my school everyone treats them the same as everybody else. That's really nice!'
- Leaders strongly promote fundamental British values, including the rule of law, British

institutions and democracy. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared to become young citizens. Pupils can explain the differences between monarchy and presidency. Older pupils are also able to explain how our monarch does not have absolute power, but that parliament makes our laws. Studies of countries and religions develop pupils' understanding and respect for other faiths and world cultures effectively.

- The curriculum is a strength of the school. The school uses the national curriculum as a base, which is enhanced through the inclusion of additional visits and activities to provide an exceptionally rich diet of experiences that are carefully and creatively coordinated to help pupils achieve well. Topics seize pupils' interests and inspire them to deepen their knowledge and understanding both in lessons and beyond the classroom. For example, pupils learn about the human digestive system using practical experiments that develop their scientific enquiry skills.
- Subject leadership is a strength of the school because leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Excellent induction and appropriate training ensure that subject leaders who are new to their role quickly develop their skills and contribute positively to school improvement. Subject leaders have detailed knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects because of their frequent monitoring. They recognise that the school's topic-based curriculum, while strongly developing pupils' knowledge and understanding, does on occasions present teachers and leaders with challenges in demonstrating pupils' progress. Subject leaders are now planning further coordinated actions to enhance current practice.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is strong. The governing body knows the school well because of the quality of information it receives from the headteacher, other leaders in school and external educational advisors. Governors check the information they receive through frequent visits to the school and their effective links to specific classes.
- The governing body makes excellent use of the professional skills of its members to hold leaders assiduously to account and provide strategic guidance. Governors ensure that the school development plan drives the allocation of budget resources and that their investments have the desired impact through their detailed analysis of outcomes.
- Governors ensure that the school's performance management policy is robustly applied and that targets set for staff at all levels are matched appropriately to the priorities for school improvement. Their secure understanding of how the school's performance management procedures relate to teachers' pay allows them to evaluate carefully against clear criteria any proposals for increases in the salaries of members of staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. This includes the robust checking of the suitability of adults to work with children in school and the provision of appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet connection.
- All staff are vigilant and well trained to protect pupils from potential safeguarding risks, including risks from radicalisation and extremism, because leaders ensure that their skills and knowledge are kept up to date.
- The school's commitment to safeguarding is evident in all aspects of school life. Pupils are confident that staff will respond quickly and effectively to any concerns they might

have. They say they feel safe in school and have very positive relationships with all staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have consistently high expectations of themselves and pupils alike. They are well trained and have very high levels of subject knowledge that they use to plan inspirational learning activities. The science curriculum is enriched by practical experiences and investigations.
- Teachers use systematic approaches to the teaching of reading and writing that consistently develop pupils' skills and confidence. Topic themes are regularly woven into the planned sequences of lessons to promote pupils' application of their newly acquired skills and knowledge to the wider curriculum. For example, pupils studying an astronomy topic and eagerly awaiting their forthcoming overnight lessons in stargazing, used their new knowledge of planets to develop detailed settings for their science-fiction writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school because teachers receive appropriate training.
- Teachers plan and deliver effective sequences of lessons that quickly develop pupils' knowledge. All groups of pupils, including the most able, master their mathematical skills because of appropriate challenge in lessons. For example, some pupils were required to explain how they applied their knowledge and skills to identify missing selection criteria from completed Carroll diagrams of shapes.
- Assessment is used well to inform planning so that tasks are both accessible and suitably challenging. The effective use of assessment leads to pupils of all abilities, including those who are most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, making strong progress.
- Teachers use questioning exceptionally well to probe and develop pupils' understanding in all subjects, including in the early years when children choose their activities. As a result, pupils quickly develop their knowledge and respond to questions with confidence using a wide vocabulary that demonstrates their secure acquisition of knowledge and deep understanding of concepts.
- Teachers use homework very effectively to consolidate and extend learning beyond lessons. Pupils regularly complete tasks in writing and mathematics linked to their topic. They read at home frequently and develop their fluency and a love of books. Longer projects are closely linked to the topics and promote pupils' development of more complex research skills. For example, pupils studying the Viking invasion of Britain researched, planned and built an accurate model of a Viking longhouse.
- Skilled and committed teaching assistants, well led by the school's higher-level teaching assistant, have strong positive impact on learning, particularly in supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning in the early years.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Pupils are immensely proud of their school and recognise how the range of activities, lessons and clubs empower them to succeed. One pupil stated, 'This school inspires you to be all you want to be!' They say teachers help them to learn and that they feel safe. Parents share this view and are overwhelmingly supportive.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school, including when online, because of the high-quality guidance they receive. Focused work on online safety, including specific workshops delivered in partnership with the police, ensures that pupils and parents are well informed about the risks of social media.
- Pupils carry out roles of responsibility with maturity, including through being respected school councillors. Pupils have been instrumental in leading and organising charitable fundraising events. A recent project involving a number of pupil-led activities raised substantial funds for cancer charities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are impeccably polite and well-mannered to adults and each other. They welcome visitors and are eager to celebrate their learning and their school life.
- Pupils love coming to school. One parent said that their child was 'often sad it was a weekend because that meant there was no school to go to'. Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, has improved further since the last inspection and remains above the national average. Leaders ensure that all absences are quickly followed up and, where necessary, appropriate challenge is levelled at parents. Effective support from teachers and other school staff for those pupils who are unable to come to school for good reasons ensures that they are not disadvantaged by their absences.
- Pupils are eager, attentive learners who have outstanding attitudes to learning. Disruptions to learning are extremely rare. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are confident to take a lead in learning because teachers strongly promote resilience and nurture pupils' inclusion.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils recognise this behaviour is wrong and are confident that, if it does occur, all adults in school will deal quickly and effectively with it.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make strong progress in their understanding of phonics because of the teaching they receive. As a result, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check continues to improve. It has remained above the national average for the last three years. In 2016, the provisional results show that all Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard.
- In 2015, the proportion of Year 6 pupils leaving the school having achieved the standards expected for their age was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved higher standards than those which are expected for their age was significantly greater than the national average. Pupils left the school on average two terms ahead of their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2015, higher proportions of Year 6 pupils made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics than the national average. The proportions of pupils making better than expected progress in these subjects were considerably higher than national figures.

- Provisional results from the 2016 statutory assessments for Year 6 pupils, and the work seen in pupils' books show that the strong improvement in pupils' outcomes is being sustained.
- Pupils who are most able receive appropriate challenge and support and as a result make strong progress from their starting points.
- There are very few disadvantaged pupils in each year group across the school to draw meaningful conclusions from the overall outcomes for statutory assessments in 2015. School-based tracking information shows that this group of pupils make strong progress from their starting points in all years as a result of the support they receive.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points owing to the carefully planned support they receive that ensures that they are included in all aspects of learning.
- Pupils also make strong progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics and develop deep and comprehensive understanding of more complex concepts and knowledge. Pupils were confident to explain how their studies in lessons had helped them develop this knowledge and understanding. Their deeper learning included the tectonic plate theory, relating to their study of earthquakes, and a number of possible explanations of why Vikings chose to travel to Britain that demonstrated deep understanding of geographical and historical theories. Pupils develop excellent musical skills and all learn to play an instrument well by the time they leave school. Progress in modern foreign language is strong; pupils confidently go beyond numbers and colours and develop their grasp of the Spanish language from a young age. They develop their conversational Spanish skills with enthusiasm.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leadership and management of early years is outstanding. Leaders have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses because of their effective monitoring. They use this knowledge well to inform improvement planning. Leaders recognised the need to develop early years and their actions, including robust challenge and effective training, have led to significant improvement in the quality of teaching and the outcomes for children.
- Children's induction into the Reception class at the start of their school life is exemplary. The school liaises closely and highly effectively with the 19 nursery schools attended by the children.
- Frequent visits to the nurseries by school staff and visits to school by nursery children during the summer term establish a firm bridge of knowledge and confidence that children can cross into their new school. Additional home visits prior to their start at the school maintain contact with children between schools and provide excellent opportunities for parents to share information. Children settle very quickly during their short period of part-time induction to class and rapidly become independent and confident.
- Strong partnerships with external agencies ensure that staff are well trained and that children receive appropriate provision for their needs. Regular workshops and 'drop-ins' are well attended. These provide parents with excellent opportunities to seek advice and guidance from a wide range of professionals and share any worries they may have.

- Most children enter the Reception class with levels of development in line with those which are typical for their age. All groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged and most able, make strong progress from their starting points because of the strengthened quality of teaching. Outcomes for children in early years have rapidly improved over the last three years and continue to rise. In 2015, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was well above that seen nationally. In 2016, this increased again and nearly nine out of 10 children reached a good level of development. The proportion of disadvantaged children in each year group is extremely low and too small to allow for any meaningful statistical analysis.
- Children are impeccably polite and courteous. They are keen to learn and play. They collaborate well to develop deep knowledge and understanding. Children swiftly develop their inquisitiveness and social skills. For example, a group of boys worked collaboratively together to collect creepy-crawlies from the 'bug-hotel'. They then used a key appropriately to identify which animals they had captured and recorded their finding on their clipboards.
- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Adults working in the Reception classes have a deep understanding of the early years curriculum and the subjects they teach because of the training and challenge they have received. They use the outdoors very well to provide an exciting and stimulating yet focused environment in which children develop and thrive strongly. Adults use questioning highly effectively, particularly during times where children chose their own activities, to probe and develop understanding and deepen children's knowledge.
- Children are kept safe because well-trained and vigilant staff implement the school's safeguarding policies with rigour and act quickly to respond effectively to any concerns.
- Leaders ensure that welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	119283
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10003095

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Huddart
Headteacher	Susan Penney
Telephone number	01524 410799
Website	www.torrisholme.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	bursar@torrisholme.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 January – 1 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Torrisholme Community Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils reading and talked with pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and the local authority's school improvement adviser who works with the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and staff and took account of the 64 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil online questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lis Burbage	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Clarke	Ofsted Inspector
Samantha Kidd	Ofsted Inspector
Jeremy Barnes	Ofsted Inspector

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