

Inspection of Watcombe Primary School

Moor Lane, Torquay, Devon TQ2 8NU

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Early years provision | Good |
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| Previous inspection grade | Good |
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What is it like to attend this school?

This nurturing school is at the heart of the community. Relationships between pupils, staff and families are strong and as a result pupils thrive.

The positive behaviour of pupils reflects the school values of confidence, respect, aspiration and responsibility. School leaders have ensured that there are regular opportunities for pupils to demonstrate these values. Older pupils act as reading buddies to the younger pupils. Play leaders support their peers in the playground and house captains demonstrate what it means to be a role model.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences. Career fairs for Year 6 pupils help them to learn about the different jobs available to them in the future. Pupils go on residential visits to develop independence and explore nature. Pupils also have the opportunities to learn and develop new skills in extra-curricular activities, such as gymnastics, football and athletics.

Pupils say they are treated fairly. They are tolerant of differences and believe in equality for all. Pupils learn to stay safe online. They also learn to stay safe in the community and near the sea. If pupils are worried, they say they have a trusted adult to speak to.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

School leaders and staff have a clear and ambitious vision for what pupils can achieve, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Central to this shared vision has been the prioritisation and strengthening of the school's reading curriculum. Learning to read begins in the early years. Precise monitoring ensures that pupils learn their phonic sounds in groups that match their ability. Rigorous staff training means all staff present sounds clearly to pupils. Those pupils who need extra support are identified swiftly and receive personalised support to ensure they catch up. Staff model how to read with expression and fluency. Pupils use drama activities to build a deeper understanding of the stories they read. As a result, pupils develop a love of books and have positive attitudes to reading.

School leaders have applied the same level of rigour to development of other subjects across the curriculum. However, in a minority of subjects, the school has not fully considered what it is it wants pupils to learn. This means that pupils do not always build knowledge and skills in a logical sequence. As a result, in some subjects pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. All staff are aspirational for what pupils with SEND can achieve. School leaders have robust systems to identify the needs of pupils with SEND promptly. Plans to support their learning are clear and effective. This means that pupils with SEND learn the full curriculum alongside their peers.

Children in the early years get off to a positive start. School leaders have developed an environment and curriculum that enables pupils to play and learn. Indoors, children develop their fine motor skills through craft activities. Outside, pupils develop their gross motor skills through tree climbing. From the time children start school, leaders focus on developing pupils' emotional regulation. This means that by the time pupils finish the early years they have the appropriate level of resilience for the next stage of education.

Throughout the school there are high expectations of how pupils should behave. Staff model the nurturing and caring behaviour they want pupils to demonstrate. Pupils know what is expected of them. They agree that most of the time behaviour across the school is good. Incidents of bullying are rare. When they do occur, staff take appropriate action to support all pupils.

Pupils are positive about learning. However, some pupils do not attend school often enough. School leaders have worked closely with families to try to improve rates of attendance. However, absence remains high for some pupils. This means they miss out on essential learning.

Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn to respect and understand their local community. Through 'Explorer Days' they visit woodlands and walk coastal paths. Older pupils host coffee mornings for the community to raise money for their new library. These activities help pupils to understand what it means to be an active citizen.

Governors know the strengths of the school and what they need to focus on next as part of ongoing school improvement. Staff are proud to work at the school and say their workload and well-being are considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, leaders have not fully considered what it is they want pupils to learn. This means there is not always a consistently logical sequence for the curriculum. As a result, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. The school must consider the end points of these subjects and identify what it is that pupils will need to learn so that these end points can be reached.
- School attendance is low for some pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Low attendance means these pupils are missing out on important learning for their future. The school should ensure that their ongoing work with families leads to improvements in attendance, so that all pupils attend school regularly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113233 |
| Local authority | Torbay |
| Inspection number | 10322204 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 230 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Fiona Prior |
| Headteacher | Tim Nield |
| Website | www.watcombe-primary.torbay.sch.uk |
| Date(s) of previous inspection | 19 – 20 April 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school uses one alternative provision.
- There is an on-site breakfast club run by the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors met with leaders from the school.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents before school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevin Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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