



Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 113459
LEA Torbay
Inspection number 279175
Inspection dates 10 July 2006 to 11 July 2006
Reporting inspector Lorna Brackstone AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Polhearne Way
School category	Voluntary controlled		Brixham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon TQ5 0EE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01803 851647
Number on roll	158	Fax number	01803 851647
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Paul Connor
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Miss Kate McMillan

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, although there are significant pockets of deprivation. As a result of demographic changes, the school has a falling role and takes pupils who may be experiencing difficulties elsewhere. Thus, the number of pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements for special educational needs, is above the national average. Children start school with a very wide range of experiences but attainment is broadly as expected.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that provides good value for money. This matches the school's own view. Good leadership and management underpin the continuous improvements to the school, ensuring that it is a well run and a happy place to be, with a good capacity for further development. The progress made by pupils is good in all age groups, including those with learning difficulties and those who are able and talented. This is because the quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school and pupils' progress is carefully monitored and tracked. Individuals who are not making the expected progress are quickly identified and given additional support. Consequently, the overall standards achieved throughout the curriculum are good by Year 6. However, whilst academic guidance is generally good, the advice given by teachers when marking pupils' books could be more specifically related to how the pupils might improve. The good curriculum promotes pupils' learning well and offers a rich range of activities which pupils really enjoy. Effective use is made of the good partnerships that have been created with other schools and colleges to enhance the curriculum, particularly with the provision for the able and talented. The quality of provision and standards in the Reception Year are good. However, the outdoor area for the youngest children is underdeveloped, resulting in missed opportunities for independent activities. Pupils' personal development and well-being is good, in particular their behaviour, which is outstanding. This indicates excellent progress from their social skills on entry into school. Parents are proud that their children develop into 'well-rounded individuals'. The school cares for the pupils well and keeps them safe.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the comments made by the teachers when marking books help pupils improve their work.
- Fulfil the school's plan to develop the outdoor learning area for Reception children so that it can be used as an integral part of the school day.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils progress well through the school and by Year 6 have achieved good standards. A significant proportion of children start school with lower than expected standards in language and communication skills and social development, but attainment in other areas of learning is broadly as expected. They make good progress in the Reception Year and by the start of Year 1 they have attained standards that are in line with expectations in all areas of learning. The good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. In the 2005 Year 2 national tests, standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics. They were above national expectations in other areas of the curriculum. Almost half of the current Year 2 pupils have learning difficulties and fewer of these pupils have attained the higher levels in the most recent (2006) tests. However, achievement from their prior attainment is good because they have progressed well

in these subjects and many of the pupils are working above the expected level in information and communication technology (ICT), the humanities and the arts. Progress is good in Years 3 to 6. Standards are good in English, mathematics and science with nearly half of the pupils in the current Year 6 attaining the higher levels. This is a good improvement on the results of 2005 when fewer of the more capable pupils attained the higher levels. This is a good example of how the school sets challenging targets and successfully meets them. By Year 6, pupils also attain good standards in ICT, history, geography, art and design, and music. The school caters well for pupils with learning difficulties and they make good progress in meeting their targets. Pupils who are able and talented make equally good progress because they are given interesting and well planned opportunities to extend their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes well to their personal development. Attendance rates have improved significantly over the last two years and are now good. The school has good procedures for monitoring absence and encouraging regular attendance. Pupils like their school and enjoy learning. Their response in lessons is consistently good and work is presented neatly. Pupils work well together and are considerate towards each other. Behaviour around the school and in the classroom is outstanding. Pupils act safely in school and incidents of unkind behaviour are rare. Pupils show a good awareness of how to keep healthy by eating plenty of fruit, drinking water and taking part in physical activities. They are pleased that school meals have improved but would still like to see more healthy options being made available. Playtimes are enjoyable with activities that contribute to enhancing children's health and the daily 'wake and shake' routine ensures that they are well focused for the start of the day. Pupils make a sensible and mature contribution to the school and the wider community by willingly taking on duties to care for others. Pupils are clear that the responsibilities they undertake, such as the buddy system, play leaders and work linked to the church, give them the chance 'to set an example to others'. The school council is involved in raising funds, gathering opinions amongst their peers and managing a small fund. This enhances their understanding of economic affairs. Given their good standards in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, they are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. Teachers prepare well and make good use of resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards. They provide good opportunities for pupils to work individually, in groups, and as a whole class. They use a variety of strategies to engage the pupils and do this

effectively. Care is taken to provide for pupils of different abilities and age groups. For example, in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class, learning objectives for each age group are always made clear. Good use is also made of teaching assistants to provide effectively for the different age and ability groups. Teachers create a good working environment to which pupils respond well. Questions are answered willingly and collaboration in learning activities is good. Pupils appreciate the value that teachers place on their work and this is evident through the high quality displays throughout the school. Teachers mark work regularly and have high expectations of presentation. Pupils get good feedback on how well they are doing but do not always get enough information about how they can improve their work and attain a higher level.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The school has successfully developed a curriculum that takes account of the needs of all its pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who are able and talented. The school has placed a good emphasis on creative experiences, many of which are sensibly based locally at the seaside, or on Dartmoor. Provision for physical education, art and music are strong and pupils benefit from links with the Brixham extended schools groups who provide workshops and performances. The good range of trips and visits is greatly appreciated by pupils, and contributes significantly to their personal development. There is good provision for after school clubs. The good personal, social, citizenship, health and emotional curriculum enables pupils to learn about healthy eating, regular exercise and the dangers of drugs. In the Reception class, the curriculum is good. There is an interesting range of activities planned but more use could be made of the outdoor area as an integral part of the school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Adults know children well and develop excellent relationships with them. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who are able and talented receive good support. Strong teamwork amongst teachers and support assistants means that pupils are set tasks sensitively adjusted to cater for different learning needs. Child protection procedures are well understood by all staff. Pupils feel safe and happy in the school and know where to turn for help. Pupils specifically spoke of the care taken of them as being one of the reasons why they liked their school. Pupils are inducted into school well. They are also prepared well for the transition to secondary school. Assessment procedures are good. They are excellent in English and ICT, giving a wealth of information allowing teachers to plan work to suit all abilities. In these two subjects, pupils know their targets and can discuss what to do to improve. Teachers' comments are full of encouraging praise but occasionally the comments on what pupils need to do to improve are not specific enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management underpin a well ordered, effective and happy school community where there is a balanced focus on both the academic and personal development of pupils. The headteacher provides a clear steer and encourages a whole-school approach to review and self-evaluation. The subject leaders effectively monitor standards and provision for English, mathematics, science, ICT and for those pupils who have learning difficulties. The monitoring of other curriculum areas is less well developed, resulting in a lack of formal methods used to track and monitor the good standards and provision. There are comprehensive procedures for monitoring teaching and alongside rigorous performance management procedures this has led to good improvements. The school development plan is detailed, driven by targets and influenced by the views of parents and pupils. Assessment data is used well to set challenging and realistic tasks. Governors are fully involved and play a good part in both strategic planning and monitoring. For example, they have been instrumental in establishing a Nursery on site at the start of the next academic year and are focused on raising the profile of the school within the local community through a range of interesting ventures. The school has the full confidence of the vast majority of its parents whose views are regularly sought. Links with other schools are good and lead to improved opportunities for pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection and is well placed to make further improvements.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, visiting your classrooms and looking at some of your work. We agree with you and most of your parents that St Margaret Clitherow is a good school and fun to be in. Congratulations to you all on your award for ICT. Good things about school:

Your behaviour is outstanding. You enjoy school and get on well with each other.

You do well in what you learn and attain good standards.

The school makes a good job of taking care of you and keeping you safe.

You appreciate the interesting activities that the school provides for you.

The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to make sure that you get a good education. What we have suggested the school does now:

The youngest children need to have an outdoor area that can be used throughout the school day for learning activities.

Teachers need to make sure that their marking helps you understand what you need to do to improve your work. Thank you again and keep on enjoying school! Yours sincerely Mrs Lorna Brackstone Lead Inspector