

Highweek Community Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113210
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311157
Inspection dates	29–30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Payne
Headteacher	David Glenny
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Coronation Road Newton Abbot TQ12 1TX
Telephone number	01626 216300
Fax number	01626 216301

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The number of minority ethnic pupils is low as is with the number who speak English as an additional language. A higher than average number of pupils have learning, behavioural and emotional difficulties. A school nursery is provided on the same site that is integral to the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school overall, with a notable strength in the pastoral care of pupils. Pupils arrive with levels of skills and knowledge that are below expectations for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, and when they leave their attainment is broadly in line with expectations. In Years 1 to 6 achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average by the time the pupils leave the school. The progress of pupils with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties and those with learning difficulties is good. A small number of pupils underachieve across the school, including some of the more able.

There is evidence of some good teaching. However, this is not consistent. Although lessons are planned with clear learning objectives, the work is not always matched successfully to the needs of learners. Senior leaders and managers monitor lessons, although areas for improvement are not consistently followed through with specific support and challenge. This results in teaching being satisfactory overall, although it is good in the Foundation Stage. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and these are identified in a school development plan. However, the action planning to support developments is not rigorous enough to ensure that weaknesses are addressed successfully within a set time scale. Consequently, issues from the previous inspection still need more work, although there has been some improvement. Nevertheless, because of actions taken, pupils now make better progress in aspects of literacy, demonstrating that leaders and managers provide the school with a satisfactory capacity to improve.

There is a very strong ethos of care that pervades the whole school. Pupils feel safe and secure, knowing that any problems are dealt with efficiently and with compassion. There are good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils know how to keep healthy and there is good provision for physical exercise. Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are identified at the earliest possible stage and given excellent support. This enables these pupils to make good progress. The behaviour of most pupils is good although some find behaving well difficult. Nevertheless, behaviour is managed well to ensure that all pupils are ready to learn. The excellent pastoral support that pupils receive makes a good contribution to their personal development. Pupils enjoy helping others in need, whether this is in the playground at school or supporting a variety of local and international charities. However, many pupils do not know their own targets and are not given sufficient guidance about how to improve their work. This results in their overall care, guidance and support being good, rather than outstanding.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Their enjoyment is enhanced by a satisfactory curriculum that is based on first-hand experiences and practical activities. However, although pupils are enthused by such lessons, they are not used creatively enough to develop their core literacy and numeracy skills.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Pupils begin school with levels of knowledge and skills that are below average for their age. However, even before they arrive the school identifies children that need extra support through excellent links with external agencies, such as social services and health visitors. This enables them to plan suitable provision for these pupils so that they settle well into school. Parents

praise the excellent induction programme typically saying, 'The staff can't help you enough' and, 'The Nursery seems a warm and happy place.' The children thrive in an exciting nursery environment that stimulates their desire for learning. They display good attitudes and behave well, becoming confident learners. The provision is well managed by a team of staff who plan thoroughly and correctly assess the good progress of the children. However, there is a need to develop children's communication skills further through more opportunities for speaking and listening.

What the school should do to improve further

- Identify and accelerate the progress of all underachieving pupils, including the more able, in English and mathematics.
- Improve teaching and learning to ensure that they are consistently good or better.
- Agree whole school priorities for improvement through a detailed programme of supporting, challenging, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although pupils begin school with abilities that are below expectations, the good Foundation Stage ensures that they make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are in line with expectations in most areas, with the exception of linking sounds and letters, writing and calculation. In Years 1 to 6, progress is satisfactory so that standards achieved are broadly average by the time they leave the school. A small number of pupils, including some of the more able, underachieve, particularly in writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with learning difficulties make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils have a good knowledge of right and wrong. This helps them to foster positive relationships with each other and know what to do when difficulties arise. They feel safe and happy in the school environment. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils know how to live healthily through exercise and healthy eating due to the good provision in the school. They say that they enjoy their lessons and this is shown by their positive attitudes to work. The behaviour of most pupils is good although some find behaving well all the time difficult and need extra support. This is well managed both in the classroom and in the playground. Attendance is satisfactory, but not as good as it could be because some families take holidays during term-time. Nevertheless, the school has implemented strategies to make improvements, with some success. Pupils' involvement in the community is good, both locally, such as singing for the local elderly and globally, including supporting links with people in South Africa. Pupils' economic well-being is satisfactory due to the standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers share with pupils what they are going to learn in lessons. The teaching is clear although sometimes pupils are expected to listen for too long before embarking on activities. The behaviour of pupils is managed well, ensuring that any disruption is kept to a minimum. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards to enhance the learning for pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with learning difficulties. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. However, there is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching leading to variable progress, particularly for the more able pupils. This is because assessment is not used sufficiently to plan tasks that match the abilities of all pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is based on pupils gaining first-hand experiences and to this end, pupils take part in many trips and a number of residential visits. Visitors come to the school to share their expertise and this supports the learning well. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with learning difficulties are supported well, although more needs to be done to enhance the learning for the more able. Teachers plan exciting activities to broaden the experience of pupils, which they enjoy, although their enthusiasm is not sufficiently harnessed to support their progress in practising the skills they have learnt in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). As a result, their progress is restricted.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of pupils is excellent. Even before they start school, pupils with particular difficulties are identified and supported to ensure they make a good transition to school. A dedicated team of staff ensure that their needs are well met with a wide variety of interventions to support their progress, particularly in English. However, more emphasis needs to be given to pupils who need support in mathematics. There is an exceptionally wide range of agencies that supports the school in many areas, including those pupils who have emotional and behavioural needs. Parents appreciate how the school helps not just the pupil but the whole family. Academic guidance is satisfactory, but too many pupils are not aware of targets in their learning and they receive too little guidance about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leaders and managers put much effort into the pastoral care of pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties, as a result of a totally inclusive ethos. This is having an excellent impact on helping pupils to learn and extends to helping their families. There are very good relationships with parents who speak highly of the caring nature of the school. This is central to the school's vision. The school development plan has areas of

improvement correctly identified although these are not sufficiently supported by detailed action plans. Without this knowledge, the governors' ability to act as a critical friend is limited, although they do have a satisfactory understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Teaching is monitored regularly by senior leaders and suggestions for improvement are made, although these are not consistently followed up with a programme of support and challenge to improve the provision. Nevertheless, the school has made some improvements in the teaching of phonics that have resulted in pupils making better progress. Challenging targets are set although they are not always met, particularly those for the more able. However, there is a new programme for tracking pupils' progress in place although it is still too early to assess its effectiveness in raising standards.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

1 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Highweek Community Primary and Nursery School, Newton Abbot TQ12 1TX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school this week. We really enjoyed meeting you and finding out about all the things that you do.

You told us that you enjoyed school and we can see that! Your teachers find interesting things for you to learn about and you are very lucky to be able to go on so many outings. We know that you feel happy in school and that you know who to go to if you have any problems. You have a good knowledge of keeping healthy and your school really does help you to stay that way by providing you with healthy meals and making sure that you take lots of exercise!

You told us that you feel safe in school and that your teachers take good care of you. We like the way that you help others, too, both in your local area as well as raising money for wider charities.

We have asked your school to make sure that the work you are given is just right for you and helps you to improve more quickly. We want you to have more opportunities to practise your reading, writing and mathematics so that you know more before you leave your primary school.

You can help by letting the teachers know if the work you are being given is too easy or too difficult for you.

It has been lovely to meet you all. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Shears Lead inspector

Annex B



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Mr D Shears
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