

Modbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113335
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311218
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rodney Bomford
Headteacher	Bridie Thong
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Modbury Ivybridge PL21 0RB
Telephone number	01548 830312
Fax number	01548 830921

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Healthy Schools and Active Mark Bronze awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where pupils make exceptional progress. The secret of the school's success is the highly effective leadership and management. The headteacher, and other senior members of staff, are a dedicated and passionate team, who are committed to doing the best they can for their pupils. Self-evaluation is effective in pinpointing where improvement is needed to move the school forward. For instance, the lower standards previously attained by boys in Year 2 were identified and remedial measures were rapidly, and very successfully, put in place. Governors support the school very well and they also hold the school rigorously to account for its performance.

Standards are high and pupils' achievement is outstanding. When children start in the Reception class their knowledge and skills are broadly as expected for their age. During their time in the Foundation Stage, the children achieve well, reaching, and on occasions exceeding, the goals set for them. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 to 6, with the result that standards at the end of Year 6 are high.

The school has established the highest quality systems for tracking the progress of the pupils as they move through the school. Based on this information, pupils are set very challenging targets for improving the standard of their work. For their part, the pupils know their targets well and they are keen to achieve them. Teachers have the highest expectations of their pupils, and continually challenge them in the work they provide for them. Teaching assistants are also very well deployed in supporting all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. They have very positive attitudes to learning because classrooms are stimulating and high quality work is celebrated. Further, pupils enjoy school and their behaviour is exemplary. Parents hold very positive views about the school, and one said typically, 'I am absolutely delighted with the education my child has received at Modbury School'.

The curriculum contributes extremely well to both pupils' enjoyment of school and to their learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is interesting and varied and, for example, helps to make pupils very aware of the need to follow a safe and healthy lifestyle. The school routinely reviews its curriculum and recognises that more use could be made of the outdoor area to support work in the various aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

The improvements that have been made both recently and since the previous inspection, the high quality of the current provision and the excellent progress being made by the pupils all show that the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle happily into school and the staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment where the children can enjoy themselves. The adults provide them with an appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for them to choose for themselves. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to fully use the outdoor area in the tasks undertaken, for example when tackling work in the development of literacy or mathematical skills. The children's behaviour is excellent and they have very good attitudes

towards their work. As a result of good teaching, the children make good progress, attaining the standards that are expected by the end of the year, and sometimes exceeding them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more use of the outdoor area to support children's learning in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards overall are high and pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and they reach, and sometimes exceed, the early learning goals. They do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve very well and by the end of Year 2 standards are now above average, and in reading they are high. In 2007, boys did not attain as well as girls. The school quickly identified this weakness and, through carefully targeted support and the introduction of topics and resources that are suited to the interests of boys, the issue has been successfully addressed, with boys now performing as well as girls.

By the end of Year 6, standards are high in English, mathematics and science. As a result, pupils have made exceptional overall progress in relation to their average starting point in the school. The school makes outstanding provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this enables them to make rapid progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, courteous and most welcoming to visitors, and they have very sensible attitudes to their work. A very few parents raised a concern about pupils' behaviour. However, during the inspection only behaviour of the highest standard was observed, and discussions with pupils showed no concern in this direction. Pupils feel very safe in school, and they say that bullying is not a problem. They are confident in the support of staff should any problems arise. Pupils show great enjoyment in school, and this is well illustrated by their above average attendance. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. In school, pupils readily carry out a variety of responsibilities, such as through the school council and the healthy school team. The school is very involved in the local community: for example, the choir regularly represents the school in various events, such as the harvest festival, and pupils take an active part in the Modbury May Fair.

Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to live healthy lives and they benefit from the many opportunities provided by the school for exercise and sport. The school develops in its pupils a range of personal skills such as confidence and independence, and pupils are making excellent progress in literacy and numeracy. This is preparing them very well for both their next stage of education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers provide very interesting lessons for pupils, using a wide variety of strategies. One pupil reported that, 'Our teacher is really enthusiastic!' Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of their pupils and they consistently capture their interest and attention. Assessment information, including test results, is used very well to identify the needs of different groups of pupils and they are all provided with suitably challenging work. Work is marked thoroughly and thoughtfully, showing pupils clearly how to improve their work further. Pupils are also encouraged to identify for themselves how to develop their work and this helps them take a keen interest in how they are doing.

Teaching is based on very good subject knowledge. Clear instructions and explanations are provided, often with very good use being made of interactive whiteboards. Relationships are a real strength, with pupils readily turning to teachers and teaching assistants to discuss their work. Lessons are very well planned, and an impressive array of resources is used to benefit pupils' learning. Pupils show great enthusiasm; they have high expectations of their own work, which not only shows high standards of knowledge and understanding, but is also neatly and carefully presented. This work is regularly celebrated in class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is successfully enhanced by a very good variety of educational outings, activities using the resources in the school grounds and visitors to the school. Music is a strong feature in the school and many pupils learn musical instruments as well as joining the flourishing choir. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is based both on subjects and very interesting themes and topics. These contribute very well to pupils' excellent progress. There are good links between subjects and literacy and numeracy are promoted very well in this way. Very careful allowance is made for the needs of different pupils to ensure that they are all learning at an appropriate, and suitably challenging, level. Effective steps have also been taken to introduce topics that capture the interest of boys and benefit their learning. In Reception, the children are provided with a good balance between activities which require them to make choices and more formal tasks. However, whilst good use is made of the outdoor area in developing the children's physical skills, opportunities are sometimes missed to make full use of this facility in other aspects of the curriculum. There is a very strong emphasis through the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills, and the curriculum makes a very good contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The exceptional care, guidance and support provided for pupils contribute well to both their enjoyment and their learning. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their health and safety are outstanding. External agencies are very well used to support vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Child protection procedures are in place and all staff are alert to signs that any pupil might be anxious or distressed. There are effective arrangements to ensure the smooth entry of pupils into the school, as well as into secondary

school when they leave. Parents are very appreciative of the good work of the staff and they greatly value the caring approach of the school towards their children.

Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe, secure and clean environment. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out. Pupils are taught extensively about the importance of healthy living and they are regularly reminded about the need to take care, for instance when doing physical education. Pupils are provided with most detailed targets for improving their work and, as a result, they have a very clear awareness of the next steps they must take in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the pupils receive a very good education and achieve exceptionally well. The headteacher leads with enthusiasm and skill and her dynamic approach is supported most effectively by other staff with key roles in the school. There is very good communication and teamwork, together with a clear and shared focus on tackling new initiatives. This has led to outstanding improvement since the previous inspection.

In the school's very detailed self-evaluation, senior leaders demonstrate that they have a very good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. For example, they recognised recently that improvements were needed in the standards being attained by some younger boys. Very suitable actions have been taken to remedy this situation. The school's overall view of itself, however, is modest. This is because it is always trying to improve further.

The work of the governing body is outstanding. Governors are regular visitors to the school and they are active in monitoring the financial position and the overall progress of the school improvement plan. They readily exercise their role of critical friend whenever the need should arise. School leaders have built strong links with a range of organisations such as the pre-school, the church and local community groups. The school also regularly obtains the views of parents and pupils and these are taken into account during policy reviews.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

19 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Modbury Primary School, Modbury, PL21 0RB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to the school council, and I really enjoyed joining you in assembly. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in an outstanding school, where you are doing exceptionally well with your work.

These things are some of the strengths of the school:

- Teaching is excellent and you are provided with interesting and informative lessons.
- You have a very clear idea about how to improve your work.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are excellent.
- You really enjoy the wide range of activities that the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take very great care of you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

This is what the school has been asked to improve:

- Provide more opportunities for the children in the Reception class to use the outdoor area.

You can all help the school as well, by continuing to work hard and continuing to show very good attitudes towards your work.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Best wishes

Martin James Lead inspector

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Lead inspector