

# Babbacombe Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 113472              |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Torbay              |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 325823              |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 25–26 February 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Mark Lindfield HMI  |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>  | Primary                           |
| <b>School category</b>   | Community                         |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 4–11                              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed                             |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |                                   |
| School (total)   | 201                               |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0                                 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years                                     | 0                                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body                |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Wendy Ayton                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Caroline Labrum                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 5 June 2005                       |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected          |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected          |
| <b>School address</b>  | Quinta Road<br>Torquay<br>TQ1 3RN |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 01803 329131                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>  | 01803 322507                      |

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|--------------------------|---------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is an average size school serving its local area but with some pupils from further afield, including some from socially disadvantaged areas. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at the usual time is above average. A Reception class provides for children aged four and five in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## 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. It is an inclusive school with a strong family ethos which permeates into all areas. A close and supportive staff team provides good pastoral support for pupils. Parents recognise these as strong features, with one reporting, for example, that staff provide a 'very nurturing and caring environment'. Pupils make very good spiritual progress and have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They show good levels of personal development. Their levels of attendance are only average despite the concerted efforts of the school to address and improve this aspect. The school's rate of attendance is affected by the high proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.

Progress across the school is good because teaching is consistently good in each year group. Standards have risen over the last three years in mathematics and English, especially in reading, and are average in mathematics and above average in English. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading where the majority of pupils gain the highest Level 5. Standards are broadly average in science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The school is highly inclusive and provides good pastoral support for these pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with behavioural and emotional needs. The school makes good use of other professional agencies to provide additional help and guidance.

The curriculum is sound. There are some good features to it with a strong emphasis on developing literacy skills, particularly reading, and on ensuring pupils' excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Lesson planning has an appropriate emphasis on setting work that is at the right level for different pupils. Teachers give good academic guidance, sharing targets well with pupils. Marking regularly identifies areas and points for improvement. Training and support have been well used to increase staff knowledge and confidence and, as a result, teachers show good subject knowledge. Where staff have the confidence to use a more practical approach and encourage independent learning, pupils display more positive attitudes. On a very few occasions, the pace of learning is affected where teachers' expectations of acceptable behaviour are too low.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and regularly reviewed, and the school takes additional care to regulate internet safety. Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities and a number are more actively involved in the school, supporting the teaching of mathematics and reading. The leadership team has overseen a trend of rising standards and provides the school with a good capacity to make further progress. They have good systems for evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and in deploying successful strategies leading to improvements. English and mathematics subject leaders are raising standards through their effective monitoring. They closely track individual pupils' progress and plan intervention strategies to address any lapses. The school's systems to track and monitor pupils' progress in science are not sufficiently rigorous. As a result, though the school has improved the science curriculum, those falling behind are not identified as quickly as in mathematics and English.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress towards their early learning goals in most areas, although their progress in communication, language and literacy is only satisfactory. In the more structured reading and writing sessions, children occasionally lack concentration and they then move

flittingly from task to task without making use of the opportunities on offer. Parents appreciate the weekly opportunity to work alongside their children and support their learning. Pupils make good progress in their personal development as a result. Children show good levels of care and understanding to each other. They play well on their own and with others, taking turns and sharing well.

They are encouraged to adopt healthy practices from an early age. The classroom environment is bright and features attractive displays of children's work. Information and assessments of children's progress are well used to ensure that activities are modified to suit their individual learning needs. Role-play activities are modified according to the interests of children, who enjoy the recent opportunities to become space astronauts or medical staff. Curriculum planning provides for most areas of learning but opportunities for free play and access to the outdoor area are limited by the constraints of the school grounds.

The school recognises that judgements on children's progress in previous years have lacked consistency. The recently appointed leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has benefited from the support and training from the local authority. They have accurately identified areas of weakness and prepared a comprehensive action plan. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has demonstrated the capacity to tackle these areas.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the frequency and improve the recording of science assessments to more rigorously track and monitor pupils' progress.
- Consistently set and apply high expectations of behaviour in lessons and at playtimes.
- Increase pupils' academic progress through improving rates of attendance of persistent absentees.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards have been rising year on year over the last three years. This is because the school has effective strategies in place to address weaknesses. The school's assessment data confirm that progress made across the school from pupils' starting points is good. Pupils are gaining knowledge, skills and understanding at a good rate because teaching has improved and is good across the school. The overall picture is complicated by the proportion of pupils who join the school at a later time, many of whom have very specific learning needs. The majority of pupils with learning difficulties and the few with English as an additional language make good progress, due mostly to the good support provided by dedicated staff. The introduction of practical investigations and independent work in science is helping to ensure that pupils' understanding is secure and books show more able pupils are starting to make good progress. Although the school tracks all pupils' progress carefully in English and mathematics, this is not the case in science. Delays in identifying fluctuations in pupils' scientific progress prevent the swift response that occurs in other subjects.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are eager to talk to visitors about their school and they are enthusiastic about many aspects of its life. They feel that their ideas are listened to and that the school council makes an important contribution in making things better for everyone. Spiritual and moral

understanding is outstanding and pupils are reflective and concerned about the welfare of others. Behaviour in assembly is excellent. They also show good understanding of other faiths through events such as multicultural topic weeks. They are confident that they understand what it means to live in a multicultural Britain. Standards in literacy and numeracy are secure, as are information and communication technology (ICT) skills, preparing them well for their future economic well-being. Pupils show their ability to work in teams and independently, and by the time they leave school are confident about moving on to secondary education. Contribution to the community is good, particularly in the activities of the pupils in acting as peer mediators and health and safety teams. Pupils raise money for charities and the choir is very active in the local community.

Pupils have an outstanding understanding of healthy eating and the importance of exercise. Participation in sport and dance classes is very good. They also show good understanding of water, road and fire safety and the importance of sensible use of the internet. Pupils have a strong understanding of the wider and of environmental issues – using the term carbon footprint with confidence and showing a good understanding of energy saving and the need to avoid waste. Parents have expressed some concerns about behaviour. There are some pupils with challenging behaviour but this is managed well. Overall social development is good and the atmosphere in the school is one of harmony so that pupils feel safe around the school and in the playground, despite the sometimes boisterous play at break and dinnertime. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory and pupils mostly listen and concentrate well. Pupils report their good enjoyment of school and the wide range of after-school clubs and a week's residential trip.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Some particularly effective teaching was observed in literacy, mathematics and science. Assessment procedures are good in mathematics and English, and data are used well by subject leaders and class teachers to set and review targets and monitor the progress of learners in these subjects. Work is marked regularly and provides pupils with helpful strategies for improvement. Lesson planning is good and teachers use support staff well. There has been a clear focus on raising standards in the core subjects and teachers' good planning ensures work is well matched to the needs of different pupils. Pupils are given some opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work and this was used particularly successfully in an English lesson on Little Red Riding Hood and in a science lesson on forces. Use of ICT is effective, particularly in whole-class teaching. Pupils in both key stages show good skills as independent learners and work well in pairs and groups. Practical activities, for example in science, are very popular and pupils concentrate well in this type of activity. Science books show a good focus on investigation and on developing skills in reporting. Classrooms have good displays and these contribute well to learning because they both celebrate pupils' work and help set targets for improvement. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and usually manage pupils and resources well. Learning is less successful where the pace of lessons is slow and teachers are not clear enough about their expectations of behaviour.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory with some clear strengths. There are a wide range of clubs and enrichment activities available for pupils. There is a very clear emphasis on developing skills in literacy, particularly in reading, through regular guided reading sessions. The curriculum for science and that for citizenship provide valuable opportunities for pupils to find out about health and safety and the environment. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, but the school's move to a new curriculum is not fully established and, as yet, the routes pupils will take through it are not sufficiently clear. The curriculum effectively develops writing across many subjects with some excellent examples in Year 4 science books. There is also a clearer focus on developing skills in mathematics but not enough focus on the opportunities for this in other subjects. The recent focus on science through practical activities is proving popular with pupils because they enjoy hands on activities. Systems in place to monitor its effectiveness lack rigour and resources are limited.

By Year 6, pupils are confident in using ICT, particularly for research, although the school recognises that some of the computers are coming to the end of their usefulness. French is introduced in Key Stage 1 and taught regularly in Key Stage 2. The particular needs of most of the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met effectively. The school's links with other organisations provide good opportunities for pupils who have identified gifts and talents. Links with local secondary schools help to ensure continuity and progression so that Year 6 pupils are confident about moving into Key Stage 3.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff work hard to ensure pupils' happiness and well-being. Parents believe that pastoral care is particularly good with one parent writing that "My children have settled in well here. They have grown in confidence." Pupils are safe and secure despite the lack of playground space and sometimes their very energetic games. Pupils contribute to the feeling of safety by being friendly and caring – following the good examples set for them by adults within the school. Teachers know pupils well and work closely with parents and outside agencies to promote pupils' welfare. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are looked after well. The social and emotional development programme is very effective in supporting pupils.

Systems for monitoring progress are good and target setting is helping to promote good achievement and progress. Data are readily available and they are used well in mathematics and English. Guidance about academic progress is good because teachers talk to pupils about their work and set targets for them. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the opportunities to assess their own and others' work. All aspects of safeguarding are fully in place; health and safety procedures are thorough and supported by a separate pupils' health and safety committee. The system for monitoring and improving attendance is thorough and robust and pupils are rewarded for good attendance. The school's efforts to reduce persistent absenteeism have been hampered by a lack of external support as there is no appointed local authority education welfare officer.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

In this inclusive and welcoming school, the leadership effectively promotes the personal development and well-being of all learners. Barriers to learning are confronted honestly and supporting structures put in place to encourage and raise the self-esteem and confidence of learners. Training and support for staff have been well used to increase their skills and confidence. Leaders at all levels are more actively engaged in monitoring teaching and learning and have overseen a rise in standards and progress. The school's self-evaluation systems effectively identify strengths and areas for development. Systems to track the progress of individual pupils are used effectively. Core subject leaders analyse a range of data, although science assessments are gathered less frequently and prevent the swift identification of variations in progress seen in other subjects.

The school has completed a comprehensive audit of its contribution to community cohesion. Plans to further promote this aspect within the United Kingdom and more globally await implementation. Governors fulfil their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. A small number are more actively involved in the life of the school and pupils benefit from their presence in school to hear reading and participate in mathematics sessions. Resources for science, ICT and the school's library are good but some are becoming outdated, although the school has plans in place to enhance these in the near future.



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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 |
|---|----------------|

**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   |
| 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?              | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve?   | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 3 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 3 |

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education  | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 2 |
| 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 |

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 2   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 3   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   |
| 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  |

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Babbacombe Church of England Primary School, Torquay, TQ1 3RN.

Thank you for welcoming us into your school and allowing us to see you at work. We enjoyed listening to you telling us about your school, and we were very impressed by the way you behaved in assemblies.

We agree with your parents, who told us that the school looks after you very well. We also understand why you enjoy coming to school, because we know that there is lots for you to do. You do some interesting things in lessons, as we saw, for example, in your science lessons on forces and your English lesson on Little Red Riding Hood. You told us about how much you enjoy the trips and we saw how many of you take part in the after-school clubs. You help the school well, too – for example through the health and safety teams. You have a great understanding of how to stay healthy.

Babbacombe School gives you a good education. Many of you do well in your work, especially with your reading. We saw how the school uses marking and tests to keep an eye on your progress. You are given targets in English and mathematics that help you to know what you need to do your best. Many of you receive help from teaching assistants and we recognise that this helps you to do well, to concentrate in lessons and try your hardest.

We know that the school has worked hard to help you succeed. In order to help you do even better, we have asked the school to work on three things. First, we have asked that the school uses marking and tests from your science work to keep a close eye on how you are doing. Second, we have asked the teachers to make sure that your behaviour is good in all lessons, not just in most of them. Third, you can do your bit to help the school by making sure that you attend school regularly. Some of you are missing a lot of lessons and this is making it hard for you to catch up with your work and to get good results in your tests.

Once again, thank you for your welcome and good luck for the future.

Mark Lindfield HMI