

Torpoint Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111968
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337796
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Ronald Hall

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barry Deacon
Headteacher	Mrs Elisabeth Carney-Haworth
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 teachers in 17 lessons covering 8 hours of observations. The team held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, looked at data collected by the school on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan and procedures for keeping pupils safe. A range of documentation and pupils' books were scrutinised. A total of 68 questionnaires from parents and carers, and over 20 from the staff were returned and scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of teaching and learning on all groups of pupils
- the impact of leadership and management at all levels on driving the school forward and contributing to school improvement
- the performance of all pupils, especially more able pupils
- the progress of all pupils

Information about the school

Torpoint Nursery and Infant School is larger than most nursery and infant schools, serving an area of some deprivation. The school includes a funded nursery. The school has fewer than the average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are only a few from minority ethnic groups.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Torpoint Nursery and Infant School is an effective and happy school. The pupils and staff feel secure, sharing great pride in their school and its achievements. Pupils enjoy attending. One pupil commented, 'It's lovely, everyone is so friendly.'

Attendance is above the national average. The new and innovative curriculum is broad, well balanced and well organised, presenting the pupils with a wide range of interesting and highly relevant learning opportunities. A topic-based approach gives the pupils opportunities to study a wide of interesting topics such as earthquakes and volcanoes. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. The pupils and vast majority of the staff feel the school is highly supportive and staff and pupils do all they can to make newcomers welcome. One staff member stated, 'The school has come a long way since the appointment of the headteacher. The school has a vision and unity.' The pupils contribute positively to the school and local community. They are very polite, well mannered and positive about their education. Although pupils study a range of places, cultures and religions this is not currently giving the pupils a full understanding of community cohesion.

The school has gone through major changes over the past two years. The inspirational and highly dedicated headteacher, supported by the leadership team, has not only regenerated its very positive reputation within the community but improved attainment to above national levels. This is due to the very high expectations of the headteacher, staff and governors, whose single vision has resulted in good and in some cases outstanding pupil outcomes. The school development plan is well focused and informed by accurate self-evaluation. Leaders and managers have created an Early Years Foundation Stage, providing an outstanding start to the pupils' education. The excellent work carried out with those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities means they are making outstanding progress given their starting points. The school has worked hard to improve attainment and progress in all subjects, resulting in pupils attaining higher than national averages in all subjects. More able pupils, however, do not currently achieve as well as they should in the core subjects, but the school has robust plans to correct this. Due to the changes made throughout the school and improvement in the attainment of pupils, the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

The focus and drive of the headteacher and staff have rightly been focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning to raise the pupils' attainment, which are now good overall. However, the modelling of exemplary teaching is not yet sufficiently well utilised to give consistency of teaching and learning. Children enter the Nursery with below age-expected levels and make good progress to enter the Reception class in

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line with expectations. Children's attainment at the end of Reception is above average and at times well above. This continues throughout the school, with pupils leaving with levels above national averages. The school has generated a range of useful and in-depth data on individual pupils' performance and has used these effectively to raise attainment and standards in general. Although planning, marking and assessment are having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment, the leadership team's skills are not developed well enough to ensure effective monitoring and improvement of their areas of responsibility. The school is aware of this issue and has robust plans for improvement. Torpoint Nursery and Infant School has good links with other local schools, which it uses effectively to provide a range of learning opportunities. The school provides too few opportunities, however, for pupils grow in their understanding of a range of cultures. There are good links with a wide range of external agencies. The work carried out with the special needs specialists during the early intervention work in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the training the school carries out for other early years settings are prime examples of this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that planning throughout the school provides sufficient challenge for all pupils, and that marking is used effectively to support the pupils' understanding of how to improve.
- Develop the skills of the senior leadership team so they are all able to take full responsibility for their areas of the school.
- Provide pupils with in-depth opportunities to study a range of cultures nationally and internationally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

In most lessons observed pupils made good progress, and in some lessons they made outstanding progress, with achievement for all groups being at least good. In an excellent English lesson pupils were analysing their earlier performance in a class assembly. The teacher used a range of skills and techniques to engage all pupils fully. They were clearly focused on the learning objectives and their own targets. The lesson was lively and challenging throughout, with the pupils clearly enjoying the lesson, and relationships were excellent. Good use was made of partner and group work with pupils commenting constructively on each other's performance and challenging each other as to how it could be improved. This resulted in all pupils making excellent progress and learning valuable communication and social skills for their future development.

The very early intervention to improve the education for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is an outstanding feature of the school. These pupils now make progress at least in line with their peers and sometimes even better. Pupils value both the support and the resources available to enable them to overcome their difficulties. Throughout the school, pupils are confident, polite and enthusiastic in their learning, particularly so where teaching is at its best. Pupils play a vital role in the life of the

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school and community, as members of a very active school council, which works to raise money for numerous causes. They are increasingly involved in the development of the school and enjoy their responsibilities.

The pupils enjoy their learning, which is reflected in their good and improving attendance. They demonstrate good social skills and are polite and helpful both to each other and to adults alike. The pupils' spiritual, social and moral understanding is good and the effect of this can be seen in all they do and the way they behave.

Pupils have an inquisitive approach to other cultures and faiths. Although the pupils' understanding of other cultures and the diversity within this country is developing, this is not yet of sufficient depth. The school has the Healthy School award, which reinforces and develops pupils' outstanding understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of staying safe and are confident in raising any concerns.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge and the skills to use different approaches to enhance lessons. Good use is made of a range of resources and equipment, such as

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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interactive whiteboards and computers, to help make lessons fun and interesting. In outstanding lessons, the level of challenge and pace enthuse and motivate the pupils. Where lessons are satisfactory, the pace is slower and the pupils are unclear of their learning objective. Generally, good use is made of partner and group work and pupils find this informative and helpful in forming ideas. Pupils generally know their lesson objectives but these are not consistently reinforced during lessons or through the marking and assessment processes. Thus, in some classes opportunities are missed to reinforce learning and gain an accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers set targets for their pupils and their progress is monitored, which has helped towards the improvement in pupils' progress throughout the school. Middle managers, however, do not monitor planning or targets effectively enough to ensure the highest level of challenge for all.

The innovative and imaginative changes in, and approach to, the curriculum have resulted in its supporting learning to a much greater degree than previously. Staff have worked hard to develop and introduce an approach which intermixes skills, knowledge and understanding in a way that allows pupils to think and learn in a broader way. There is good use of visits and visitors to enhance learning, and resources are carefully selected to support and develop understanding. There is a range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities that enrich and enhance the pupils' learning opportunities. For those for whom learning does not come so easily, the school has developed a very personal approach, effectively matching the curriculum and its content to the needs of the individual. This is further supported by excellent inter-agency links, which ensure that the needs of these pupils are fully met. The school is a very happy, caring and supportive environment. Pupils feel very safe and generally free from difficulties such as bullying.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly effective headteacher has a clear vision for improvement, which is successfully communicated to and shared by most staff. Senior leaders know the school well and have accurately identified its strengths and weaknesses. With clear knowledge of its areas for development, senior leaders plan appropriately for improvement. They are well supported by knowledgeable, active and supportive governors, who increasingly challenge and monitor all aspects of the school's work. Middle managers are not yet

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effectively involved in monitoring target setting, planning and marking processes. This has resulted in inconsistent application throughout the school, with the more able not always achieving their best. The leadership team has developed a robust plan to overcome this.

The school makes good use of a range of partnerships, such as its partner schools, to help support and develop staff and provide learning and other opportunities for the pupils. Links with the local colleges provide a range of expertise to enhance learning within the school.

The school successfully promotes equal opportunities, does not discriminate and is very inclusive. School principles are well modelled and taught by all staff, and have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and personal development. The school promotes local community cohesion well, as local links are very strong and the pupils' responsible attitudes and behaviour in and around school reinforce the school ethos and teaching. However, pupils have insufficient understanding of other cultures and the effects they have on our society, both from a national and international perspective.

Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and both staff and pupils state that they feel very safe and secure in school. There are excellent safety and security systems in place for online learning and pupils understand the need for these measures well.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children, and especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well and

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make good progress towards the early learning goals. This is due to consistently good teaching. A prime example was a session related to colour, where a wide range of activities were used to gain the children's attention and interest. Careful and thoughtful questioning and interaction between the adults and children resulted in good and at times outstanding responses and language use from the children. One child explained, 'The water makes the colour paddles change and if we put more than one together we make even more colours.' There is very good use of observations to improve learning and to inform future planning.

Children acquire the qualities they need to enable them to make good progress in developing the skills they require in the future. This is developed through the consistent use of routines, giving children responsibility for small tasks and allowing them to initiate their own activities, so that they can be confident enough to make appropriate decisions and choices. Children demonstrate how to stay safe and healthy through their good and sometimes outstanding behaviour. Relationships between peers, children and adults are very good. Excellent positive role models reinforce and develop this further.

Assessment is used effectively throughout by all staff, who carefully monitor children's progress and record it in their 'Learning Journeys'. Group and individual observations are utilised effectively to create baseline judgements. The excellent leadership gives a clear direction, with a strong focus on achievement. Transition arrangements, both into and out of the provision are strong and these are closely linked to the strong relationships with parents and carers. There are good links with external agencies for staff development and to ensure that the needs of all children are met. The monitoring role of the leadership and management is fully embedded, allowing leadership to take every opportunity to refine and enhance practice further. All policies and safeguarding procedures are in place and meet requirements.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires, or who spoke to the inspection team, are overwhelmingly supportive of and happy with the school. They feel the school is well led and has a strong and capable staff team. As one parent commented, 'We consider ourselves lucky to have such professional teachers in charge of our children.' Parents and carers feel the school is warm and supportive, with a positive learning atmosphere. One reply stated, 'The headmistress is very approachable and open to suggestions.'

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They feel pupils make good progress, although a few felt this was not the case for all pupils. A small minority feels that communication could be better between school and home. The school has taken note of such comments and is assessing how improvements could be made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Torpoint Nursery and Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 333 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	74	17	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	68	22	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	54	28	41	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	59	22	32	4	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	43	63	22	32	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	53	26	38	4	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	53	26	38	4	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	50	25	37	1	1	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	57	25	37	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	38	32	47	6	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	43	32	47	4	6	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	36	53	21	31	2	3	6	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	62	23	34	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Torpoint Nursery and Infant School, Torpoint, PL11 2LU

Thank you for making the inspection team feel so welcome. Your polite and very helpful attitude towards us helped to make our visit very enjoyable. We were especially impressed by your confident and positive approach and the pride you take in your school. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. You contribute to your local school community well and take pleasure in raising the reputation of the school. Many of you highlighted how safe and happy you felt in school because the teachers and staff take good care of you all. You also stated you felt yours was a good school and we agree with your views.

The excellent relationships you have built up with the teachers and other staff encourage you to try hard and always do your best in lessons. The links you have with schools locally give you a wide range of opportunities to broaden your understanding and knowledge of the world. Your excellent headteacher, governors and staff have all worked hard to make your school successful. In order to make your school even better, we have asked school leaders to work on the following things:

- make sure you receive at least good teaching in all your lessons
- mark your work better so that you know how to improve it in the future
- ensure your teachers plan lessons that make your learning challenging and enjoyable for all of you.

I wish you all the best in the future and I am sure you will all continue to help make your school an even better place for you to learn.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall

Lead inspector

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