

# Priory Roman Catholic Primary School, Torquay

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113474
<b>Local Authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	357362
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alexander Baxter

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	180
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pat Ward
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Barreto
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	St Catherine's Road Torquay TQ1 4NZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and seven teachers were observed. The inspectors also attended collective worship, observed break and lunchtime activities and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are potentially vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, 32 parental questionnaires, 15 staff questionnaires and 87 pupil questionnaires were analysed.

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

- The children's skills and needs on entry and whether progress is equally as good for all groups of pupils.
- The school's efforts to raise attainment in mathematics and science, especially the performance of more able pupils.
- Pupils' attendance and the effectiveness of the school's work with parents to improve it.

## Information about the school

This school is below average in size. Most pupils are White British, but there is an increasing proportion of pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. Of these, an increasing number speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are above average and include a high proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected. Among others, the school holds Healthy School and Active Mark awards.

**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

- Priory Roman Catholic Primary is a good and improving school with a combination of good features and a few very notable and significant strengths. These include the excellent care, guidance and support which are provided for the pupils and the high quality assistance given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, the school successfully inducts an increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom arrive with very limited English language skills. All of these factors reflect a determined and welcoming commitment to inclusion, which is promoted very strongly by the headteacher, ably supported by staff and the governing body.
- As a result, following a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most pupils make good progress during their time in this school. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average overall, but in response to strengthened teaching, an increasing number of more able pupils are now reaching higher National Curriculum levels, especially in English. Following a dip in standards in mathematics and science in 2009, effective actions have been taken to lift pupils' understanding in these subjects. Achievement continues to rise, although pupils' basic numeracy and investigative skills are not always good enough.
- A range of high-quality opportunities help pupils to live healthy lives and to make good contributions to the school and wider community. The school works hard to develop good links with parents and a range of other partners, especially in support of pupils' welfare and special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school lies at the heart of its community and by providing pupils with diverse cultural visits and links promotes wider community cohesion effectively.
- The school has made good gains since the previous inspection in developing the quality of teaching and learning. The large majority is now good and occasionally it is outstanding. However, the quality of teaching of pupils of average ability and of pupils' involvement in setting and reviewing their own targets is more variable.
- Most pupils attend well. However, the school's open welcome to pupils from a wide area, often offered to families whose children have failed to settle in schools elsewhere, has at times, because of persistent absence, reduced attendance to broadly average. The school is having some success in engaging with these pupils. Even so, rigorous monitoring of the reasons for absence remains an area which the school is seeking to strengthen further.
- The headteacher, senior managers and the governing body provide a strong lead for the school. They use self-evaluation well to tackle issues of concern and to promote improvement. This is evident in the continued development of the school's

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facilities and resources, for example in the enlarged covered area for children in Reception and a new network of notebook computers. Rising levels of achievement, especially in English, together with improvements in teaching and learning and the use of assessment also reflect the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

By the end of the current school year, to have put in place the following.

- Further develop pupils' basic skills, especially their recall and use of number facts and their ability to undertake investigations in science by:
  - sustaining a suitable level of challenge and practical learning activity matched to pupils' abilities
  - involving pupils in setting and evaluating their own targets so that they know more precisely what they have to do to improve.
- Improve pupils' attendance by sustaining firm action to reduce persistent absence and consulting with parents more closely to reduce absence.

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

Observations of lessons show the benefits of the pupils' good behaviour and well-planned lessons in helping them to make good progress. From slightly below average starting points on entry into the Reception class, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen and is broadly average. Patterns of good achievement across the school are increasingly consistent. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in response to excellent support, are enabled to make progress in line with that of their peers. Vulnerable pupils and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve well during their time in this school. A scrutiny of pupils' work, especially of their writing, also shows good improvement stemming from helpful guidance and adult support. At times, though, written comments in teachers' marking are not always matched sharply enough to pupils' understanding. As a result, for example, although there has also been some improvement in mathematics and science, basic number and investigative skills, particularly of pupils of average ability, are not always sufficiently developed.

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and their responses to the inspection questionnaire, and when interviewed, reflect their enjoyment of learning. The pupils' happy demeanor shows that they feel safe and welcome at the school. Pupils behave well, in and out of lessons, and this also shows that caring staff are very effective in supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. Attendance is average and is showing improvement so far this term. The school's very caring ethos makes a very supportive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and to their understanding of global issues and diversity. For example, acts of collective worship are particularly uplifting occasions, which instill the pupils with a strong sense of community. Consequently, by the time they leave school, pupils' good academic achievement and, in

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particular, their genuine regard for others, prepare them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage behaviour very effectively and, by promoting warm relationships with the pupils, they create a positive ethos for learning in all lessons. Teachers and their capable assistants make good use of assessment and effective questioning to move learning forward. All staff provide high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils at an early stage of learning English also receive excellent guidance. There is a continuing improvement in the challenge offered to more able pupils, including in the written guidance evident in the marking of pupils' work. However, there is some variation when there is too much whole-class discussion. This means that some pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve and this slows their progress. Most lessons continue at a good pace. This was seen, for example, during a numeracy lesson in Year 4 when pupils explored negative numbers, and in a Year 6 literacy lesson where pupils edited each other's written texts. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to enthuse and stimulate pupils, but a new supply of

<sup>1</sup> 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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notebook computers has yet to extend pupils' skills to the full.

The curriculum is enriched by a stimulating range of clubs and useful links with the church and local community and these are reflected in their Healthy School and Active Mark awards. In particular, pupils' self-confidence and social skills are enriched significantly by involvement in activities such as the breakfast and after-school clubs. However, pupils' numeracy and investigative skills are not always promoted to best effect across the range of subjects. The outstanding care pupils receive in school is underpinned by the diligence and breadth of staff skills, their willingness to seek specialist support and by the pupils' free access to very sensitive guidance and 'time out' in the 'Space 2 Be' room. The school is having some success this term in lifting attendance, including by working closely with the local authority's attendance officer. The school continues to focus on improving attendance and recognises that, by working more closely with parents, more could be done to reduce absence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides an inspirational lead in promoting an inclusive ethos and in maintaining a strong focus on continued improvement. She receives good support from the governing body and from all the staff, who share fully the values evident throughout the school. The governing body is also particularly supportive of the school's close links with the church and local community. The work of the learning mentor and other senior leaders of special educational needs are strengths of the school. Self-evaluation is effective and makes good use of carefully gathered information about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress through the school. As a result, teaching is effective and pupils' needs are identified and addressed well at an early stage. Partnerships with parents and with outside organisations are good. They provide very good support for pupils' personal development and, alongside the school's diligent child-protection and adult-vetting procedures, ensure that the pupils' welfare is safeguarded effectively. Staff and the governing body work hard to sustain a welcoming school community in which equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are well secured. The school fosters community cohesion well. There are very close links with the church and the local area and effective national and international links, for example with a more culturally diverse school in London and through its Filipino and Polish families.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's skills on entry vary from year to year, but most often they are below those expected for their age, especially in social skills and aspects of language development. Currently, though, a capable group of children is having a very good start. Good leadership and excellent first links with parents help the children settle very confidently and provide a boost to their successful learning. Generally, children make good progress across the areas of learning because provision for teaching and learning is consistently good. Very caring staff promote the children's care and welfare extremely well. Staff's use of assessment, to get to know children's strengths and weaknesses and to target their future learning, and their encouragement of children's understanding of words are other very strong features. Aided by having free access to the covered area, children benefit from a good blend of adult-led activities and those they can choose for themselves. For example, children enjoy investigating with magnets, magnifying glasses and binoculars and readily share their observations with adults and with each other. The school recognises the need to further extend the learning opportunities provided in the newly extended covered area.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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	2



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## Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers who returned their questionnaires are very happy and have full confidence in the work of the school. A typically supportive comment, also reflected in the comments of those interviewed, was, 'This school has a very caring atmosphere in which every child is treated as equally important.' Of the additional written comments in the relatively small number of questionnaires returned, several were appreciative about the diligent work of staff in the school. Notably, all the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed full agreement with 11 of the 13 statements. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and whether the school keeps them sufficiently informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence shows that pupils behave well, that the school manages behaviour very effectively and keeps parents and carers well informed, including about pupils' progress.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Priory Roman Catholic Primary 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	84	5	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	29	91	3	9	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	56	11	34	3	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	56	11	34	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	72	9	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	56	14	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	56	14	44	0	0	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)	22	69	10	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	53	15	47	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	38	16	50	3	9	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	53	15	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	72	9	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	81	6	19	0	0	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Priory Roman Catholic Primary School, Torquay, TQ1 4NZ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Special thanks go to the two groups of pupils who so willingly took time to talk with one of the inspection team. We were extremely impressed by the excellent care provided for you by the staff of the school. We have no hesitation in agreeing with your headteacher that Priory is a good school that continues to improve.

These are some of the good things we found.

- As a result of good teaching and learning, you make good progress and enjoy your time at school.
- The school works well with your parents and with other groups to ensure that those who need a lot of support can enjoy and benefit from school just as much as everyone else.
- You behave well and say that you feel safe at school.
- You mix well together and are very considerate of each other's needs as you experience an interesting and stimulating range of activities.
- well with your parents and with other groups to ensure that those who need a lot of support can enjoy and benefit from school just as much as everyone else.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work well together. They have a good understanding of the school and know what to do next to continue to improve it further.

To help the school to improve we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- help you to learn number facts, such as multiplication tables; to become better at investigating in science; and to improve how you set and review your targets for improvement
- improve the attendance of those pupils who do not come to school regularly

You can help to make the school even better by really thinking about your targets and working hard to achieve them.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead Inspector

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