

Tavistock Community Primary & Nursery School

Plymouth Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8BX

Inspection dates

18–19 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- There has been a decline in outcomes since the previous inspection due to pupils not making good enough progress in writing by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils do not make good progress in writing in key stage 2 because teachers do not have high expectations of what they can achieve.
- The quality of teaching and learning across key stage 2 is too uneven, other than in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are not being effectively supported or challenged.
- Senior leaders do not check the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour. As a result, they do not deal with weaknesses in teaching quickly enough.
- Governors have not intervened swiftly to stem the decline in standards or to ensure that additional funding is used effectively.
- Middle leaders do not have sufficient skills or knowledge to hold others to account for improving teaching and learning.
- Provision for pupils in the enhanced resource base does not consistently meet their needs.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are supported skilfully by teachers and teaching assistants. They leave the Reception class well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are good. Pupils enjoy their learning and are very proud of their school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1 is good.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of faiths and cultures that are different to their own.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the judgements leaders make about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum using a wide range of evidence of pupils' progress and work
 - ensuring that leaders, including governors and those responsible for the resource base, develop the skills they need to be able to check on the progress of pupils and groups of pupils accurately
 - ensuring that, where teaching is weak, swift action is taken by leaders to improve pupils' progress
 - ensuring that the curriculum is planned so that pupils in key stage 2 develop the depth of knowledge, skills and understanding they require for the next stage of their education
 - making more effective use of funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that governors use what they know and understand about the school to hold leaders to account more robustly.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 2, by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise their expectations of what all pupils can achieve, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and disadvantaged and the most able pupils
 - build upon and share the good practice in key stage 1.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Middle and senior leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not sharp enough across the curriculum. Leaders are aware of a decline in standards since the previous inspection, but have not taken swift enough action to deal with the weaknesses in teaching.
- Leaders have been too slow in identifying that some teachers have low expectations of pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics. As a result, pupils are not developing a range of knowledge and skills to prepare them for the next stage of their education.
- The impact of good curriculum planning can be seen in some areas. For example, high-quality art permeates the school. However, the curriculum is not planned or delivered in sufficient depth in some subject areas.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not used as well as it could be. As a result, some pupils make good progress but others do not. Furthermore, the strategy for pupil premium does not meet requirements. Leaders acknowledge, correctly, that there is more to be done to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils' work in books and current assessment information show that pupil premium funding is having some impact upon raising pupils' achievement. Where this has been effective, pupils have made accelerated progress. However, in some year groups, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are not making enough progress based on their starting points.
- Leadership for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the resource base is not precise enough. Systems to check pupils' progress are not effective in improving outcomes. The teaching and learning of this group of pupils are not checked with enough rigour to inform pupils' progress.
- Following low writing outcomes in 2016, the local authority intervened and offered the school support. However, the local authority's evaluation of the school's work is overly positive. It lacks in-depth scrutiny across all areas of the school, including of leaders' ability to evaluate the school's performance accurately.
- Leaders' work to promote British values is effective. The school council is active in its role, and pupils report that they feel that they are listened to and have 'influenced change', for example, with the addition of 'reading boxes' at break- and lunchtimes.
- School leaders reacted to recent acts of terrorism by inviting into school a range of speakers from different faiths. As a result, pupils decided to adopt the slogan 'everybody is different, but all are equal'.

- Leaders use the additional funding for physical education and sport to good effect. Teachers have worked alongside expert coaches and received training to improve the quality of their teaching. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons. Furthermore, the funding has been used to enhance wider provision and the school has had many successes across a wide range of sports, including winning the local swimming gala in 2017.
- Leaders ensure that performance management systems and processes are in place for teachers and provide appropriate training opportunities. As a result, current pupils' progress information for 2017 shows some improvement.
- Parents are positive about the work of school leaders. Many parents who met with inspectors or responded to the Parent View questionnaire were supportive of the school and its leadership. A typical comment was, 'Tavistock Community Primary and Nursery School is a special place.'
- A very large proportion of staff who responded to the online questionnaire believe that the school is well led and managed.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been proactive in holding leaders to account for the lack of progress that some pupils are making, including children who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Governors understand that improvements have not come about quickly enough. They are aware of what is required to bring about better outcomes for pupils and are determined to sharpen their effectiveness.
- Governors are knowledgeable and ambitious for the school. However, they recognise that their current system for sharing information with other governors is not effective. As a result, they have made plans to ensure greater clarity across the whole governing body.
- Governors are trained regularly and routinely check arrangements for safeguarding. Working with senior leaders, governors foster and ensure a culture of safeguarding at the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The organisation of safeguarding in the school is well considered. For example, there are always members of staff who are present with high levels of training. As a result, pupils report that they feel safe and that they know where to go if they have a concern. They receive regular assemblies and information on how to be safe and stay safe. Their lessons include information on e-safety and potential risks from strangers.
- Staff have regular, up-to-date training and information about how to protect pupils. As a result, staff are alert to the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm and are aware of how to report their concerns. The recording of concerns and information is shared promptly between staff and other agencies.

- Arrangements to check on the suitability of staff and visitors are thorough. The school business manager maintains records carefully, including rigorous pre-employment checks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies too much throughout lower key stage 2, particularly in reading and writing. Teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve and do not always plan learning that is well matched to developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Consequently, as pupils move through key stage 2, their progress is hindered.
- Where teaching is weak in key stage 2, the focus for learning across subjects other than English and mathematics can be confused and pupils do not know what is expected from them or what they have achieved. Subsequently, pupils' standards are low and their work is of a poor quality.
- There are similar inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning in writing. Where there are high expectations, books show a wide range of writing and pupils understand how to improve their work. Some books show, however, that writing skills are not well developed. Pupils do not know what they need to do to improve, and, as a result, do not make the progress they could.
- Teaching of some groups is not consistently good across the school. This is particularly the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and the most able. This is because teachers are not skilled at identifying what these groups need to be successful.
- Some teaching assistants are highly effective in supporting pupils' learning. They are able to check pupils' understanding and challenge their understanding further. However, this is not consistent across the school.
- Reading is taught well across key stage 1. Pupils like reading and make strong progress with the development of their reading and comprehension skills. Pupils are taught phonics effectively. Pupils who read with inspectors used their phonological skills adeptly to help them with words that were unfamiliar or tricky.
- Staff have received additional training to strengthen their mathematical understanding and delivery of the curriculum. As a result, the teaching of mathematics is a relative strength. Pupils have good opportunities to solve problems and develop their mathematical reasoning.
- Staff promote good relationships and pupils want to please their teachers. Teachers ask relevant questions and build upon pupils' answers. They encourage pupils to share their ideas with each other.
- Learning in the classroom is reinforced by suitable homework. Pupils report that they enjoy the homework that has been set and it helps them understand their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are friendly and polite. They relate well to one another in a school that is free from discrimination and intolerance.
- Pupils say that they feel happy and safe at school. Parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, agree. Pupils trust adults in school and say that their concerns are responded to swiftly and taken seriously. Pupils are consistent in their view that infrequent bullying is dealt with swiftly and attentively by staff.
- Pupils report that they value the trust placed in them by adults to take on extra responsibilities. They talk positively about the democratic process to be elected as a school councillor or house captain.
- Pupils say that they enjoy taking part in school performances, and trips and visits, particularly to London, which all benefit their social development.
- Pupils respect each other and enjoy learning about different faiths, beliefs and cultures. This reflects how well the school promotes pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Work in pupils' books shows a good understanding of other faiths.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or an education, health and care plan are provided with a high level of care. Parents who spoke with inspectors strongly endorse this view.
- The breakfast club provides a warm and welcoming environment for pupils to prepare for the school day. Adults place the highest priority on pupils' safety and well-being. However, despite a wide menu, there are too few healthy options.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils who can find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are well supported. Occasionally, pupils are not as focused on their work as they could be. However, they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils take pride in their school. Compelling displays of their artwork show their many interests. The pupil questionnaire shows that the vast majority of pupils are happy in school and would recommend it to others.
- There were no incidents of poor or disruptive behaviour seen during the inspection. Pupils enjoy listening to each other and value each other's views.
- Attendance over time has improved to be in line with the national averages. More pupils are attending school regularly, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across different year groups is too variable, particularly in lower key stage 2.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, pupils made significantly less progress in writing than other pupils nationally with the same starting points. The school's assessment information for current pupils shows that progress in reading and writing is improving but remains too inconsistent, especially in key stage 2.
- In 2016, by the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils had made significantly less progress in reading and writing, particularly pupils from low starting points in key stage 1. The school's performance information for current pupils shows that disadvantaged pupils' progress is variable across different year groups and subjects.
- In 2016, the most able pupils' progress and attainment by the end of key stage 2 in reading and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average, with writing below average. However, inspectors did see some improvement in current pupils' writing performance.
- Pupils make variable progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in art, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE), but do less well in science, geography and history. Teachers do not systematically develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time.
- The progress of pupils supported by the resource base is inconsistent. This is because pupils' individual needs are not always considered carefully enough. The additional support provided does not meet the needs of pupils because the work is not well matched to their specific needs.
- In key stage 1 in 2016, the progress pupils made in English and mathematics from leaving Reception was in line with the national average. Work in books shows that current pupils' performance is aligned fully to the age-expected standards. Teachers have a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils in key stage 1 are challenged to achieve their very best.
- The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 1 who meet the expected standard in phonics has been improving over the last three years. As a result of effective teaching of phonics, the proportion of current pupils meeting the Year 1 expected standard is high, according to the school's assessment information.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision for children in the early years is good. There is strong leadership from the early years leader and a capable team ethos throughout the setting.
- The early years is a constant 'hive' of activity with children purposefully 'buzzing' around their rich curriculum and well-designed activities. Children in the Nursery class are lively and engaged. They are confident to take considered risks in their learning which prepares them well for the Reception class.

- Children are well behaved and work harmoniously with each other. They take turns and are keen to support and help one another. Adults model good manners.
- Children's knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in the early years foundation stage prepare them well for entering key stage 1. Children in the Reception classes are articulate, cooperative, enthusiastic and capable. This enables them to demonstrate skills above what is typical for their age.
- Teachers and support assistants have a good grasp of how to teach phonics. As a result, most children are able fluently and articulately to use their knowledge of letters and sounds by the time they leave the Reception classes.
- Children are well looked after. Staff give children's safety a high priority and make sure that the statutory welfare requirements are met.
- There are positive relationships between parents and the early years staff. A typical comment by parents that represents many views of the early years was, 'My child loves coming to Nursery and is even more excited by the possibility of attending the Reception class.'
- Good teaching provides interesting tasks which stimulate learning well across both the Nursery and Reception classes. Staff provide a suitable balance between tasks that are led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. Tasks build upon children's early basic reading, writing and mathematical skills well.
- Children enter the early years typically with low skills and knowledge for their age. However, for the past three years the proportion of children who reached the level of development expected for children at the end of Reception has been in line with the national average. Current children's work and information provided by the school suggest that the proportion likely to reach the expected level of development in 2017 will remain in line with the national average. However, the progress of disadvantaged children is not as good as other children with similar starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	113265
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10025088

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	441
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Down
Headteacher	Lynnette Selbie
Telephone number	01822 616044
Website	www.tavistock-pri.devon.sch.uk
Email address	admin@tavistock-pri.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 October 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium on its website.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The early years consists of one Nursery class and two Reception classes.
- The school has an area resource base for pupils who have complex special educational needs, including autism spectrum disorder. The resource base currently has six pupils attending it.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below average and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is small.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in lessons and looked at work in a range of books from across the curriculum.
- A meeting was held with different groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school and to listen to pupils with a range of abilities read.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders and four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievement, the school's current assessment information, self-evaluation report, PE and sport premium information, special educational needs report, and a pupil premium strategy plan. They also looked at the school's documents relating to safeguarding, and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector took account of the 167 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 71 responses to the staff questionnaire, and 39 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Matt Middlemore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Mascal	Ofsted Inspector
Justine Hocking	Ofsted Inspector
Anthony Epps	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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