

Brixham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	113390
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	378694
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2012
Lead inspector	Rowena Onions

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Tim Deacon
Headteacher	Melody Easter
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 March 2008
School address	Higher Ranscombe Road Brixham TQ5 9HF
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Introduction

Inspection team

Rowena Onions

Additional inspector

Mark Anderson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons, taught by 10 teachers. Some teaching assistants were also observed at work with pupils. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at data about pupils' progress. In addition, they considered the school improvement plan, reports from the local authority and a range of other documentation. One hundred and thirty responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaire were received and analysed.

Information about the school

This average-sized primary school serves its local area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average, and an above average proportion are at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils' special educational needs include behaviour, emotional and social, speech, language and communication and moderate learning difficulties. Pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are taught in single-age group classes. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. There is a pre-school, which is not managed by the school's governing body, which operates on the same site as the school. Since the school's last inspection, new housing in the area has broadened the social contexts from which pupils come.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. The strong vision of the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils to excel, currently expressed as 'going for gold' is very successfully translated into provision that works to ensure every pupil makes the best possible progress.
- By Year 6, standards are above average. Pupils are articulate, literate and numerate. They are extremely enthusiastic about learning. They have been very successfully taught personal skills, for example the need to persevere when activities are challenging, which set them firmly on the path to success in later life.
- The pupils are a delight to be with. Their ability to consider others, to be thoughtful and compassionate is remarkable. These personal attributes translate into outstanding behaviour. Pupils also demonstrate a clear understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship and are keen to make a contribution to the success of the school.
- Teachers hold high expectations of both their pupils and of themselves. They plan lessons that are both demanding and interesting. This combination very successfully promotes effort, pride in success and a love of learning. A broad and creative curriculum underpins pupils' success in English and mathematics and in a wider range of subjects. Pupils are provided with extensive opportunities to practise and consolidate communication, reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Although there are ample opportunities to apply mathematics skills in this way, these are not yet as extensive.
- The dynamic, determined leadership of the headteacher has created a school that is self-evaluative and forward looking. Very rigorous checking of the quality and impact of teaching constantly seeks out ways in which pupils' achievement can be maximised. As a result, over the last two years, teaching has improved from good to outstanding with consequent increases in pupils' progress.

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What does the school need to do to improve further

- Extend the opportunities pupils have to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below expectations overall and very few meet or exceed these expectations. Rapid progress in the Nursery and Reception classes means that, by the end of the Reception Year, they are enthusiastic, independent learners. This is illustrated well by the concentration and creativeness with which they made pirate ships from junk and the curiosity and joy with which they tested whether these would float. By the end of Reception, many of the children meet the expectations for their age, however, their low starting points mean that only a few exceed these. The rate of progress of higher-attaining pupils has increased because of the focus of recent school improvement work. As a result, an average number of Year 2 pupils are on track to attain higher levels this year and overall standards in Year 2 are set to rise. More-able pupils continue to do well in Years 3 to 6. Challenging work enables them to achieve well and means that a few in Year 6 are on track to attain the higher Level 6 by the end of the year. Less-able pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make strong progress throughout the school narrowing the gap between themselves and their peers nationally. Almost all pupils reach the expected Level 4 or above.

Throughout the school, pupils gain a strong ability to learn. They quickly identify the key skills they will need to help them with an activity. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, they understood the need to justify opinions when looking for clues about a character from an illustration. By the end of the lesson, they demonstrated high quality, well-reasoned thinking. Pupils make strong progress in learning to read. By Year 1, pupils are able to decode words sufficiently well to enable them to read a simple text as a result of careful attention to the development of phonics. With the increase in the number of pupils gaining higher levels this year, standards by the end of Year 2 are on track to be at least average. By Year 6, standards are high.

Pupils are able to apply their communication, reading and writing skills very well. Younger pupils used their reading skills, for example, to research different countries in preparation for writing about them. Older pupils' podcasts on the subject of healthy eating demonstrate strong communication skills. Pupils are able to write in wide and varied contexts. Pupils' very secure grasp of mathematical concepts allows them to demonstrate good capacity to apply skills, for example, when solving problems in a woodland environment. The range of the opportunities to apply mathematical skills is, however, not yet as extensive as that in English. Pupils are not, therefore, able to learn to apply these skills to the same wide extent. The great

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majority of parents and carers agree their children are making good progress and pupils are confident they are helped to rapidly improve.

Quality of teaching

There is a high level of consistency in the way in which pupils are taught. For example, there is an agreed structure to lessons which ensures a good balance of teacher talk and pupil activity. There is a liveliness about the lessons. Teachers plan a wide range of activities that are very frequently practical and collaborative, and which make each lesson distinct and interesting. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, pupils were asked to review their knowledge of adaptation by modelling a playdough creature with characteristics to help it win an Olympic medal! This resulted in both very good revision of scientific knowledge and language and a huge amount of enjoyment. Work to give pupils a language with which to discuss their learning is having significant impact and this allows them to quickly identify how and where to concentrate their efforts. This type of approach has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development by giving them the confidence to take personal responsibility for making good decisions about their own learning. Shared high expectations and strong relationships mean that pupils understand the concept of aspiration and try hard to do as well as they can. Pupils speak very highly of the way in which they are taught, a view with which parents agree.

Teachers use regular, accurate assessments to set tasks that challenge all groups within their classes. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well taught, both in class and in extra support sessions. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution in providing this highly effective extra support. They also contribute significantly when teaching alongside the teachers in class. Pupils know the level at which they are working as well as their target for the end of the year. This, together with detailed, helpful marking, ensures that each is acutely aware of how to improve their work. Additionally, pupils are very willing to discuss and self-assess the quality of their work, allowing them to see for themselves how to improve.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school's ethos and the way the curriculum supports personal development mean that there is an easy discipline, based on mutual respect. Outstanding behaviour allows teachers to give pupils the freedom to get excited, for example cheering when they are successful in playing a game in a phonics lesson, because they know that their pupils will calm down when asked to do so. Pupils actively seek to help and support one another both in class and beyond. Pupils described their school as a 'collaborating' school. The explanation they gave of this was that they work together to learn. Pupils have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the school. They show empathy for others and a strong sense of community. This is carefully nurtured through responsibilities such as being play-leaders and prefects or looking after the school's chickens and ducks. They also feel a sense of belonging to the local community and are, for example, very keen to participate in

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town cultural and sporting events. Pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is very effectively developed, for example, through regular contact with a school in India. Pupils also show very good awareness of the cultural heritage of Great Britain through work such as identifying where a diversity of 'children of the UK just like me' live.

Pupils feel really safe and secure in school, and parents confirm that this is the case. Incidents of bullying of any kind, such as name-calling or cyber-bullying, are extremely rare and pupils show a keen understanding of how to avoid such incidents and what they should do if they occur. Very successful action to improve attendance means that attendance has risen and is now above average. Both the headteacher and pupils identify that this is because pupils like being in school. The opinions of many were summed up by one Year 6 pupil who said, '...the school has been good to me every step of the way'.

Leadership and management

Staff and governors work very closely and productively with a headteacher who shows inspirational leadership and a relentless drive for giving pupils the best possible education. Improvement activities stem from systematic and rigorous checking of the school's provision. School improvement planning links very well with professional development activities and performance management. The success of the initiatives can be seen in a wide number of ways, including the improved progress of more-able pupils and more consistent progress in mathematics. Improvements in the provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes mean that in the last two years, many more have reached expected levels than was previously the case.

Close tracking of the progress of individuals means that any pupil who is not making the progress expected of them is picked up very promptly. Teachers ensure that, both through work in class and through a wide variety of very successful interventions, these pupils' progress is accelerated. The success of this ensures that any form of discrimination is avoided and that there is extremely good equality of opportunity. Governors are both proactive and constructive in the way they support and challenge the school. They have been fully involved in ensuring that the pupils are properly protected and safeguarded. Pupils, parents and carers are listened to and their opinions valued. Pupils in the school council, for example, are party to the school improvement plan and asked to assist the school to meet its targets. Parents voiced the opinion that the school's website needed improvement and the school promptly responded by providing a high quality, highly informative new site.

Curriculum development has been a key priority over the last two years. This has been very effective in securing a curriculum which both supports the rapid learning of basic skills, and interests and excites the pupils. The cross-curricular approach means that work is given relevance and pupils have opportunities to revisit and consolidate skills in a wider context. This is particularly true in English because the broader curriculum planning is literacy based. The school is right in wishing to look at

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ways of further extending such opportunities in mathematics. Children in the Reception Year are provided with a well-balanced programme of indoor and outside work. Throughout the school pupils have extensive opportunities to be creative, both artistically and musically, as well as to engage in regular physical activity. The curriculum combines with the ethos of the school to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development especially well. The very strong determination to succeed, the strong staff, governor and pupil team, and the record of successful improvements shows there is excellent capacity to improve further.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brixham Church of England Primary School, Brixham TQ5 9HF

We hugely enjoyed our time in your school. Thank you very much indeed for helping us and making us feel so welcome. One of the highlights was talking to you about what you think. You will be pleased to know that we agree with you that yours is an outstanding school. We think you are very lucky to have such an exceptional headteacher, who fully deserves the respect you and your parents have for her.

These are some of the things we liked best.

- You make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and by Year 6 attain above average standards.
- You are exceptionally well taught. Your teachers work with you to make sure that you learn as well as you can.
- You are taught to talk about, and take responsibility for, your own learning.
- The excellent contribution you make to ensure your school community runs well, not least because you behave so considerately.
- The way everyone takes care of you and the way you support each other.
- The way your headteacher, governing body and other staff try hard to make your school as successful as possible.

To help you make even better progress, we have asked your headteacher, governors and teachers to give you even more opportunity to use your mathematics skills when you are learning in other subjects.

You can help by continuing to work hard and supporting your teachers and each other.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions
Lead inspector

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