

# Tor Bridge Primary School

Miller Way, Estover, Plymouth PL6 8UJ

## Inspection dates

2–3 March 2016

## 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	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not secured the improvements necessary since the previous inspection to ensure that all pupils are receiving a good quality of education. The improvements in Years 5 and 6 have not been matched elsewhere.
- Last year, pupils made good progress across Year 6 so that the proportion achieving expected standards in reading and mathematics was above average. Similar progress and attainment are not evident in other year groups and subjects.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have not made enough progress over time. Consequently, standards in key stage 1 have remained below the national average over the past three years.
- Until recently, the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has not equipped younger pupils with the knowledge they need to read and spell accurately.
- Too often, work planned for lower ability pupils, does not challenge or support them to achieve well.
- Checks on children’s learning in Reception are not routinely used to inform further learning activities in order to help them to make the progress they are capable of.
- Information from checks on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils’ learning is not used to bring about improvements swiftly enough.
- Leaders and governors do not routinely check the impact of the school’s safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The accuracy of information provided to governors by school leaders is not checked carefully enough. This hinders governors’ ability to hold school leaders to account and check if actions in the school development plan are working.

### The school has the following strengths

- Parents are positive about the school. They feel welcome and included in an increasing number and range of school activities.
- Pupils’ behaviour and attitudes to learning are typically good. They are happy, enjoy coming to school and feel safe.
- Bright, engaging teaching in upper key stage 2 is motivating pupils and helping them catch up on previous lost learning and reach the standards expected for their age.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching, including in the early years, by making sure that teachers:
  - plan activities at the right level to meet the needs of the full range of abilities within their classes
  - check pupils' understanding in lessons and adapt tasks so that pupils make good progress from their starting points
  - provide guidance to teaching assistants so that their support helps pupils to make the progress they are capable of and work things out for themselves.
  
- Improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - evaluating and monitoring more precisely the impact of actions taken to raise pupils' standards and improve teaching, especially in key stage 1
  - using performance management more effectively to ensure that staff are held to account for the academic progress made by pupils
  - making certain that governors check the accuracy of the information they receive on the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement
  - regularly monitoring the impact of the school's safeguarding procedures to ensure that procedures to keep children safe are known and consistently applied by all staff.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have not ensured that the overall quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good. Pupils are now making good progress during Years 5 and 6 and catching up on previous lost learning. However, the improvements evident in upper key stage 2 are not reflected elsewhere. Pupils' progress throughout Reception to Year 4 does not match this good level.
- Leaders' strategies to secure improvement focus too much on the completion of agreed activities but do not always confirm that the impact of these activities is effective. For example, the emphasis placed on reviewing safeguarding policies does not place sufficient emphasis on evaluating how well the policies ensure that all staff are clear about safeguarding procedures.
- Systems are in place to manage the performance of staff. However, leaders do not evaluate these systems effectively enough to ensure that teachers are fully accountable for the academic progress that pupils make.
- Subject leaders are keen and passionate about their subjects. They are at the early stages of developing their understanding of the expectations of the revised national curriculum. As a result, subject leaders' work to support and challenge teachers in assessment without levels is ongoing.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Leaders work with a wide range of partners, including staff from the on-site secondary school, to broaden pupils' experiences of the world. This includes visits and themed events, such as Year 5's recent 'War Horse' work. Collective worship and religious education lessons help pupils develop their understanding of, and respect for, different cultures and religions. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a secure understanding of tolerance, democracy and the rule of law.
- The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including residential visits and after-school clubs. These enrich pupils' experiences, enhance their personal development and support them in following a healthy lifestyle. Leaders use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and have appropriate support to overcome any difficulties which might otherwise get in the way of their learning. Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils in the school.
- The additional physical education and sports funding for primary schools is used effectively. Pupils enjoy visits from sports specialists who help to develop not only a wide range of pupils' skills, but the skills of teachers in teaching sport and physical education.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is supported by the on-site enhanced specialist provision. Adults, including specialist staff, cater well for pupils' pastoral needs through carefully planned and delivered support. However, the school's provision overall is not closely matched to pupils' academic needs and so has not yet led to improved outcomes for all pupils.
- The local authority's evaluations of the quality of teaching and learning have been overgenerous, which has slowed the rate of school improvement. Improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in upper key stage 2 are not replicated elsewhere in the school. The local authority's support has had a positive impact on helping children in Reception to settle more quickly into routines through additional links with the on-site nursery.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors have an overview of strengths and weaknesses in the school but have not held leaders sufficiently to account to secure improvements in teaching and in outcomes for all pupils.
  - Although governors check that leaders complete the agreed actions for improvement, they do not check closely enough whether these actions are making any difference to improving the quality of teaching or pupils' achievement.
  - Governors visit the school regularly to keep abreast of developments but have accepted too readily school leaders' assertions that school effectiveness is good. They do not ask enough searching questions about the link between the impact of teaching and weaknesses in the outcomes for pupils.
  - Recently appointed governors bring a broader range of skills and experience. They demonstrate an improved capacity not only to support but also to challenge leaders to improve overall school effectiveness.
  - Governors are aware of how leaders spend the pupil premium funding and the impact it has on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are generally effective. However, while leaders, including governors, attend training to keep up to date with their statutory obligations around safeguarding they have not

ensured that all staff have knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. For example, gaps in the knowledge of some staff, such as lunchtime assistants, need to be quickly addressed to ensure that the quality of the protective and preventative culture is consistent across the school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching overall requires improvement. Despite improvements to the quality of teaching in upper key stage 2, teaching for pupils in other year groups is not helping them to make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils' standards by the end of key stage 1 have remained below the national average for some time. Consequently, pupils in lower key stage 2 have a long way to catch up and reach the standards expected for their age.
- Where teaching is less effective it does not always allow less-able pupils, including some with special educational needs, to make good progress. This is because planned activities are not always at the right level to meet the needs of the full range of abilities within each class.
- Not all support staff check on pupils' understanding while they are working independently or in small groups. Pupils therefore make the same mistakes and compound their errors because their misconceptions are not identified or corrected. As a result, pupils are not regularly receiving the support they require to improve their understanding and catch up with their peers.
- The quality of marking and feedback is too inconsistent across the school. When feedback is clearly given, pupils respond well to their teachers' advice when correcting their work. However, in some cases marking does not follow the school's policy and explain clearly enough what pupils need to do to improve.
- The recent approach to improving the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is proving successful. The reorganisation of teaching groups and introduction of extra help is providing support more quickly and ensuring that phonics teaching is now more closely matched to pupils' needs. Initial indications are that pupils, particularly boys, are responding positively to these new systems and that there is now a positive impact on outcomes for younger children in Reception and Year 1. However, gaps in pupils' understanding in Years 3 and 4 remain and further work is required to help them to catch up with their peers.
- The teaching of reading is also improving. Pupils now have access to a wider range of books and reading materials. Older pupils say that they enjoy reading and are keen to read at home as well as in guided reading sessions. They make good use of the frequent opportunities they have for independent reading during the school day.
- Teachers are receiving training to improve their understanding of the new assessment arrangements for schools. This is helping teachers plan activities that are increasingly being matched to pupils' different needs. Pupils' engagement in learning is therefore improving and their achievement beginning to improve. However, some staff remain unsure how to accurately judge the progress pupils are making or how to set challenging targets to raise the attainment and progress of all groups rapidly.
- Evidence in pupils' books shows that they have many opportunities to practise calculations and to develop an understanding of a wide range of mathematical topics. However, some pupils, including most-able pupils, do not have enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills in reasoning and problem-solving activities to challenge their thinking and take their skills to a higher level. This was shown in a Year 3 lesson when a pupil remarked, 'We did a lot of palindromes today, but we could already do them.'
- Where pupils' progress is good, teachers have high expectations and steps are taken to ensure that activities are well matched to pupils' different starting points. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and to help them clarify their thinking and deepen their learning.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is good

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils want to do well and they generally try hard in lessons.
- During the inspection, pupils were happy to talk to inspectors and were proud of the improvements that have been made to their school. For example, they say that 'teachers try and make learning as much fun as possible' and say that it 'makes the school a much nicer place to learn'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Older pupils explained that at Tor Bridge all pupils and staff are

expected to treat each other with respect and that racist or homophobic language is not tolerated. They say that there are now far fewer incidents of bullying and, although it still happens from time to time, pupils are confident that adults will help and will sort it out. School records confirm that the number of incidents of bullying continues to reduce.

- The parents who spoke to inspectors or who completed the parental survey believed that their children are safe in school. Inspectors' evidence supports this view.
- Pupils have been taught how to stay safe in different circumstances, for example when crossing the road or when using the internet. Pupils confidently explained to inspectors why it is important to never share personal information online. They know that they should tell a trusted adult if anyone tries to get them involved in something which is wrong or dangerous.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and show good manners. Adults have high expectations for behaviour. Well established routines, good levels of supervision and the consistent promotion of the school rules help pupils to behave well.
- Pupils are effectively encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions for themselves and others, and are praised for making wise choices about their behaviour.
- Leaders ensure that records are kept of any incidents of poor behaviour although they are aware of the need to analyse these in greater depth in order to demonstrate the impact of their actions in this area.
- The large majority of pupils and parents who spoke with inspectors agreed that pupils behave well.
- At lunchtime and breaktimes, pupils play cooperatively. Pupils say that the improved choice of activities and playground resources help to keep them busy and active. They are enthusiastically looking forward to the opening of the school's new adventure trail.
- Attendance has shown a year-on-year improvement and continues to be above the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. The headteacher monitors the attendance of pupils who have previously had high rates of absence, which has led to an improvement in their attendance.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to please and get on with their learning. Occasionally, when their misconceptions are not addressed, a small number of pupils lose focus in lessons and begin to chat and this can distract others.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- The progress of different groups of pupils is too inconsistent across the year groups. The work in pupils' books, the school's information about achievement and inspectors' observations of learning in lessons show that less-able pupils and some pupils with special educational needs do not make as much progress in some classes as their classmates. This is because of weaknesses in the way that teaching builds on their lower starting points and addresses gaps in their understanding.
- Outcomes for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are improving. However, gaps in pupils' basic skills across the whole key stage mean that their progress is not consistently good. Not enough pupils are making more than the expected rates of progress to catch up on their earlier underachievement in key stage 1.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been well below the national average for some time. In 2015, fewer than half of Year 1 pupils reached the standard expected. Determined actions by leaders this year are bringing about the improvements required in the quality of phonics teaching and are starting to improve outcomes for younger children; however, less-able pupils in Years 3 and 4 remain below where they should be and this hampers their progress.
- Over time pupils' attainment in key stage 1 has been well below national levels. The work of pupils currently in Year 2 is showing that standards are beginning to improve. In particular, recently introduced initiatives to stimulate boys' interests, including a wider range of practical and physical learning opportunities, are beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of boys' work.
- Teaching in Year 6 provides a good level of challenge for the small number of the most-able pupils as a result of the increased use of open-ended problem solving activities. Consequently, these pupils are now making good progress. This is often not the case in other year groups where mathematical activities offer good opportunities for the most-able to practise their calculation skills but provide insufficient challenge to stretch their reasoning skills when solving problems.

- Pupils eligible for additional support through pupil premium funding are now making better progress than in the recent past and gaps between them and their peers are narrowing across the school.
- Pupils are not making consistently strong progress across the full range of subjects in the curriculum. Although pupils have good opportunities to write for different purposes in a range of subjects, including history and geography, teachers' expectations across other subjects are not as high as in English lessons and so the standard of pupils' written work is too variable.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- The early years provision requires improvement. For example, the assessment of some children's learning does not inform lesson planning quickly enough to address gaps in children's learning and development.
- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication. In 2015, children were inadequately prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum as very few entered Year 1 with a good level of development. However, more children are on track to reach the standards expected by the end of Reception this year to adequately prepare them for Year 1.
- Some less-able children do not make as much progress as they should. This is because teaching does not fully engage them. Assessment information is not used effectively to plan next steps and help support staff build on children's knowledge and skills.
- Staff have created a safe environment in which children confidently explore and play. Although it is well resourced both indoors and outside, the activities do not encourage children to maintain their attention. As a result, children become distracted and move quickly from activity to activity which in turn hampers their learning and progress.
- There is an appropriate balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that are led by adults. This helps children to develop learning behaviours such as independence and resilience.
- The current early years leader has a clear understanding of what needs to be improved. Appropriate plans are in place to share information and build on the work started with the on-site nursery so that children entering Reception can get off to the best possible start.
- Teachers keep records of children's progress that are shared with parents so that they can be partners in their children's learning.
- Children settle quickly into the routines of school. They get on well together and share and take turns. They cooperate and listen to each other. They feel safe in school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113327
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009225

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sam Tompkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cathryn Tompkins
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 207903
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.torbridge.net">www.torbridge.net</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:receptionprimary@torbridge.net">receptionprimary@torbridge.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13–14 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Tor Bridge Primary School is based on a large campus where pupils share their sports and dining facilities with pupils from a secondary school and a special school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported by the on-site enhanced specialist provision, which is run by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupil's attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 14 lessons and were accompanied by the headteacher during several of these observations.
- The inspectors observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with pupils and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes. The lead inspector met with governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspectors also took account of 16 parents' responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. Inspectors also spoke informally with a number of parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own information on pupils' progress, school improvement planning, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, local authority checks of provision and pupils' progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Stuart Busby, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karen Gannon

Ofsted Inspector

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