

High Street Primary School

High Street, Stonehouse, Plymouth, PL1 3SJ

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, senior staff and governors are committed to providing the best possible education for their pupils.
- The quality of teaching is good and staff are conscientious and set themselves high standards.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress in English and mathematics from the time they enter the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language make good progress, often from very low starting points.
- There is a strong sense of community throughout High Street. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and pupils behave well. They feel very safe and valued and are genuinely proud of their school.
- Pupils' progress is accurately and regularly monitored. Pupils requiring extra help with their learning are quickly identified and appropriate support is put in place to ensure they make similar progress to all other pupils.
- The great majority of pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and enjoy their lessons.
- The governing body provides a good level of support for the school and understands the school's strengths and areas that require improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Although they make good progress, not enough pupils reach the expected standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- Despite the school's best efforts, attendance has been below average in recent years.
- There are still a few inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and marking.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days with half a day's notice.
- All full-time staff were observed teaching. A total of 17 lessons were seen, including a joint observation with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors heard a selection of pupils from Years 3 and 4 read individually.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and members of the school leadership team as well as the school improvement adviser.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of evidence which included: the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, performance management documentation, the school's self-evaluation information, curriculum and lesson plans, governing body documentation and the work pupils were doing in their books.
- A number of parents and carers discussed their views of the school with inspectors at the beginning of the school day on both days of the inspection. There were only two responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Responses from 26 staff questionnaires were taken into account.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was observed both inside and outside of the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- There is a breakfast club on the school site. It is managed by the governing body and therefore formed part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steven Edwards

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- High Street is a smaller than average-sized primary school which is situated near to the centre of Plymouth in an area of significant deprivation.
- Approximately three quarters of pupils at High Street come from White British backgrounds. The remainder of the pupils come from a variety of other White and minority ethnic backgrounds.
- There are seven classes in the school, including a Nursery unit, which the great majority of children enter at the age of three, and two mixed-age-group classes for older pupils.
- A minority of pupils also join High Street in different year groups at times other than at the start of the school year and several leave the school before the end of Year 6. During the current academic year 26 pupils transferred to other schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children with a parent or carer in the armed services and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is significantly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported at school action is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the national minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics for Year 6 pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standards attained in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave Year 6 by:
 - providing as many opportunities as possible for all pupils, and especially those with English as an additional language, to develop their speaking, writing and listening skills
 - giving pupils plenty of time to practise new skills and to work independently in lessons
 - ensuring that all lessons provide sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities to achieve their full potential
 - improving the quality of marking across the school to ensure pupils regularly have detailed feedback on how to improve their work.
- Work closely with parents and carers whose children are absent too often so that they understand the importance of regular attendance for their children's learning and encourage their children to come to school every day.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children usually enter the school's Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge at significantly below the levels expected for their age, especially in their language and communication development. The on-site nursery provides an excellent start for children and they settle very quickly into a safe and welcoming setting. Their move into the Reception class is exceptionally well managed and they continue to make good progress as they move on through the school.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection and current progress data indicate that the pupils are making good progress in all year groups. There is a clear upward trend in all subjects and levels of attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012 reflected a substantial improvement compared to the year before.
- Nevertheless, standards remain below average overall at the end of Year 6. Many pupils join the school with very limited skills in speaking English, and in many cases with no English at all. There is also a high turnover of pupils. By the time they take the national tests in Year 6, some pupils have not developed their skills in speaking, listening and writing well enough to reach the standard expected of 11 year olds.
- Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to read in school and teachers and teaching assistants ensure that their phonics knowledge (the link between letters and sounds) continues to be reinforced during lessons and support sessions.
- In English and mathematics the attainment of all groups of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is in line with, and sometimes exceeds, that of other pupils in the school. The impact of well-planned actions can be seen in the improved achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The school has successfully narrowed or, in some cases, eradicated the gap between their attainment and that of all other pupils.
- This improvement is strong evidence that the school promotes equality of opportunity for all pupils and does not tolerate discrimination. This is at the core of the school's ethos and has been embedded in everyday practice for many years.
- The school's systems for tracking each individual pupil's levels of progress and achievement are very detailed and accurate. The tracking data are carefully analysed to establish any areas that are in need of strengthening and to identify any individual pupils or groups who require additional support.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The teachers' experience, commitment and subject knowledge mean that most lessons are well planned and interest the pupils. Attitudes to learning are positive and the enthusiasm of most pupils is clearly apparent. The quality of teaching is consistently good across all year groups.
- In the great majority of lessons teachers ensure that learning runs at good speed and good questioning skills keep all pupils on task and involved. A good example of the high level of challenge was seen in a Year 5/6 creative writing lesson when pupils were asked to write a real ghost story using a wide variety of vocabulary.
- Marking and feedback are also helping pupils to meet their learning targets. However, pupils do not always get clear guidance on the next steps in improving their work and marking and feedback are not of a consistently good standard across all year groups.
- All opportunities to expand pupils' learning are well used. The recent birth of three seagull chicks on the nursery roof provided a wonderful opportunity to teach the children so much about the cycle of life above their heads!
- The class teachers are very well supported by able and well-qualified teaching assistants and support staff. They are particularly effective when leading learning in small groups and when providing support for individual pupils. Learning is well planned for pupils with English as an

additional language and also disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so that they make good progress.

- Extremely high-quality pastoral support is also in place and pupils with specific behavioural or learning issues are mentored very closely. The school's maxim, 'Every child is treated as an individual', underlines all teachers' awareness of each individual pupil's needs.
- Older pupils display a high level of competence in their use of information and communication technology (ICT), which is becoming integrated into lessons across the curriculum and is enhancing learning.
- In a small number of lessons teachers spend too much time introducing lessons, leaving insufficient time for pupils to get to grips with new concepts and ideas. Some lessons do not allow pupils enough opportunities to undertake independent learning activities.
- In a few lessons activities are not always well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This results in some pupils finding the work too difficult and others completing tasks very quickly when they could tackle more demanding work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and were observed quickly settling to their work in classrooms with enthusiasm. They are keen to ask and answer questions and clearly enjoy being at school.
- The great majority of parents and carers spoken to have a positive opinion about behaviour in the school. They appreciate that the school is caring, approachable and will deal decisively with any issues that arise.
- Pupils are well mannered and polite towards staff and visitors. They show respect and consideration for others. Children joining the school for the first time from an extremely wide variety of backgrounds settle very quickly and rapidly become part of the school community.
- In a very small number of lessons pupils are not always as focused as they might be and there are a few incidences of low-level disruption. However these are normally dealt with effectively by staff.
- Attendance is below average. The school follows its attendance policies consistently and clearly explains and reinforces its expectations to parents and carers. There are also many rewards and incentives to encourage improved attendance, which include weekly commendations from the headteacher. Parents and carers do not always support the school's efforts to ensure their children come to school every day.
- Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe at school at all times. They say they are able to speak to adults if they have a problem or need to confide in someone. They have a clear understanding of what bullying entails and how to recognise different kinds of bullying, such as physical, emotional and cyber bullying. This was recently strongly reinforced during an annual anti-bullying week.
- The school has developed clear systems to record poor or inappropriate behaviour. Pupils spoken to confirmed that the adults always dealt with any instances of inappropriate behaviour promptly, fairly and effectively.
- The school's breakfast club is well attended. It is well supervised and provides pupils with a good start to the school day.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the school's continuous development and have a good understanding of its strengths. They provide effective leadership and management across all areas of the school.
- School development planning is sharply focused on the right priorities for improvement and includes measurable targets and clear deadlines.

- The effective use of performance management has successfully improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection and this has led to improving standards. Senior leaders regularly observe and evaluate teachers' practice in the classroom and the progress made by their pupils. Teachers' performance, appraisal and pay progression are all linked together effectively.
- Senior leaders regularly collect data on pupils' attainment and progress, which they discuss with individual teachers every six weeks. This helps to identify pupils who are not making enough progress and leads to prompt action to provide additional support.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory regulations. Leaders identify and respond very well to any concerns regarding child welfare and work closely with outside agencies to ensure pupils are safe.
- There are good opportunities for staff to develop their skills and knowledge through further training, although teachers do not share best practice often enough.
- The school receives good support from the local authority and plays an integral role within the community. It provides much-needed support for a significant number of pupils and families. The school's Parent Support Advisor plays a vital role in liaising between the school and parents and carers.
- The range of subjects and topics taught is wide and well matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about the world around them, such as the inspirational trip to Mount Edgcombe in Cornwall for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding is well supported, both through the curriculum and the variety of ethnicities within the school, with over 20 different languages spoken.
- Most pupils are keen to take an active role in school life and take on a variety of responsibilities such as play rangers and peer mediators. The school offers a good range of clubs and activities, including sport, music, dance, drama, art and gardening.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well trained and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and how well it performs in comparison with other similar schools and nationally. Areas for development are clearly understood and governors work closely with the leadership team to develop the improvement plan. Governors have a good understanding of how the pupil premium is spent and its impact on improving levels of attainment. Governors ensure that the school fulfils all statutory obligations, including those related to safeguarding and the safe recruitment of staff. They are also closely involved with the performance management of staff and checking the quality of teaching. They are well aware of how salary decisions are linked to teachers' performance.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113273
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	411869

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Samuels
Headteacher	John Lynch
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 June 2010
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