

Oldway Primary School

Higher Polsham Road, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 2SY

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils benefit from outstanding teaching and make rapid progress. From starting points that are below the expectations for their age, they learn quickly and by Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are significantly above those in other schools nationally.
- Pupils learn to become thoughtful, polite young people. They gain the ability to concentrate, to persevere, even when work is difficult, and to collaborate extremely well with each other. These are skills that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- There are many strengths in the way pupils are taught both by teachers and by teaching assistants.
- There is a broad and stimulating curriculum. Pupils benefit from high-quality teaching in a wide range of subjects.
- The headteacher is the prime mover in ensuring excellence. Staff, parents, carers and pupils are right in expressing their admiration for his vision and drive. The headteacher is fully supported by the whole staff team and by high-quality governance.
- Despite the fact that this school has been found outstanding in previous inspections, it has never become complacent. The leadership understands the need to be constantly self-evaluative and to seek ways to make on-going improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The school is forward thinking, trying out and adapting new initiatives, often to the benefit of other schools locally and nationally, as well as benefiting the school's own pupils.
- The school actively and highly effectively promotes pupils' personal development, safety and well-being, for example, through very regular checking of site safety by governors and through very well-planned personal, social and health education.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half-a-day's notice and took place over two days.
- The inspectors observed teaching in 35 lessons, 11 of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. They listened to two groups of pupils read and made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and three governors. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of evidence was reviewed including: the school's improvement plan; the school's data for tracking pupils' progress; monitoring reports; pupils' work in their books; and a range of the school's documentation, including that relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors took into account 186 responses from parents and carers to the online Parent View survey, and 67 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rowena Onions, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Additional Inspector
Terry Payne	Additional Inspector
Wendy Marriott	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (which is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) is below the national average. There are currently no looked after children in the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at school action is in line with the national average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help pupils to further appreciate the relevance of what they learn in mathematics lessons by widening the opportunities to use mathematics skills and knowledge in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils are active learners in lessons. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, they showed persistence and resilience when looking for an arithmetic pattern in a challenging mathematical investigation. Levels of concentration are high and are evident throughout the day, whether pupils are working in English or mathematics or whether they are in art lessons or learning to swim.
- As a result of this ability to learn, pupils make extremely strong progress throughout the school. In Nursery and Reception, the children make outstanding progress in gaining important skills, in particular in their personal, social and language development. This provides them with a very effective springboard for their continuing strong progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Very well-taught basic skills mean that pupils systematically and very securely build their competence and confidence in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 2, standards in all three subjects are above those attained in other schools. By Year 6, they are significantly above these.
- Pupils show themselves adept at using their speaking, reading and writing skills in other subjects. For example, when Year 5 pupils were discussing the factors affecting plant growth, they were able to understand and use vocabulary such as habitat, adaptation and photosynthesis to develop their learning in science. Although, when given the opportunity to do so, they show the ability to apply mathematical skills in the same way, there are fewer occasions when they are able to practise and demonstrate this ability.
- Attention to detail means that the school very quickly identifies any areas where achievement has the propensity to be less than excellent. Last year, for example, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at school action plus appeared not to have made the progress the school expects. The cause of this was thoroughly investigated and actions were taken to ensure there was no recurrence. As a result, the progress of all disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is now at least as good as that of all others in the school.
- The robust tracking of all individuals ensures full equality of opportunity. The additional funding available for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well targeted to ensure that this group make excellent progress, well in excess of the progress made by similar pupils nationally, although a small gap exists between the standards these pupils and other pupils attain in English and mathematics. This gap is less than six months in English and less than three months in mathematics. This is much smaller than the gap that exists nationally. The school is working hard and effectively to ensure the continuing reduction of this gap.
- The mix of their very well-developed ability to learn and the high standards they attain means pupils are very well placed to be successful in the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- There is a high proportion of outstanding teaching in the school. A large number of lessons seen during the inspection were of high quality and pupils' books show that this is the case throughout the year.
- Teachers deliver lessons that are accurately based on what they know pupils can already do and which demonstrate high expectations of the rate that pupils will learn. Vigilance in closely monitoring and adapting their teaching to the needs of individuals in lessons means that time is very productively used. Pupils complete large amounts of work during the year, so they have great opportunity to gain, practise and consolidate skills.
- Pupil management is excellent. Because they are accurately challenged and provided with interesting, lively and often practical activities, pupils stay on task and work hard. Nursery children were, for example, given opportunity to undertake a wide range of practical counting, sorting and drawing tasks which built on a visit to the zoo. This resulted in high-quality and

much enjoyed learning.

- The school has worked to improve teachers' questioning skills and this is now a significant strength. Teachers use questioning adeptly not only to check understanding, but to challenge and deepen pupils' thinking. For example, in an outstanding Year 4 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged to think about the practical context of what they were being asked to do when using a calculator to work out, for instance, how many buses to order to take the school on an outing.
- Through target setting and marking, pupils are made aware of the quality of their work and how to make improvements. Pupils are set regular targets for improvement and there is on-going reference to these in both lessons and in marking.
- Skilled teaching assistants are deployed very well to ensure that pupils have good amounts of adult attention. Collaborative and detailed planning makes sure that pupils get high-quality experiences no matter who is teaching them. For example, when Year 2 were reading in small groups, both teachers and teaching assistants very successfully used detailed planning showing what opportunities the text contained to deepen pupils' ability to comprehend. The work of teaching assistants is also skilfully used to support teachers in ensuring that pupils with additional needs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make accelerated progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The success of lessons is actively promoted by the respect pupils demonstrate for each other and adults. Pupils are patient and understanding while others answer questions and try hard to support each other where they can. A very successful focus on collaborative working is evident in the way pupils work extremely productively together in pairs or larger groups.
- As with all other groups in Oldway School, pupils hold very high expectations of themselves and their classmates, for example, discussing behaviour in lessons in terms of the need not to 'lose focus'. The success of this high expectation of behaviour is evident in all lessons. Parents and carers agree that high standards of behaviour are very successfully promoted in the school.
- Although lively and energetic, playtimes are relaxed and amicable periods which pupils greatly enjoy. Pupils report feeling very safe, an opinion endorsed by their parents and carers. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes bullying and the forms this might take. They say there is little bullying in school and that which exists is dealt with promptly and very effectively. The focus on promoting pupils' understanding of cultural difference both in the United Kingdom and abroad means that they show respect for the lives, customs and opinions of others, so discrimination and racism are prevented.
- Pupils are acutely aware of some dangers they might meet out of school and demonstrate knowledge of safety, for example, when using the internet. Water safety is also given high priority. Pupils' strong swimming skills are one aspect of helping them to keep safe in their coastal environment.
- Robust action has been taken to improve pupils' attendance, for example, working to reduce the taking of holidays in term time. This, together with working to support families who face particular difficulties, has been very successful in improving attendance year on year.

The leadership and management

are outstanding

- The pupils benefit greatly from being in a school that is led by a visionary, hard-working and determined headteacher. His drive, mixed with his ability to relate to others, makes his leadership outstandingly effective.
- A strong understanding that being outstanding is a goal that needs to be worked on, even

though the school has been evaluated as such over more than six years, is shared by staff at all levels and by governors. The drive for excellence is relentless. The hard work that is evident from all staff is motivated by the wish to make provision as successful as possible for the school's pupils.

- This drive for excellence stops any complacency and means that the school is often at the forefront of trying out, adapting and using educational initiatives. For example, becoming a Teaching School (a school that takes a leading role in the training and professional development of staff) has actively helped to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching at Oldway but it has also influenced improvement in other schools both locally and nationally.
- School self-evaluation is detailed and accurate and is a key element in picking out even minor aspects of school provision that the school sees as less strong. It is this attention to detail that helps the school maintain its high level of effectiveness. Any improvements that are needed are translated into detailed targets and where appropriate, these become key elements in staff performance management and appraisal. The latter is very robustly managed and there is a tight link between this and pay progression.
- Staff professional development is wide-ranging and often includes staff working together to help each other strengthen skills. The impact of the leadership of improvement is clear in the maintenance of, and gradual increase in, high levels of outstanding teaching. The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- The school provides a varied and exciting curriculum that often brings subjects together so that pupils understand that what they learn in one lesson can be used in others. This is most strongly seen in English. Prior to the inspection, the school had rightly identified a need to strengthen this understanding in mathematics by broadening opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is encouraged throughout the day in on-going routines and through high expectations. This development is also very successfully promoted through the curriculum, including through high-quality provision for art, music and physical education.
- There are extensive links with parents and carers, both routinely and where there is a particular need. This plays its part, along with an emphasis on the importance of the individual and robust safeguarding, in very effectively ensuring the well-being of the pupils. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the education provided for their child.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors have very detailed knowledge of attainment, progress and the quality of teaching the school. They understand how this performance relates to other schools nationally. They are proactive in helping to ensure that the school remains outstanding. The governors share the headteacher's view that as well as in promoting better education in the wider context, the school's pupils gain from taking a wider role in working with other schools and institutions. Governors are very supportive, and understand the need to show this support both by using their own expertise to enhance provision and by holding the school to account. They visit the school regularly, and this provides them with both knowledge and opportunity to challenge the school's leadership at a variety of levels. They are extremely well informed about systems for managing staff performance and the link with pay progression to reward teachers who teach well. They are aware of what support has been given to teachers to improve their teaching and the difference this has made. The governors have ensured that funds, including the way pupil premium funding is spent, are very successfully used to promote pupils' achievement.

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	113215
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	412446

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	694
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Cooper
Headteacher	Peter Maunder
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2009
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