

# Inspection of a good school: Sherwell Valley Primary School

Hawkins Avenue, Torquay, Devon TQ2 6ES

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Inspection dates:

20 and 21 February 2024

## Outcome

Sherwell Valley Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils talk with pride about their school. They say the best thing about school 'is the learning'. Pupils behave well and feel safe. Throughout the school, pupils are calm and respond well to instructions from staff. If pupils are worried, they know they can speak to any member of staff.

School leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. The school has rooted these expectations in the school values. Pupils learn values such as responsibility and respect in an age-appropriate way. For example, older pupils take on leadership roles. They apply to be prefects, environmentalists or mental health ambassadors. Digital leaders deliver presentations to other pupils to help them to stay safe online. Pupils are proud of these roles. They enjoy acting as role models to younger children.

All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), participate in a range of clubs to develop their skills and interests. For example, pupils take part in the amateur dramatics club, forest school and football club. Pupils develop their sporting skills to a high standard and compete at a national level.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The new headteacher has recently led significant changes to improve the curriculum. The school has raised expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils get off to a flying start.

Children learn to read through a well-developed synthetic phonics curriculum. The school has prioritised staff training to ensure all teachers are confident to teach phonics. This means that high-quality phonics lessons are consistently delivered and any gaps in pupils' knowledge are quickly identified. As a result, pupils learn the sounds that they need to know to be fluent readers. Pupils read books that match their ability. They read with fluency and expression.

The school has focused on building a culture of reading. Children are introduced to a wide range of books as soon as they begin in the early years. Adults read to children with expression and excitement. Throughout the school, books linked to the curriculum help pupils to remember and talk about the different books they have read. As a result, pupils love to read.

The school acts quickly to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. This means the school ensures the most appropriate support is in place. Staff skilfully make effective adaptations so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers.

In most subjects, the school has set out the important knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to know and remember. The curriculum is planned sequentially, so that pupils build their knowledge from Nursery through to Year 6. The school has also linked pupils' learning across different subjects. For example, when pupils write about dragons, they then develop art skills by creating a dragon's eye in an art lesson. As a result, pupils connect their learning well. They are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes to learning.

Some subjects, such as reading and mathematics, have been implemented to a standard that matches the ambitious vision of school leaders. However, in other subjects curriculum changes have not yet had the impact that school leaders want. In the wider curriculum, some subjects are not as well developed or implemented as successfully. Where this occurs, pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Children in the early years learn through a variety of well-chosen activities that stimulate their interests. To develop fine motor skills, children create shapes in dough with their fingers. They use vocabulary they have learned about minibeasts effectively when they dress up and role play being a scientist. Throughout the early years environment, the work children complete is proudly displayed and celebrated. This is used well to help children to link what they are currently learning to what they have learned before.

The school has developed a thoughtful and well-planned curriculum for pupils' personal development, which is rooted in the school's values. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions. As a result, pupils are respectful and courteous. They are keen to come to school and they attend well.

Staff feel valued. They know that governors and school leaders prioritise their well-being and workload. Staff appreciate school leaders' commitment to professional development. They understand how this improves outcomes for all pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not as well developed or implemented as successfully as the core curriculum. As a result, pupils' substantive knowledge is less secure and pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school needs to ensure the curriculum, in all subjects, is well developed and implemented effectively so that all pupils have the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage of their education.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2013.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113240
<b>Local authority</b>	Torbay
<b>Inspection number</b>	10307228
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	658
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Maria Beer and Kelly Bremridge (Co-Chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cristy Nelson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sherwell-valley-primary.torbay.sch.uk">www.sherwell-valley-primary.torbay.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school uses alternative provision.
- There is an on-site breakfast and after-school club run by the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, including those responsible for governance.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents before and after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Bray

Ofsted Inspector

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