

Inspection of a good school: Torre Church of England Academy

Barton Road, Torre C of E Academy, Barton Road, Torquay, Devon TQ1 4DN

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 July 2021

Outcome

Torre Church of England Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Torre Church of England Academy is inclusive and welcoming. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend well. They feel safe and say that adults look after them. Pupils say it is important to be kind to one another. They appreciate what makes each person unique. This is reflected in their behaviour around school. Pupils firmly believe that should bullying occur it will be treated seriously and dealt with quickly.

Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and look forward to selecting their next book. They are curious and enjoy learning about a wide range of subjects. However, sometimes they find it hard to recall important knowledge in some subjects.

The school encourages pupils to 'live life in all its fullness' and provides many opportunities to put this into practice. Pupils are keen to volunteer for leadership roles in school as worship leaders, school councillors, 'eco warriors', or 'problem pals', who look out for others at social times. Pupils contribute to their local community through volunteer projects. Clubs are now returning to school life and pupils enjoy taking part in multi-skills and sports activities.

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

Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for pupils. They are determined to continue to make improvements to the school. They have considered the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on pupils and are making changes to the organisation of the key stage 1 curriculum in light of this. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Children get a strong start to their education in the early years. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception Years prepares children well for what they will learn in Years 1 and 2. Leaders in the early years have carefully planned the curriculum, taking into account children's starting points and their needs. Children quickly develop a love of books and are keen to learn to read. Pupils in the Nursery talk enthusiastically about their learning, for example describing the best materials to make a nest for their toy owl.

Learning to read is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Staff are determined that all pupils will develop a love of reading. Pupils learn to read from the moment they start at the school. The phonics programme is structured well so pupils are able to decode words and to build up their fluency in reading. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they are learning. Leaders carefully monitor the teaching of phonics and have made sure that staff are well trained. Leaders use assessment information well to check on pupils' reading and to make changes to the curriculum. They plan well-structured support for pupils who are behind with their reading. This is helping these pupils to catch up and to become more confident readers.

Older pupils continue to enjoy reading. Teachers choose texts that are varied and broaden pupils' knowledge and interests. Pupils are encouraged to read widely. The reading programme in key stage 2 is providing useful steps for pupils to become better readers.

Leaders have made sure that pupils study a broad range of subjects that reflects the national curriculum. Pupils are interested in the different subjects they learn about. Leaders have developed a curriculum to connect learning from the early years through to Year 6. However, the curriculum plans are stronger in some subject areas than others. Where there are strengths, such as the early years curriculum and the reading curriculum, there is clear sequencing that ensures pupils carefully build their knowledge over time. Where it is not as strong, it is because leaders have not yet identified precisely enough the essential concepts that pupils need to know and when they need to know them. Consequently, pupils are not learning important knowledge securely enough in some subjects. For example, although pupils enjoy science activities, they cannot confidently recall scientific concepts.

Teachers know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff provide effective support in lessons to help these pupils to learn. In early years, the curriculum is carefully structured to support children with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is active in seeking out appropriate external support for pupils with SEND.

All staff have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils conduct themselves well and behaviour around the school is calm and purposeful. Pupils generally get on with their work and take pride in what they do.

Leaders are keen to support pupils and staff to develop their mental health and well-being. Staff are well trained in techniques that help them to support pupils' well-being. Staff are positive about working at the school. They comment favourably on workload and appreciate leaders' actions that make workload more manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to keep pupils safe. They know what to do if they spot any concerns about pupils. Staff help pupils to know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know that they can talk to an adult if they have problems.

Leaders act quickly and appropriately when they deal with safeguarding concerns. They are tenacious in securing appropriate support for pupils and families. The family support leader works closely with external agencies and families to support children through early help and to overcome any barriers to learning.

Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding, well informed about local issues and keep a close eye on safeguarding arrangements at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in some subjects do not clearly identify essential knowledge that pupils need to know and when they need to know it. Subject leaders need to ensure that important concepts are clearly identified and carefully sequenced in the curriculum plans and that teachers closely follow these plans. This will help teachers, particularly non-subject specialists, to teach what pupils need to know and remember. It will also help leaders to ensure that the curriculum has the impact they intend.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 19 June 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140092
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10198442
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	344
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Fiona Washbrook
Headteacher	Suzanne Julyan
Website	www.torrecofeacademy.org/
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average primary school.
- It is voluntary controlled and is part of the Diocese of Exeter. It had its last section 48 inspection in March 2019.
- There is a school nursery, Tiny Torre, for children aged 3 and 4 years old.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders, class teachers, and the SENCo. The inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Exeter.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and the family support officer, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.

- The inspector completed deep dives into reading, mathematics and science. The deep dives entailed visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, talking with pupils, listening to pupils read, discussing the curriculum with leaders, talking to teachers and examining documentation.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Tracey Reynolds, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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