

Shortlanesend Community Primary School

Northey Close, Truro, Cornwall, TR4 9DA

Inspection dates 29–30 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From their varied starting points, pupils across the school make good and increasingly, for a notable proportion of pupils, outstanding rates of progress.
- Attainment has improved and is now broadly average in all subjects.
- Teaching across the school is consistently good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, and those receiving support through the pupil premium grant, make at least as good progress as their peers, because teachers are adept at meeting their precise needs.
- Over time, outstanding leadership by the headteacher, senior staff and governing body has created a powerful sense of ambition, shared by staff, to do the best for each pupil.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils get on well together, co-operate with each other and have excellent relationships with staff.
- The curriculum and extra-curricular activities provide the pupils with rich spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and say it has improved dramatically in recent years.
- There are good systems in place for checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. These have helped ensure that pupils' progress has improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in writing is not high enough because pupils have too few opportunities to write independently. In addition, they do not always use their knowledge of phonics (letters and sounds) to help them when spelling unfamiliar words.
- Pupils' work is not always presented neatly enough, which detracts from the good content.
- Teachers do not give pupils time to respond to marking in order to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were joint observations with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 6. She met with several of the school's pupil ambassadors to hear their views about the school.
- She looked at pupils' work in their books as well as during their lessons.
- Meetings were held between the inspector and members of the governing body, and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector also met with the school's special educational needs coordinator, early years leader and subject leaders.
- Account was taken of 16 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as to those from a group of parents and carers the inspector met at the end of the school day. In addition, the inspector took account of a letter she received.
- School documentation was examined, including statutory policies as well as evidence of the school's own monitoring records and self-evaluation, case studies of pupil support, tracking data showing the progress of all pupils, and the school improvement plan.

Inspection team

Anne Newell, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a much smaller than average primary school which has three mixed-year group classes and one Reception class.
- It is led by an executive headteacher, who is also responsible for another small primary school a few miles away.
- All the pupils are of white British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which is the funding provided by the government to support pupils eligible for free school meals, pupils whose parents are in the armed services or those in the care of the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action is similar to the national average, while the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is significantly higher than the national average.
- There is an on-site 'Earlybird' club, managed by the governing body, which cares for pupils before school.
- The school has gained the Intermediate International Schools Award and the Eco School Award since the time of the last inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write in a wider variety of styles
 - ensuring pupils use their knowledge of phonics when they are spelling and experimenting with new vocabulary
 - ensure that pupils always present their work neatly.
- Ensure that pupils always have enough opportunities to respond to teachers' marking in order to further improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Very few children join the Early Years Foundation Stage each year. They have varying skills and abilities for their ages, but in general, they are lower than expected. They make good progress in meeting their early learning goals and are well prepared to move into Key Stage 1.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 have made good progress in recent years, and have achieved standards similar to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Key Stage 2, there has been a trend of improving attainment and increasing rates of progress since the last inspection. Attainment at the end of the key stage is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Evidence from the school's own assessment information shows that the majority of pupils are making good, and sometimes outstanding, rates of progress because the school ensures equality of opportunity. There is, however, some variation in writing because pupils do not all have sufficient opportunity to write independently. In addition, pupils do not always use their knowledge of letters and sounds to spell words when they are experimenting with new vocabulary.
- Pupils' work is not always presented neatly enough, which detracts from the quality of the content.
- The progress of pupils who have disabilities and those with special educational needs is good, and sometimes outstanding, because they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants who understand and provide well for their individual needs.
- The proportion of pupils who met the government's phonics screening check in Year 1 was well below the national average, because pupils did not have enough opportunity to practise reading and writing the sounds they are taught. This has now been rectified by the school.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read well and enjoy reading books by a wide range of authors. This is because regular guided reading sessions enable them to discuss texts and gain a greater insight into what they are reading.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium have made good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Their combined reading, writing and mathematics average point score for 2012 was similar to that of their classmates of the same age.

The quality of teaching is good

- Across the school, teaching is typically good with some examples of outstanding teaching where pupils are constantly challenged by exciting activities closely matched to their individual needs. In an outstanding English lesson, through imaginative use of a range of teaching strategies, such as listening to a recording of Field Marshal Montgomery rallying the troops during the Second World War, pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of the power of persuasion and used this knowledge when writing their own persuasive arguments.
- Teaching in the school has improved in recent years, due to rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and guidance given to staff on how to make their lessons even better.
- Marking of pupils' work is generally good and sometimes outstanding, but pupils are not all given opportunities to respond to the guidance given. The presentation of pupils' work is not yet of the highest quality in all classes and pupils do not always have enough opportunity to write in a sufficient variety of styles.
- The youngest pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills well through role play, and thoroughly enjoyed planning and watching each other perform the story of 'Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish'.
- Teachers connect learning to real-life situations to make it meaningful for their pupils. Pupils in

Year 3 and 4 cooperated well to design their ideal drink, and worked out the quantity of each ingredient in millilitres before going to the supermarket with their shopping list.

- Pupils are keen to work and show exemplary attitudes to learning because their lessons are interesting and because the staff have created a very positive learning atmosphere where pupils feel secure and supported.
- The needs of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are carefully identified by teachers, to ensure they have equal opportunities to succeed. For example, a group of young pupils was closely supported by their teacher and teaching assistant to link 'o'clock' times to important features of their day such as breakfast time or bedtime.
- The support for pupils who benefit from pupil premium funding is well targeted to individual needs, such as one-to-one help with reading, and has enabled them to move forward well in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils, governors and staff overwhelmingly agree with the inspector that the behaviour in school is outstanding, and this view is strongly supported by the parents and carers spoken to and by those who responded to the online questionnaire.
- There is no unacceptable behaviour in lessons because lessons are typically interesting and inspire the pupils. On the rare occasions when the attention of younger pupils drifts, they are quickly and effectively brought back on task.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and the opportunities it gives them. Those who are 'Super Sixes' or 'School Ambassadors' say such privileges are not just given out, they have to be earned.
- Pupils say, and their parents and carers agree, that they are safe in school. They understand about different kinds of bullying such as cyber-bullying or name-calling but say there is not any in the school, just the occasional misunderstanding which is quickly sorted out.
- A strong moral code permeates the school, with self-esteem and respect for all paramount. The pupils understand equality, believing 'We are all from one race, the human race.'
- There have been no exclusions in the last two years. The school works closely with parents and carers, and external agencies when necessary, and keeps detailed records of the very few incidents that arise. This ensures pupils are given exactly the right support and guidance to enable them to continue learning.
- The school has taken positive steps to improve attendance, such as weekly awards for the class with the highest attendance, and working with the educational welfare officer to remind some families of the importance of good attendance. As a result, attendance has increased and is now above average.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The unremitting drive and clear direction of the headteacher and governors has been highly effective in improving the quality of teaching in recent years, following a long period of difficulty for the school.
- Objective and detailed evaluation of the school's work, thoroughly shared with the governing body, has led to decisive action to improve all aspects of the school. The school works in close partnership with neighbouring schools to jointly monitor its effectiveness.
- Priorities for improvement have rightly been directed at ensuring an excellent climate for learning so that teachers could teach and pupils could learn. In this secure environment, the rates of pupils' progress have improved rapidly.
- Many strategies to include parents and carers in the life of the school have been implemented, including weekly newsletters, an informative website, opportunities for adult learning classes and visits to classrooms. The parents and carers who responded to Parent View were overwhelmingly

supportive of all aspects of the school. Parents and carers spoken to say it has 'improved beyond belief since the new headteacher came' and they believe the teachers do their best for the pupils.

- Performance management is based upon close monitoring of all teachers in relation to the National Teachers' Standards. It has been very effective in developing their skills and in identifying any professional development required.
- Changes to the curriculum which have ensured much better use of learning for a purpose, and of cross-curricular work, mean that pupils are excited about learning and are becoming more independent, and this has contributed strongly to improved achievement.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. This can be seen in their exemplary behaviour, understanding of right and wrong, and links with schools elsewhere.
- The school meets all statutory requirements for safeguarding.
- The local authority confirms the improvements in recent years and now only provides light-touch support for this good school.
- The sustained improvements made, together with the continuing relentless ambition of school leaders and staff, show that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have been instrumental in the improvements made and are closely involved in evaluating the school and strategic decision making. Consequently, governance is outstanding. Governors have an in-depth knowledge of the progress of each group of pupils and of the standards achieved compared to those seen nationally. They hold the school to account for its performance. For example, they know that the teaching of phonics and early reading and writing are a target for improvement. The governing body receives performance management information from the headteacher, and makes pay decisions based upon this. It is also involved in the headteacher's performance management. It has played an important role in engaging parents and carers more fully in school life. Governors evaluate the impact of the way the pupil premium is spent on extra teaching assistant hours and resources in terms of pupils' progress.

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	111862
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	401209

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Holroyd
Headteacher	Vanessa Bragg
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 September 2009
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