

Mevagissey Community Primary School

Old Road, Mevagissey, St Austell, PL26 6TD

Inspection dates 5–6 March 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils of all ages achieve well. In 2012, over 90% of Year 6 leavers achieved at least the national standard in both English and mathematics. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in these and other subjects, especially in their writing. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium, make progress that is equally as good as that of other pupils.
- Teaching is consistently good or better. Teachers use assessment data well to plan work that stretches pupils across the wide range of ages and abilities present in each class. Pupils describe enthusiastically lessons they have found particularly interesting. Marking is a particular strength, and pupils can explain how it helps them to improve their work.
- Pupils behave very well both in lessons and around the school. They report that bullying is very rare and that they are confident to discuss problems with adults. They are aware of different forms of bullying and of how they may be avoided, and also of potential dangers such as when using the internet or playing in their coastal environment.
- Leaders and managers are ambitious for their pupils and know them well. Data are used very well to identify and rectify any emerging weaknesses. Teachers' performance is managed effectively and subject leadership is very strong. This has led to rapid improvements since the previous inspection. Resources such as the pupil premium are used well for their intended purpose. Governance is also very effective as governors challenge school leaders to make improvements and support them in doing so.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding as some staff lack confidence when using information and communication technology (ICT), and teaching assistants, while of good quality, are not always used effectively by the class teacher.
- In spite of school leaders' best efforts to improve it, pupils' attendance has been below average in recent years.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons taught by five teachers. He made briefer observations of other activities, such as an assembly. Several of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher. The inspector held meetings with staff, a group of pupils and with five members of the governing body. He had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed documentation including that relating to pupils' progress and achievement, their safety, and the school's evaluation of its own improvement. The responses of staff to a questionnaire were analysed, as were the responses of 11 parents who submitted their views on Parent View. One parent wrote to the inspector and two were spoken to in person. These views were used to form an overview of parents' opinions of the school.

Inspection team

Paul Sadler, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school is of much smaller than average size and serves a well-known fishing village and holiday resort in Cornwall and the surrounding area.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action, at just over 7%, is below average, while the proportion supported by school action plus or with statements of special educational needs, also just over 7%, is average. These pupils have a range of physical disabilities or learning or behavioural difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, at around 20%, is broadly average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of families in the armed services.
- In November 2011, Her Majesty's Inspector visited the school to check on the effectiveness of mathematics teaching and reported that this was satisfactory at that time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school shares its site with a privately-run pre-school which was not inspected on this occasion. The latest report can be viewed on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding, and hence further raise pupils' achievement, by:
 - developing the skills of staff and pupils in the use of ICT
 - improving the consistency of the use of teaching assistants, especially when they are working with groups of pupils.
- Improve pupils' attendance by:
 - developing and sharing with parents a policy concerning the authorisation of non-medical absence.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with the skills and knowledge somewhat below those expected of those of their age. In Reception they make rapid progress, especially in learning their letters and their sounds and in beginning to write. Some in Reception and all pupils in Year 1 were observed writing sentences using accurate spelling and punctuation when recounting the story of St Piran, the patron saint of Cornwall.
- By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils have made good progress from their starting points, both in English and mathematics. A small but increasing proportion makes even faster progress. In 2012 this was most noticeable in writing, but the school's good analysis of the progress of current pupils, and the quality of their work, show that many of the current Year 6 are also making very good progress in reading and mathematics. This was confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of work.
- In 2012, the attainment in English and mathematics of Year 6 leavers eligible for the pupil premium slightly exceeded that of other pupils, as shown by their average point scores. Those disabled or having special educational needs make equally good progress. For example, a pupil in Year 5 with special educational needs could readily describe an equilateral triangle and a pentagon for the inspector. These good achievements demonstrate the school's very good commitment to equality of opportunity for all its pupils.
- As pupils move through the classes they read an increasing range of challenging texts, and by the end of Year 6 they are reading a wide range of fiction and non fiction. Their writing is sensitive and uses a wide vocabulary, for example when describing the appearance of a witch from the perspective of different characters in a story.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved significantly since the visit of Her Majesty's Inspector in 2011. Pupils can solve challenging problems, for example more-able pupils in Year 6 derived the value of pi from measurements of the diameter and circumference of circles.
- High quality work was observed in other subjects, notably in Years 4 and 5 where pupils were aware of the significance of the shrinkage of the polar ice caps and had an excellent understanding of the main tenets of Islam. This small school is successful at competitive sport, notably football where local competitions have been won. Work in art and music is of a high standard. These features demonstrate the school's success in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to use ICT routinely in their lessons, for instance to use the internet for research. As a result, while their skills of using literacy and numeracy and of working independently are well developed, this aspect of their learning develops more slowly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils which are reflected in the challenging tasks they set. Often these develop a range of skills, for example in Years 4 and 5 a simple task based on the compass developed pupils' understanding of angles, the points of the compass and of clockwise and anticlockwise rotation.
- Good quality assessment is used effectively to spot any slower progress and to track the progress of individuals and groups, including those eligible for the pupil premium and those disabled or having special educational needs. As pupils recognise, the extra help they are given quickly enables them to catch up. The school has started to meet the additional needs of more-able pupils, for example higher attaining mathematicians in Year 6 are taught separately by the headteacher and are making very rapid progress.
- Pupils are excited by much of their work. A Year 5 pupil enthusiastically explained to the inspector how she had learned why the bones of penguins are solid while those of flying birds are hollow, and how rice behaved on a drum skin. Pupils in Year 1 talked knowledgeably about

the purpose of a mill and the uses of flour.

- The good teaching of subjects such as science, religious education and history gives pupils ample opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- All work seen by the inspector was accurately marked, with a range of helpful comments and appropriate praise. Pupils made a point of telling him how helpful they found this and other feedback. Assessment across the school is much improved since the previous inspection.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively when supporting individual pupils and on most occasions when working with groups of pupils. There are times, however, when they lack the skills or experience to make sure all members of the group are learning effectively, partly due to limited supervision of the task by the class teacher.
- The school has recently purchased new ICT equipment and some staff lack the skills or experience to use it effectively. This, together with pupils' limited access to a range of ICT equipment in classrooms, slows the development of the associated skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They work well in groups and on their own. For example, when Year 1 wrote their stories of St Piran, all worked hard and completed the task. When more-able Year 6 pupils were learning mathematics, the lesson had the atmosphere of a tutorial involving much older students.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities such as being playground buddies or team leaders. They willingly help adults and each other, showing that the school is effective in promoting good relationships. They are excited by their involvement in the community such as when taking part in the village Feast Week, or singing in the church.
- A range of evidence shows that there is very little bullying or other poor behaviour, for example there have been very few exclusions over many years. Pupils are taught that bullying is unacceptable and about the forms it can take, showing that any form of discrimination would not be tolerated.
- Pupils are taught about safe use of the internet and by Year 5 can explain why they should never reveal personal details to others. They are taught to swim from Reception and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught how to cycle safely, important skills in their rural, coastal environment.
- Pupils are punctual to school and lessons, but overall attendance is lower than it should be. The nature of the local economy makes it difficult for some families to take holidays except during the school term. However, while school leaders encourage good attendance by individual families, there is no clear guidance for parents on how the school will view requests for absence in circumstances that are not medically related.
- Pupils say they feel happy and safe at school, a view that is supported by parents. Classrooms have lists of adults to whom pupils might speak about a concern on display, and pupils are confident that they can seek help if required.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have taken effective steps to rectify weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and by Her Majesty's Inspector's check on mathematics. They have identified and rectified other areas of weakness, such as a fall in standards of reading at the highest levels, and are in a good position to make further improvements.
- Teachers' performance is checked regularly, which has led to significant improvement in its quality. The results of these checks are used well to ensure that teachers receive any necessary further training. Teachers have appropriate responsibilities for their level of pay. Subject leadership is strong, notably in mathematics and, especially, English. Staff are enthusiastic and rightly have high levels of confidence in the school's leadership.
- Data concerning pupils' performance are used well, especially to ensure good progress by

disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs or are supported through the pupil premium who, for example, receive teaching in smaller groups and are supported financially on educational visits. Teachers and governors all have a good understanding of the data and of how the school's performance compares with other schools nationally.

- The school has an interesting and varied curriculum which is especially effective in developing reading, writing and numeracy, but is less so in the use of ICT. Art, music, sport and geography are all strong and pupils have the opportunity to learn French.
- School leaders have developed very strong partnerships with the local community, the pre-school on the site and with secondary schools. Pupils benefit from the smooth transition from one stage of education to the next.
- Parents rightly have a positive view of the school and almost all who gave their opinion would recommend it to other parents. Whilst a few felt the school did not always respond to their concerns, no evidence was found to support this view.
- The local authority has a good understanding of the school's many strengths and few weaknesses and has provided an appropriate level of good quality support to aid improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very good understanding of the school. They challenge senior leaders to improve the school and help them to do so, for example by promoting good attendance within the community. They check appropriately on the overall quality of teaching, and of how this links to policies for teachers' remuneration. They check that resources allocated to the school for a specific purpose, such as the pupil premium, are being used as intended and are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. They meet their duty to keep pupils safe, for example by ensuring that staff and governors are trained appropriately in child protection. Several recently-appointed governors bring useful skills and, with other governors, take part in regular training. In summary, the governing body is a dynamic and well-informed group who is making a considerable contribution to the rapid improvements taking place in the school.

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	111890
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	401213

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	Sandra Beardsmore
Headteacher	Katherine Warren
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 February 2010
Telephone number	01726 843522
Fax number	01726 843522
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