

Gerrans Primary School

Tregassick Road, Portscatho, Truro, Cornwall, TR2 5ED

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
- The quality of teaching is good. This has resulted in the good progress pupils make over their time in the school.
- Teachers plan lessons well to meet the needs of all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Teaching assistants support and lead learning very well.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from good and outstanding teaching and develop quickly.
- Exciting lessons provide a stimulating environment and enable pupils to establish routines and achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because they are highly respectful to all members of the school and show great independent skills in their learning, responding positively to their work.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and talk about it enthusiastically, particularly how they represent it in a wide range of successful sporting and other activities.
- The well-respected headteacher provides highly effective leadership of a small but strong team, who make sure that this good school retains the values that are important to the local community.
- Governors provide good support and challenge to leaders. This has been important in sustaining good achievement for all pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is insufficient outstanding teaching leading to higher levels of achievement.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities for practical work based on their environment, particularly in mathematics.
- Marking of pupils' books does not provide sufficient guidance for pupils on what they need to do to improve or opportunities for them to do so.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 lessons and observed all three teachers. The headteacher joined the inspector for a number of observations. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons and small-group work to look at the teaching of geography, PE, music and art as well as additional activities run by teaching assistants.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work took place jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement information and the safeguarding of children.
- There were no responses available on the online Parent View survey but the inspector took note of parental comments in the school's own survey and responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection. The inspector also spoke to some parents and carers.

Inspection team

Graham Pirt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gerrans is a much smaller than average-sized primary school, located in a village. Most children who attend are from the local area.
- The number of pupils who attend the school increased recently, allowing for an extra class to be established in September 2012, but numbers still remain low.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are part of a joint class with Key Stage 1 pupils, but are often taught separately.
- There is a nursery for a small number of part-time pupils in the morning.
- All pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, with the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and for children from armed service families, is above average.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment. However, in a very small group, more than half were not in the school in Key Stage 1, a number had special needs and one had not attended a school for a number of years.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - developing active and practical learning opportunities in the environment, particularly in mathematics
 - developing a more consistent approach to marking so that pupils know what they have to do in order to improve their work and ensure they are given the opportunities to do so.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Many children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities below the levels normally expected for their age. However, the ability range is wide, varying considerably from year to year. The good and outstanding teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that all children achieve well and most leave the Reception class with at least expected levels of skill and ability.
- Good progress continues across the school and this is demonstrated by the above-expected progress of many pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The disappointing Key Stage 2 results in 2012 were due to a very small year group of whom more than half were not in the school in Key Stage 1 and so direct comparison is not possible. A number had special educational needs and one had not attended a school for a number of years. The school's detailed tracking documents show that all made good progress and a number made more than outstanding progress.
- Achievement in mathematics was weaker than for reading and writing in Key Stage 2 but this gap has been closed successfully in the current year groups. The introduction of greater structure in the teaching of mathematics and a clearer use of mathematical language by teachers has contributed to this. The regular teaching of basic skills, including pupils' understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make), is improving their progress in reading and writing.
- Attainment in reading is above average at the end of both the current Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are able to blend letters well and read and write with confidence. Pupils in a Reception and Key Stage 1 group were seen making good progress when writing postcards and letters to an artist, telling him 'The Sandhorse' was safe and suggesting improvements, using correct punctuation and grammar. One pupil in Reception showed her painting and explained 'It's the Sandhorse lost in the sea. I'm going to write to the artist and tell him it's safe.'
- All pupils from all backgrounds, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make at least good progress throughout the school from their individual starting points.
- This is a very inclusive school, where additional support is expertly targeted to meet individual needs and supports the work being done in lessons, thus promoting equality of opportunity.
- The proportion of pupils who make and exceed their expected progress is now similar to the national average and continues to improve.
- Because of the very small numbers in the school, it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the achievement of different groups compared with other pupils at the school. However, pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and often outstanding over time. This enables all pupils to make at least good progress in all subjects.
- Teachers plan lessons well, making sure pupils of all abilities are fully involved. Teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons using effective questioning and observation. However, sometimes teachers are not making full use of this information to inform pupils of what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils said that they enjoy their lessons and that teaching is good. Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were very happy with the quality of teaching at the school and the progress their children make.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from good and outstanding teaching. This helps them establish good routines in their learning and make good progress. During a session where children were discussing their writing, one pupil exclaimed 'I've used "crystal clear" at the

beginning and at the end. I'm going to use "deep blue sea" because I'm repeating it and that's boring!

- In the best lessons, pupils are able to make at least good progress because teachers make sure that they are able to think and learn for themselves. In the Year 5/6 class, where pupils were working on their own solving number problems, they made outstanding progress. This is because they were able to learn in partnership and were not dependent on the teacher for support. However, in a very few lessons, teachers expected pupils to follow their directions for too long, restricting their ability to think things out for themselves.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to extend the pupils' learning beyond class-based learning from books and similar materials.
- Teaching assistants make a substantial contribution to the good teaching, often developing their own skills, such as in the use of sign language, to help children develop.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regularly undertaken, using 'Gold for go' and 'Pink for think' colour-coding to assist their understanding of what is correct or what is an error. However, there is an inconsistent approach to informing pupils of the next steps that they should take. Regular use is made of self- and peer-assessment to support good learning in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils settle very well to their work and are extremely respectful of each other and of their teachers.
- All parents and carers who spoke to the inspector recognised the quality of behaviour of the pupils at the school and how well they are looked after. Pupils move around the school in a safe and pleasant manner and play outside together exceptionally well.
- All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, say they feel safe at school and older pupils enjoy acting very responsibly as mentors for younger ones. They know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of the dangers of the internet.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are often outstanding in lessons and behaviour is impeccable. They demonstrate high levels of independence, taking responsibility for their learning and a willingness to check their learning and alternative ways of undertaking their work with staff. In one mathematics lesson, some pupils decided to check their division independently by multiplying their answer to see if the inverse operation applied.
- Pupils were adamant that there was no bullying in the school and showed surprise at being asked. They stated that pupils all looked after each other and know that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Pupils are passionate about their school and proud that they successfully represent it in the wide range of events that are organised, especially in the competitive sports with other schools. The school council provides pupils with an opportunity to support the work of the school and pupils believe their voice is heard. This is demonstrated in how the house teams select the charities for which each will raise funds.
- Pupils are very keen to come to school and are punctual. The attendance of the vast majority of pupils is above average and continues to improve.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher gives the school strong and committed leadership. She has the support of a small but effective team, including experienced governors, who have made sure that this school not only maintains its good standards but also seeks to improve. The leaders demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers well and make sure there is a good match between pay progression and how well pupils learn. Training is arranged to meet the needs of

both the individual members of staff and those areas of teaching where the most impact is needed.

- There is an exciting range of subjects and topics that interest pupils, providing good opportunities to learn and prepare them for future learning. Well-planned exciting activities in Early Years Foundation Stage help children develop personal and social skills alongside their work in numeracy and literacy.
- Topic-based work is designed well to develop pupils' learning of literacy across all subjects. Annual performances of a Shakespearean play, currently 'Romeo and Juliet', involve all pupils in high levels of reading and homework and are exceptionally well received by parents, carers and members of the community. The regular visits and annual residential visits provide a wide range of experiences to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders check the progress of pupils regularly and assessments of pupils' progress are used by teachers to help plan their lessons and to target where additional support is required. This is monitored carefully to make sure it has the best effect on how well pupils do. There is a clear ethos in the school that everyone matters and is valued.
- Leaders, including governors, robustly manage all statutory requirements relating to safeguarding.
- The local authority provided strong support because of the previously reduced size of the school. This has now changed to moderate-touch support.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body supports the headteacher very well, is involved in the school self - evaluation and knows how well the school is performing. There is a good focus on challenging school leaders and understanding how well the pupils are doing in relation to pupils nationally. Governors are committed to becoming even more effective and undertake training to secure further improvements. They are actively involved at the school and, having been fully involved in the recent reduction of classes and the subsequent growth, they are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are aware that teachers' salary progression is only awarded to reflect their quality of teaching and any leadership responsibilities. Funding to the school is monitored very well by governors who work closely with the headteacher to make sure any additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is spent effectively and that pupils in receipt of the funding make at least the same good progress as other pupils in the school.
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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	111860
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	412261

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	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annabelle Sylvester
Headteacher	Julie Elvy
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
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