

# Polperro Community Primary School

Brentfields, Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2JJ

## Inspection dates

19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Teaching is not of a consistent quality across the school and has not been good enough over time to ensure that pupils achieve well or to their full ability.
- The handwriting and basic numeracy skills of some pupils are not good enough.
- Teachers' marking and use of targets and assessments of pupils' progress vary across the school. As a result, not all pupils have a clear enough view of how to improve nor are they able to undertake activities that match their ability and interests.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have not been using improved checks of the quality of teaching and learning long enough or with sufficient rigour to fully accelerate pupils' progress in all classes.
- Not all governors have been suitably trained, and procedures introduced by governors in recent terms have not been implemented long enough to fully hold senior staff to account.
- Although most pupils attend well, the attendance of a number of pupils is below average.

### The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher has the support of staff, governors and parents and carers in sustaining a friendly community atmosphere that promotes pupils' enjoyment of school and good behaviour and helps them to form supportive relationships.
- Adults working in the school provide consistently good care and diligently safeguard pupils' welfare.
- Teaching and learning is consistently good in Year 1 and in the Years 5 and 6 class.
- Strengthened team leadership and management are improving the determination and ability of the school to bring improvement.
- Reading is taught well across the school, especially at the beginning of each day, and because of good relationships with parents and carers this continues for most pupils at home. Consequently, pupils succeed in reading.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of learning activities outside in the school grounds and across the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 11 lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher during most of these observations.
- The inspector observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also observed part of a celebration assembly and a practice of the pupils' performance for the Polperro Festival.
- Meetings were held with groups of Year 6 girls and boys and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and break times. The inspector met with governors and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspector also took account of 35 parents' and carers' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, in planning and undertaking the inspection and also received 14 staff questionnaires. The inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents and carers as they brought their children to school and held a separate interview with one parent or carer.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Polperro is a below average sized primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class and most other pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes.
- Most pupils attending the school are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. These proportions vary across the classes, but overall are below those found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the expected times is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A nursery unit for children aged from two to four years also operates on the school site and is subject to a separate inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so that they are good across the school by:
  - ensuring that pupils are given work that is appropriate for their individual needs and abilities and taught in a way that stimulates their interest
  - developing a more consistent whole-school approach to marking pupils' work and using targets for improvement so that pupils are shown exactly how well they have done and what they need to do next to improve
  - more systematically developing pupils' handwriting and basic numeracy skills as they move through the school.
- Improve the leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - strengthening the way that senior leaders work with staff to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning, in particular, to ensure that actions taken lift pupils' progress and raise standards more quickly
  - more specifically ensuring the accuracy of assessments of pupils' attainment, matching them with evaluations of the quality of teaching and pupils' work, and refining the use of data on pupils' progress to check the impact of teaching
  - ensuring that all new members of the governing body are well trained and are better placed, with other governors, to hold school leaders to account and bring improvement

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

- Make more effective use of the school's good relationships with parents and carers to improve pupils' attendance by:
  - raising awareness and emphasising the importance of good attendance on pupils' learning
  - more rigorously reducing authorisation of absences during term time.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Previous national test results at the end of Year 6 show that over time pupils' attainment and progress have not been good enough due to inconsistent teaching.
- School assessments at the end of Year 6 this year indicate an increased number of pupils showing above average levels of attainment in English and mathematics in response to sustained good teaching and progress in Years 5 and 6. However, inspection evidence shows that pupils' levels of attainment in some classes and the too slow progress they make require improvement.
- Children's skills on entry in the Reception class vary from year to year, but generally their overall levels of skill match those expected for their age.
- Children make variable progress in Reception, developing reading, speaking, creative and physical skills effectively, but their social and numeracy skills develop more slowly.
- Observations of lessons, pupils' work and the school's strengthened assessments of pupils' progress show an improving, but still mixed picture of pupils' progress through the school.
- As a result of more consistent and effective teaching of reading, especially of phonics (the sounds that letters make), most pupils learn to read well. This was seen, for example, as pupils read complex texts in lessons and tackled new and tricky words confidently and described story characters well when talking to the inspector. Above average scores in Year 1 phonics screening checks also reflect pupils' improving reading skills.
- Improved teaching and rich outdoor learning experiences have also widened pupils' vocabulary and developed their good speaking skills and these are now underpinning a positive enrichment of the pupils' ability to write expressively. For example, this was seen in a lively role play session in the Years 2 and 3 class when a pupil described a pen as, 'a magical golden pen in the Queen's pocket'.
- At times, pupils' basic handwriting and numeracy skills, including in Reception, lack such imaginative and consistent stimulus and require improvement.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from additional adult support and in response to plentiful practical opportunities make good progress in relation to their starting points and abilities. Pupils joining the school other than at the normal time of entry also achieve as well as their classmates.
- In 2012, Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained as well as other pupils in reading, but lagged behind in mathematics and writing. This year, in response to carefully targeted adult help, pupils in receipt of this support have closed the gap in writing and narrowed the gap in mathematics from half a term to one quarter of a term's progress.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching varies, which means that it is still not yet consistently good enough to ensure pupils bridge gaps in previous learning as they move through the school.
- There are aspects of teaching that are strengthened by consistent practice. For example, reading is taught well in all classes, especially at the beginning of each day when pupils, organised in groups of similar ability, are taught phonics and then return to their regular classes to continue further reading activities. Good links with parents and carers ensure that regular reading at home also helps pupils to continue to make good progress.
- Following improved checks of pupils' progress, earlier identification and support of pupils' needs mean that more consistent practice now underpins the additional support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium. For example, during a good English lesson in Year 1 pupils with particularly complex needs were able to work practically alongside their peers and made good progress at their own level because of close

individual support from well-deployed and very caring teaching assistants.

- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also benefit from consistently good teaching. In a mathematics lesson based on units of measure pupils responded well to the teacher's high expectations. Pupils were required to think for themselves and solve problems matched to their level of understanding.
- Work is not always matched to pupils' ability as effectively in other classes, including in Reception, and this results in some variation in pupils' progress. For example, girls and more-able pupils sometimes sustain their interest and make better progress than other pupils.
- Teachers and their assistants manage behaviour well and use questioning effectively to let pupils know how well they are doing, and speaking skills are taught well. Occasionally, whole-class discussions continue for too long or fail to capture pupils' interest and some pupils lose concentration and begin to chatter.
- There are inconsistencies in the way teachers use targets for improvement and mark the pupils' work. As a result, some pupils do not have a clear enough picture of how they can improve their work and consequently do not respond well enough to quicken their progress.
- The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is given appropriate priority across the range of subjects and, unlike their handwriting and basic numeracy skills which often require improvement, the pupils' ability to write expressively is taught well.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- When interviewed by the inspector, Year 6 girls reflected the views of other pupils by saying, 'This a caring school where we have lots of friends and adults give us the chance to be ourselves and keep us safe.'
- Staff, governors and most parents and carers responding via the online questionnaire or in discussion with the inspector agreed that pupils behave well and enjoy helpful relationships with each other and with adults.
- Observations of lessons, lunch and break times also showed pupils' typically good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- Occasionally a few pupils begin to chatter in lessons, but only when the teaching and whole-class discussions fail to stimulate their interest. In contrast, for example, when practising their speaking roles in the Polperro Festival, pupils showed outstanding behaviour, particularly in their spontaneous applause of each other's efforts and contributions.
- Boys and girls in Year 6 all agree that they are making better progress now than at times in the past, reflecting their appreciation of the stimulating learning activities provided in this class and the generally improved outdoor learning opportunities across the school.
- Pupils also talk knowledgeably about the forms that bullying can take, for example, physical or verbal abuse and confidently report that, 'There is no bullying at this school, just a few pupils showing a lack of thought for others from time to time.' Pupils also know how to stay safe and report that adults are quick to offer support to keep them safe.
- Most pupils attend well, reflecting their enjoyment of school, but too many pupils do not attend regularly enough and although improving in the spring term, attendance is still below average.

### **The leadership and management** require improvement

- Until this academic year, senior leadership, including governance, has not been rigorous enough in checking the quality of provision and using information to quicken the pace of improvement and secure the consistency of good teaching needed to fill gaps in pupils' previous learning.
- Some actions of the headteacher and senior colleagues have been effective in raising standards, for example, providing consistently good teaching of reading and rich outdoor learning experiences for the pupils in the school grounds. In recent terms, a more formally agreed and

organised team approach to leadership, including governors, has strengthened the way leaders and managers check the effectiveness of the school.

- This has already begun to improve teaching and is providing the additional support that some pupils need to bridge gaps in previous learning at an earlier stage. As a result, for example, pupils' spoken vocabulary and sentence writing skills are being developed more quickly. All adults working in the school are committed to keeping pupils safe, tackling discrimination and treating them equally. They make sure that disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils arriving from other backgrounds take a full part in all the school has to offer.
- Leaders manage finances efficiently and ensure that additional funds such as the pupil premium help those pupils in receipt of such support to achieve as well as other pupils.
- The headteacher and staff sustain close links with parents, carers and the local community and use these effectively to provide a good breadth of learning activities, including across the expressive arts and the environment. Out of school activities such as Forest School, and assemblies when celebrating pupils' achievements, also show that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fully promoted.
- The local authority now provides effective assistance in helping to establish a more efficient team approach to leadership, including governance, and in strengthening checks of pupils' progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance requires improvement because over time members of the governing body have lacked a sharp enough picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently they have not always acted with sufficient rigour to quicken pupils' progress and improve the school's performance in relation to that of other schools nationally. This academic year, governors have put in place more efficient procedures and now receive more reliable data of pupils' progress from a new staff leadership team. These are now enabling governors to check the effectiveness of the school more thoroughly. As a result, governors are also becoming more able to hold senior leaders to account and with improved information about the performance of teachers and other staff are better placed to more closely link decisions about pay to pupils' achievements. For example, governors are now checking to ensure that pupils in receipt of the pupil premium receive the support they need to help them to achieve as well as other pupils. Even though the governing body has some new members yet to undergo training, it sustains good links with parents, carers and the community, soundly manages finance and safeguards pupils' welfare.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111955
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	411720

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	111
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lucy Finnimore
<b>Headteacher</b>	Roger Carter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01503 272249
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