

St Mary's Church of England School, Truro

Higher Trehaverne, Truro, TR1 3RJ

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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:

- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not good enough. The gap in achievement between them and their peers, in English and mathematics, is not being closed effectively enough.
- Teachers do not always use information on pupils' progress to plan tasks to meet their needs, or make full use of additional adults to support pupils' learning in lessons.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils' work is marked accurately. As a result, when pupils use teachers' comments to review and improve their work it leads to some misunderstanding.
- Programmes of work, especially in English and mathematics, do not ensure that pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well. The programmes are not effective and restrict pupils' ability to make accelerated progress.
- Leaders do not monitor closely enough how the additional funding provided to support pupils is used, and the effect it is having on raising achievement.

The school has the following strengths:

- The majority of pupils make good progress at the school. This leads to above-average attainment in English and mathematics by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6.
- Most pupils' progress in reading and writing has improved strongly following a whole-school focus and a successful teaching programme on phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make).
- Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are good. They enjoy their lessons, are respectful, and their attendance is above average. They say they feel safe in school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, through the work pupils do in lessons and in the wide range of additional activities on offer, including residential visits.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 lessons, observing seven teachers. Inspectors also undertook a learning walk to inspect the teaching of phonics. The headteacher joined inspectors for a number of observations.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at examples of pupils' work to find out how well they learn, including the work of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including school improvement plans, priorities for development, achievement information and documents relating to the safeguarding of children.
- Inspectors took account of the 42 responses to the online Parent View survey and the 14 responses to the staff questionnaire during the inspection. Two parents and carers forwarded responses to inspectors independently.

Inspection team

John Cavill, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Nebesnuick

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises just one Reception class. The school does not have a nursery.
- Almost all pupils are White British, with very few pupils from different ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by the local authority and children from armed-service families) is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school manages a breakfast and an after-school club for the pupils.
- The school does not provide access to any alternative or specialist provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to good or better, in order to raise achievement generally, by ensuring that:
 - when marking pupils' work teachers check thoroughly for mistakes and misconceptions so that pupils are able to use this information to review and improve their work
 - additional adults are used in classes more effectively to support learning and accelerate pupils' progress.
- Close the gap in achievement between disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by pupil premium funding, with those of their peers by:
 - accelerating their progress in English and mathematics
 - making sure that teachers make better use of information about their progress to plan lessons to better meet these pupils' needs.
- Improve leadership and management by monitoring more closely the use and impact of pupil premium funding to ensure it is properly directed at supporting pupils who are eligible for free school meals, so that the tasks they are given enable them to make faster progress, especially in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress made by disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who are supported by pupil premium funding is not good enough in English or mathematics. This is because the quality of teaching provided for these pupils is not focused sufficiently closely to meet their needs. Consequently their progress is not accelerating quickly enough to close the gap in achievement between them and other pupils at the school.
- Since the previous inspection too few pupils have exceeded the expected rate of progress by the end of Key Stage 2. This has been more noticeable in English, and especially in reading. However, following the programme to improve achievement in reading across the school, progress data at the school indicate that this is likely to improve rapidly this year.
- The school has successfully introduced a phonics programme to support the teaching of reading and writing. Along with the whole-school focus on improving English over the last two years, this has improved achievement for the majority of pupils, who are now making good progress in reading and writing. Attainment in reading is now above average both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6.
- When children join Reception their skills and knowledge are generally similar to what would normally be expected for their age. Most children respond well to the interesting learning activities they are given and make good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result they enter Key Stage 1 with above-expected levels of skill and knowledge.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, the attainment of most pupils is above average in English and mathematics. This ensures they are well prepared to move onto the next stage of their education.
- Pupil premium funding is not being used effectively enough to accelerate the progress of pupils in receipt of it to close the gap in their achievement successfully. As a result, they are approximately one year behind the standards reached by their classmates in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not always focused on meeting the needs of all pupils. Some groups of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, are not making enough progress because teaching is not always accurately matched to their individual needs. This limits their achievement over time and restricts their ability to catch up with their peers.
- Most groups of pupils make better progress because teaching is good enough to meet their needs well. Work in lessons is appropriately set, and pupils of similar ability work together well in their groups.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour in lessons and of what most pupils are able to learn, challenging them well to make good progress. This results in lessons that are productive and which encourage pupils to think and learn by themselves.
- In the better lessons, additional adults are used well to support learning. During a Year 1 mathematics lesson where pupils were solving word-problems on a pirate theme, some pupils extended the task successfully using doubling because the teaching assistant challenged their learning well. However, this is not always the case, and additional adults too often undertake time-consuming administration tasks rather than supporting pupils to accelerate their learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and provide some 'next steps' to help the pupils to improve their work. Pupils report that this helps them, and they usually make any required alterations. However, teachers do not pay enough attention to checking everything that is incorrect and challenging any misconceptions. For example, in a Year 6 literacy book, the teacher indicated that the pupil had included a 'play on words' in the work when clearly they had not. In other years, teachers ticked all boxes on 'learning ladders' and then wrote comments that

said aspects were missing, giving pupils mixed messages about what is good or correct.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is, for most pupils, effective, and ensures they make good progress. Teachers make effective use of the outside and inside spaces, using resources well to promote children's development towards the early learning goals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school. They attend regularly, are happy and have positive attitudes to learning, especially when the work is engaging and challenging.
- Behaviour around the school is good and pupils demonstrate respect for each other, their teachers and other adults at the school. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including emotional, physical and cyber bullying. Some parents, carers and pupils who were spoken to by an inspector talked about some occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour outside at lunchtime. However, pupils were quick to say that the adults at the school would quickly resolve any incidents or problems they may have. Visits to the playground during the inspection confirmed that behaviour outside is good.
- In most lessons behaviour is good. However, very occasionally there is some inappropriate behaviour such as chatting to each other or losing interest in the task. This is usually because the work provided by the teacher is not appropriately demanding, but any unacceptable behaviour is quickly identified and corrected by teachers.
- Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire or spoke to an inspector were satisfied about the way that the school cares for and looks after their children. All pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, say they feel safe and very secure.
- Attendance is above the national average and pupils are keen to get to school and into lessons. Allowing pupils to arrive at school early into classrooms ensures a punctual start to the school day and reflects the importance the school places on regular attendance. Some pupils attend the breakfast club, which provides a good start to school, and the after-school club looks after pupils well.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the issues relating to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement at the school. However, they are not monitoring the effect that teaching is having on all pupils closely enough, and consequently not all pupils are making sufficient progress and achieving well. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged groups of pupils.
- Leaders have made use of pupil premium funding to provide additional support for these pupils. However, this has not been monitored closely enough to ensure that it is having the desired effect to accelerate pupils' progress and close their gap in achievement.
- The curriculum, especially for English and mathematics, is not planned well enough to enable all pupils to make good progress. It provides well for most pupils with work that is appropriate and challenges them to do well. However, for some pupils, the tasks that are set do not fully meet their individual needs and, as a result, they make slower progress and are not assured of reaching levels of attainment similar to their peers'.
- Leaders and governors have successfully addressed all areas of concern in the previous inspection. They have secured some improved teaching, which has led to improved achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for most groups of pupils. Pupils' attendance has risen and is now above average. These improvements indicate capacity to sustain further improvement.
- The headteacher, supported by governors, has managed the performance of teachers well, and

has challenged them to improve their teaching and leadership responsibilities. Where there is a lack of evidence that teachers on higher pay have reached their performance target, they are not routinely awarded a further pay rise.

- Leaders share a determination to avoid discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity for all. There is still more to do on this by ensuring that any gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils are eliminated.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for very well through the curriculum and other activities, such as assemblies and visits. Encouraging pupils to work together, such as in the gardening club, helps them to develop their understanding of rural skills while working together developing their social skills.
 - The local authority provides this school with some light touch support.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed, support the school well, and undertake training to improve their effectiveness. They have a clear understanding of the need to support the headteacher in her quest to improve and challenge the performance of teachers in their teaching as well as in their leadership roles. Governors ensure that the link between performance and salary progression is challenged effectively. They monitor how well pupils are doing at the school and evaluate the impact of developments within the improvement plan on pupils' achievement. They check how well their school performs compared with others nationally to seek maximum impact on the outcomes for pupils. Governors monitor funding to the school well, and they assess the impact of initiatives as compared to the cost. They are clear about the need to use the pupil premium funding to improve the outcomes for pupils. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.
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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	111990
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	401222

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Pearne
Headteacher	Dianne Jones
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 April 2010
Telephone number	01872 276689
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