

Polruan Community Primary School

St Saviour's Hill, Polruan, Fowey, Cornwall. PL23 1PS

Inspection dates

4–5 March 2014

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The executive headteacher, staff and governors effectively deliver outcomes that provide well for all pupil needs.
- Good progress is made by all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However pupils' attainment varies from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The executive headteacher has succeeded in motivating staff to work as a team to improve all aspects of Polruan's work.
- The contribution of the teaching assistants reinforces the good teaching, especially for the less able pupils.
- Behaviour is of a good standard. Pupils feel safe and well-cared for.
- Pupils' positive attitudes in the classroom and good relationships with their teachers lead to effective learning in lessons.
- Attendance is above average.
- Being part of a federation provides a greater level of support for staff and wider opportunities for the pupils' development.
- The curriculum has many varied enrichment activities, events and trips which ensure that the pupils enjoy their learning.
- The executive headteacher and governing body have a clear vision for the school's future.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding. The standards pupils reach are not always high enough and the progress they make is not outstanding.
- Expectations for some pupils are too low in Key Stage 1 and the more able pupils are not always challenged enough.

Information about this inspection

- All staff were observed teaching. A total of 10 lessons were seen, five of these were joint lesson observations undertaken with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector observed the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent) and heard pupils from Year 2 and Year 3 read.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, groups of pupils, the special educational needs coordinator, the local authority representative, subject leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Federation's Governing Body and two other governors.
- The inspector looked at a range of evidence which included the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, records relating to behaviour and safety, the school's checks on how well it is doing, and curriculum and lesson plans.
- The inspector also looked at the work pupils were doing in their books and spoke to pupils in their lessons and during their free time.
- Parents were spoken to at the beginning and end of the school day and the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed. Responses from 7 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were checked.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Polruan is a much smaller than average-sized primary school situated near to Fowey.
- The vast majority of pupils at Polruan come from White British backgrounds.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-year classes. Each year group has a small number of pupils.
- A significant proportion of pupils have joined the school in Key Stage 2 with special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is above average.
- Polruan is a member school of the Wivelshire Federation, which consists of two primary schools, who share the same governing body and executive headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that pupils' work is always well matched to their individual abilities
 - ensuring teachers, when working with a small group of pupils, regularly check on the progress of all pupils when they are carrying out their written tasks.
- Raise the achievement of the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 by making sure that they are fully challenged by the work they are doing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' skills and knowledge on entry to the school are generally below those typical for their age. A significant number of pupils join Polruan in the older year groups and a relatively high proportion have been at the school for less than a year.
- The inspection findings and school information confirm that good teaching leads to all pupils making good progress throughout the school.
- The small number of pupils in each year group make comparisons between key stages and year groups far less relevant than in larger schools. Pupils' attainment varies from year to year because of the size of the classes and the fact that a significant number of pupils of mixed ability join Polruan towards the end of Key Stage 2.
- There have been less than seven pupils in Year 6 for the last two years.
- The most recent information collected by the school shows that progress is good in all classes as pupils move through Years 1 to 6, with some pupils making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The mixed year groups mean that the younger pupils are encouraged to keep up with their older classmates.
- The headteacher and staff know each individual pupil's needs, which are well provided for, and so all pupils, including those supported by the pupil premium, achieve well. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good quality support so that they achieve as well as other pupils. More able pupils also make good progress in line with their ability.
- The current proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium grant has more than doubled in comparison with last year.
- The majority of parents who completed the on-line survey on Parent View or spoke to the inspector considered that their children are making good progress and achieving well throughout the school. This positive response was supported by the school's most recent parent questionnaire.
- An effective programme is in place to ensure good teaching of phonics (the links between letters and sounds) which supports the development of the pupils' good reading skills.
- The consistent monitoring of individual pupil's rate of progress and level of achievement is precise and staff have a good understanding of how well each of their pupils is achieving. The same tracking system is used by both the primary schools in the federation. The data is regularly and closely checked to identify any individual or group of pupils who may require additional support.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good and results in good progress for all pupils. The sharing of expertise and subject knowledge across the federation since 2012 has helped improve teachers' practice.
- Lessons are well-planned and have clear learning goals that the pupils understand.
- Teachers bring varied and interesting strategies and activities into the classroom that capture their pupils' interest. For example, pupils are able to use a range of practical materials and resources in mathematics lessons to help them with their calculations.
- Staff have good subject knowledge. They praise pupils well for their efforts and correct any misunderstandings sensitively and in a positive way.
- Good use is made of the outdoor area for the younger pupils. A wide range of activities are on offer which extends their learning.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that the leadership of teaching has become increasingly rigorous. This drive is well supported by the teachers' commitment to keep the school moving forward.

- Staff provide good role models and are liked and respected by their pupils.
- Through half-termly progress meetings and accurate monitoring, teachers have a clear understanding of the level each individual pupil is working at.
- At times, activities are not well matched to the different abilities of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1. This results in some pupils finishing tasks quickly when they could take on more demanding work and so make more rapid progress.
- On occasions, teachers do not regularly check on pupils' progress when small groups are engaged in different writing activities, consequently not all pupils make as much progress as they could.
- Books are marked regularly and pupils are given guidance as to the quality of their work and how to make it better.
- Classrooms are colourful and stimulating. The displays incorporate a great deal of pupils' work.
- The teaching staff function well as a team and are supportive of each other. The skilful teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning at Polruan. Regular intervention sessions enable pupils who struggle with their work to make similar progress to others and help develop their confidence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in lessons and during the school day. The great majority of pupils are keen to learn in all subjects and have good relationships with their teachers. They are happy at school and make the most of every day.
- Polruan is a very inclusive school which values each of its pupils as an individual. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The school's work to keep its pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils cooperate well together at work and at play. The mixed year groups encourage them to 'team up' together from an early age. An example of this cooperation was seen during the inspection when a member of staff and a group of pupils were trying to break their team skipping 'record'!
- On occasions behaviour can become a little too boisterous on the playground but any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with appropriately and consistently.
- A small minority of pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. They receive a high level of support and make good progress in improving their social and emotional development.
- The majority of parents who met the inspector, completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) or responded to the school's own questionnaire felt that the pupils behave well.
- New pupils are accepted well. For example, a pupil who was new to Polruan said she felt very welcome and was much happier than she was in her previous school.
- Pupils understand what bullying means and how it can take place. However they thought that there was 'very little bullying, if any at all, at Polruan'. They also show good awareness of how to stay safe on the internet.
- Attendance has improved in recent years and is above average.
- The school's behaviour policy, based on the 'Good to be Green' system, is clearly understood and consistently applied. This helps maintain good relationships and mutual respect throughout the school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher provides extremely strong and determined leadership for Polruan and the federation as a whole. The staff and governors work towards a united vision for on-going improvement.

- The federation's improvement plan is focused on ambitious and appropriate development goals.
 - Since the establishment of the West Wivelshire Federation in 2012 the executive headteacher has worked very closely with the federation's governing body to put in place rigorous systems to monitor all aspects of the school's provision.
 - Careful management of the school's budget has provided for an increase in staffing levels.
 - An effective system of performance management is in place which has improved the quality of teaching. Teachers' movement up the salary scale is related to the quality and effectiveness of their teaching. Staff are seen teaching regularly and their practice is accurately judged.
 - The school makes effective use of the pupil premium funding to support regular small-group and one-to-one work, as well as additional subject teaching. This allows eligible pupils to do as well as their peers.
 - Staff questionnaires provide evidence that staff feel they are well supported by the leadership and that Polruan is well-managed.
 - A minority of parents are not wholly satisfied with some aspects of the school's work and do not feel that their views are taken into account.
 - The executive headteacher and senior staff are determined to avoid discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity. The needs of all pupils are catered for through the 'Achievement for All' and 'Thrive' programmes. The successful integration of pupils with a range of behavioural and educational needs reflects the school's principles of inclusion and equality.
 - The leadership team regularly checks that all pupils are on track to make good progress from their starting points. Pupil progress meetings are held every half term and ensure that staff are accountable for their pupils' progress. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs or who are entitled to the pupil premium is carefully monitored.
 - Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements. The senior leadership team identify and deal appropriately with any child welfare issues.
 - Parents receive regular information through termly reports and weekly class newsletters.
 - The local authority has played an active role in providing good effective support for the school.
 - The curriculum includes a wide range of visits, topics and experiences, including close links with the National Trust, which have extended pupils' learning.
 - The new primary school sports funding has been used successfully to extend the PE curriculum. Pupils benefit from specialist coaching and now participate in a wider variety of sports activities.
 - The curriculum provides good opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding.
 - The older pupils are well prepared for their transition onto secondary education and have the opportunity to spend the last fortnight of their final summer term at Fowey Community College.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors understand Polruan well and visit the school on a regular basis. The governing body is knowledgeable about the school's performance and how it compares with national standards. Decisions about spending are carefully evaluated and the budget is managed effectively. They ensure that staff salaries are closely linked to performance and that statutory safeguarding arrangements are in place. Governors understand the areas for development and work closely with the school to implement the plans for improvement. Governors are aware how the pupil premium funding is spent and how it has improved the provision for eligible pupils. Members of the governing body have completed the required training and understand their individual roles and joint responsibilities.
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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	111883
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	441224

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	45
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Mason
Executive Headteacher	Heidi Hoskin
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 November 2011
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