

# Devoran School

Devoran Lane, Devoran, Truro, Cornwall, TR3 6PA

**Inspection dates** 19–20 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Staff make full use of the school’s excellent facilities to ensure that all pupils enjoy their time at school and achieve well.
- From starting points broadly in line with expectations for their age, pupils make good progress to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically at least good. Teaching in mathematics, art, drama and sports is particularly strong.
- An increasing number of pupils across the school achieve high levels of skill in mathematics, art and sport.
- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and reflects the diligence of staff in caring for pupils.
- Pupils behave well and share very supportive friendships. Their attendance is above average.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. It is promoted very effectively through the excellent relationships and a wide range of exciting activities.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and senior managers have managed changes in Reception and Key Stage 1 staffing effectively.
- Governors are highly supportive and effective in holding the school to account. They work closely with senior staff to identify where improvement can be made and work determinedly with staff to achieve this.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In Years 1 and 2 classes, teachers do not always ensure that pupils settle down quickly into activities.
- Pupils’ skills in checking and improving their work are not developed well in all classes.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 17 lessons and were accompanied by the headteacher for some of these observations.
- The inspectors observed morning playtime and lunch breaks, and also visited the breakfast and after-school clubs, and attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of the school council and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- Inspectors also met with governors and the lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- Ten members of staff expressed their views in staff questionnaires. The inspectors also spoke informally with a number of parents and grandparents as they brought children to school.
- The views of parents were gathered from 62 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection.
- The inspectors also received a letter from a parent.
- Inspectors 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.
- The inspectors also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. The inspectors also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Anderson

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional funding, known as pupil premium, is well below average. This additional funding is for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated in a designated Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve teaching so that pupils typically make rapid and sustained progress in all parts of the school by:
  - ensuring teachers in Years 1 and 2 settle pupils quickly into their activities
  - developing pupils' ability to check and improve their own work as they move through the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' good achievement is evident in the above average levels of attainment reached by the end of Year 6 and Year 2. Consistently strong teaching of mathematics across the school sustains above average standards in this subject.
- The school's emphasis on checking pupils' basic literacy skills more effectively has quickened pupils' progress. As a result, after a minor dip in previously high standards last year, teachers have now restored pupils' above average levels of attainment in reading and writing.
- Most pupils make good progress across the school, and prompted skilfully by adults, successfully extend their speaking and listening skills, together with their knowledge of vocabulary. Progress is not as consistently strong in Years 1 and 2 as in other year groups. Pupils respond more consistently and enthusiastically to teachers' high expectations in Years 4 to 6 and an increasing number are making rapid progress.
- Children begin school with knowledge, skills and understanding that match the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception and do particularly well in developing self-confidence and the ability to communicate and learn well together.
- Strengthened teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved reading skills in Year 1. The outcomes of the annual phonics check in Year 1 in 2013 were broadly in line with those found nationally. Effective teaching of reading, frequent visits to the well-stocked school library and strong parental support of reading at home sustain pupils' good progress in reading.
- Observations of pupils' learning in classes, work in books and the school's checks of pupils' developing skills show that all pupils including the most able now achieve well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive sensitive additional adult support and make progress that is similar to that of other pupils.
- In Year 6 in 2013, there were too few pupils receiving support through additional funding to make valid comparisons between their attainment and that of other pupils. Across the school, in response to well-planned additional adult assistance, pupils supported by additional funding are now making equally good progress as their peers.
- The attainment of pupils in Year 6 currently assisted by the extra funding matches that of other pupils in reading and writing. Pupils receiving this support are still about one term's attainment behind their peers in mathematics. However, this is an improving picture.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically at least good. Across the school, all teachers promote positive relationships and boost pupils' confidence by valuing pupils' thoughtful responses to their carefully considered questions.
- Staff encourage pupils to express their ideas and provide a stimulating range of topics, such as 'World Book Day', to enthuse pupils. Teachers develop pupils' writing effectively across the range of subjects. For example, pupils completed high quality charcoal and pastel drawings in the style of Henry Moore and wrote perceptively about them.
- Teachers, especially in Years 4 to 6, skilfully extend the pupils' understanding of technical terms. For example, during English in Year 6, the teacher focused on the precise meaning of 'synonyms' and 'antonyms' to significantly improve the quality of pupils' descriptive writing.
- Teachers develop pupils' handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills effectively. For example, during literacy in Year 4 the teacher stressed the importance of a dictionary and thesaurus to secure pupils' accurate spelling.
- Teachers develop pupils' basic mathematical skills in a consistent way and provide activities and support to build well on previous learning.
- Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and use symbols to praise pupils and to show them how to

improve. Teachers give good advice to extend pupils' understanding when talking to them in class.

- Staff in Years 4 to 6 classes sustain consistently high expectations that pupils should contribute fully to their own learning. As a result, pupils make rapid gains in their learning. This is not always the case in Years 1 and 2 classes where pupils' learning occasionally slows because they sometimes take too long to settle down to work.
- Teaching is also not yet outstanding because the pupils' skills in checking and improving their work are not developed systematically enough as they move through the school.
- Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development significantly through a wide range of stimulating activities. Staff also celebrate pupils' art and topic work in vibrant displays, such as 'The Amazing River Ganges', which enrich pupils' interest in learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils aided by the additional funding, often on a one-to-one basis. Children in the Reception class are able to successfully find things out for themselves. During the inspection, children were observed learning well as they searched for mini-beasts and designed their own 'rain shakers'.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Often it is exemplary, for example when pupils are fully stimulated by exciting activities at break times and when teachers challenge them to give of their very best.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because, occasionally, when pupils are slow to move from one activity to another, their attention slips and reduces their contributions to learning.
- Pupils move around the school in a confident and relaxed way and their full participation in the excellent range of clubs clearly reflects their full enjoyment of school. Very supportive relationships between staff and parents also contribute greatly to the pupils' consistently above average attendance.
- Pupils share many friendships and the warmth of relationships between pupils and adults, and between pupils themselves, boosts their love of school and learning. At break times, for example, even when fully absorbed in their skateboarding, older pupils are carefully mindful and considerate of younger pupils.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know about the different forms that bullying might take, for example verbal and racist abuse, and recall assemblies and discussions about how to stay safe.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably about cyber bullying and internet safety and confidently assert that, 'Because we use computers a lot we know how to use them safely and not to talk to strangers.'
- Pupils insist that bullying is rare in the school and confidently state that staff are quick and fair when intervening, 'to sort things out'. Pupils on the school council agreed that everyone is safe at the school, 'Because staff look after us very caringly.'
- School records and the very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire support this view. As one parent commented, 'There is a genuine family feeling at this school because staff really know and care about our children.'

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Despite the decline in the school's overall effectiveness since the previous inspection, the experienced headteacher provides strong leadership. Her strengthened partnership work with senior managers has led to a significant extension of the learning activities provided for the pupils.
- For example, the school is making good use of the new sports funding to provide additional training for staff and an even wider range of sports such as 'Tag Rugby' and 'Zumba'. These are

raising pupils' participation in sport and enriching their health and well-being. Sports leaders have identified increased take-up of sports with 93% of Key Stage 2 pupils attending at least one club.

- Leaders work well as a team to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Staff are regularly consulted to identify training needs and there is a close link between evaluations of their performance, their salary progression and school's and pupils' needs.
- Governors provide excellent support and challenge and with other leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are implemented efficiently and keep pupils safe. Governors stand firmly alongside the headteacher in identifying and rectifying areas for improvement. For example, determined action in recent terms has already addressed concerns about pupils' writing and phonic skills, which emerged in last year's national checks.
- Leaders are supporting new staff in Reception and Years 1 and 2 classes effectively. This has secured good teaching and continues to quicken pupils' progress. The high level of staff morale seen in staff questionnaire responses also shows a united determination to sustain the school's strong capacity to bring further improvement.
- Although improving, leaders and managers recognise that the current quality of teaching and pupils' progress through the school are not yet improving rapidly enough to show outstanding leadership.
- Staff are particularly diligent in checking pupils' progress to quickly identify pupils who may be at risk of not doing as well as others. This enables staff to meet pupils' needs equally and to eliminate discrimination so that all pupils achieve equally.
- For example, staff give additional adult assistance to disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those supported by the additional funding that significantly increases their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The school provides an extensive range of learning activities for the pupils, especially across the expressive arts and sports. These include a wealth of clubs and visits, including residential trips, that are fully supported by staff, parents and often governors.
- Several parents questioned by an inspector typically reflected the views of many by highlighting the impressive array of activities provided by the school. One parent wrote that, 'Some were unexpected favourites with poetry recitation at the Truro festival, running club, find your sport, and choir being recent hits.'
- The pupils' wholehearted participation in such events greatly enhances their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enjoyment of school.
- The local authority sustains a light-touch relationship with this good and improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are particularly active in the school and communicate well with parents. The governing body is highly focused and organised and strongly drives improvement. Governors work closely with the headteacher and senior staff and are equally determined in supporting them and holding them to account. For example, governors undertake regular visits to the school, carefully examine detailed reports from senior staff, and check the progress of different groups of pupils. Governors ensure that pupils supported through additional funding benefit from additional teaching and achieve as well as other pupils in the school. Governors secure a good understanding of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress through their various sub-committee deliberations. They visit classes and question leaders carefully. For example, governors check that steps taken to bring improvement through staff training and considerations of teachers' pay and performance also raise pupils' achievements. Governors fulfil all statutory requirements fully and maintain the school's extensive facilities in the excellent state of repair that enriches pupils' learning.

## 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>	111872
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	440992

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.

<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>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Guy Chappell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Breakwell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01872 863223
<b>Fax number</b>	01872 862281
<b>Email address</b>	admin@devoran.cornwall.sch.uk



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