

Delaware Community Primary School

Drakewalls, Gunnislake, Cornwall, PL18 9EN

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- There has been significant turbulence in the leadership of the school during the last three years. The lack of consistent leadership at senior, subject and governor level has had a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The achievement of pupils, particularly in English and mathematics, is inadequate. Weak teaching means that pupils do not make the progress they should as they move through the school.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. Moreover, a lack of challenge for the most able pupils limits their progress.
- Until recently, weak monitoring of the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has not helped these pupils do the best they can.
- Pupils are not prepared well enough for the next phase in their education. There is insufficient coverage of science and the humanities across the curriculum.
- In the past, too many lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour and some pupils felt unsafe as a result of bullying. New senior leaders have acted swiftly to improve behaviour. Improvements are clear but very recent.
- Around half of the governing body is new in post since the last inspection. While training has been provided, governors do not yet provide sufficient challenge to senior leaders or monitor how well the school is doing carefully enough.

The school has the following strengths

- New senior leaders have introduced positive changes that are starting to have an impact, especially in improving behaviour and the quality of teaching.
- The area resource centre for pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder provides a very effective education for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in nine lessons, four of which were undertaken jointly with school leaders. In addition, shorter visits were made to classes to check on standards of behaviour and the use of teaching assistants.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the assistant headteacher, teachers with specific areas of responsibility, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of parents were gathered from the 19 responses to the on-line Parent View questionnaire, from talking to parents who were visiting the school and from four letters received.
- Pupils' views were gathered from a meeting and from discussions with pupils, including those in the Area Resource Centre, throughout the inspection.
- Many staff made inspectors aware of their opinions through the staff questionnaire as well as through discussions.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books during their lesson observations. They also had a detailed look at samples of books from classes throughout the school. They also listened to some pupils read.
- A range of written evidence was looked at, including evidence on the progress being made by pupils, teachers' planning and assessment, the school's improvement planning and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Wendy Marriott

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Information about this school

- Delaware Community Primary is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority, and children with a parent in the armed forces) is below average.
- A large majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which represent the minimum expectation for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The school is part of a hard federation with the nearby Gunnislake Primary School. The two schools share a single governing body.
- Delaware Community Primary hosts an area resource centre, managed by the governing body on behalf of the local authority, which provides specialist education for up to five primary-aged pupils who have an autistic spectrum disorder.
- There is extended school provision before and after school but this is not run by the governing body and is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- Since the previous inspection, the last permanent headteacher left in September 2013. She has yet to be replaced. During this time, the school has been supported by three acting headteachers.
- There is currently an acting executive headteacher who is responsible for the two schools in the federation pending the appointment of a new headteacher by the governing body.
- A new assistant headteacher, who currently works only at Delaware Community Primary, was appointed in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - making use of the wider expertise available within the federation and providing appropriate training to enable teachers to become as effective as possible
 - supporting teachers so that they know how to best help pupils improve their skills in punctuation, spelling and, particularly, in extended writing
 - ensuring that teachers all use the same methods for teaching phonics (the knowledge of letters and the sounds they make) and provide appropriate challenge for more able readers
 - making sure that pupils have more opportunities to cover topics that include suitable science and humanities work.
- Raise the achievement of pupils to at least the standards expected nationally by:
 - ensuring that children in Reception are better prepared for joining Year 1 by increasing the focus on developing the skills that support work in the use of number, and in reading and

writing

- setting work at the right level for the most able pupils so they are challenged to fulfil their potential
 - developing the monitoring of the progress of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who attract the pupil premium to ensure they are narrowing the attainment gaps with other pupils
 - improving pupils’ skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics throughout the school so they achieve well regardless of their background, ability or starting point.
- Ensure that standards of behaviour are equally high in every classroom and with every member of staff by:
- ensuring that all lessons are engaging and interesting for pupils
 - making sure that the new behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school.
- Ensure that school leaders and governors are contributing strongly and equally effectively to improving outcomes rapidly for pupils by:
- appointing a suitable permanent headteacher at the earliest opportunity
 - challenging weak performance through regular and rigorous checking of the school’s work
 - supporting the key subject leaders in English and mathematics to lead improvement in their subjects
 - developing subject leaders’ understanding of how to use the information resulting from checks on pupils’ progress to improve the quality of teaching
 - undertaking regular checks of teaching in all subjects, modelling best practice, and identifying appropriate training opportunities for all staff.

An external review of governance, and the school’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- The achievement of pupils is inadequate because too many of them do not make the progress of which they are capable as they move through the school.
- Children enter the Reception class with skills broadly in line with those expected, although some show particular strengths in areas of learning such as reading and use of number. Over time, teaching has failed to prepare them adequately for accessing the National Curriculum in Year 1.
- The teaching of early reading and writing is weak and inconsistent. Too many younger pupils do not get the best start in learning to read, and as a result standards in reading throughout the school are below average. Delay in starting to teach children to write further hinders the development of their basic skills.
- Pupils have therefore lost ground by the time they move into Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, standards vary year on year but are generally well below those expected for pupils of their age in all subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- When they reach the end of Year 6, pupils have not been sufficiently well prepared to move to secondary school because their attainment in English and mathematics remains well below that expected. The percentages making or exceeding expected progress as they go through the school are lower than those found in similar schools.
- The most able pupils are also underachieving. They do not make the progress of which they are capable because not all teachers are confident in identifying these pupils or in setting work at the right level for them.
- Until recently the progress of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs was not being tracked effectively and class teachers did not know how well pupils were progressing. A new system introduced in September is enabling class teachers to establish a better understanding of the progress that these pupils are now making.
- The achievement of pupils in the specialist area resource centre is good. They receive excellent support and their progress is mapped very carefully. Within a short time, they start to make rapid progress and this enables many to return to supported mainstream places when they move to secondary school.
- In 2013, national assessments showed that Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium were six months behind their classmates in mathematics and writing and just under four months in reading. While the additional funding is used to provide extra staffing and additional support including wider support for families, its impact on pupils progress is too variable, particularly in English and mathematics. The new system to track the progress of this group of pupils indicates that their identified needs are starting to be met and progress is beginning to speed up for some.
- The additional funding made available this year to promote sport and physical education has been used well. There are also more opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of festivals and competitions, which they are taking up with enthusiasm.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Over time, teaching, including the teaching of English and mathematics, has been inadequate.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils, especially the most able, can achieve. Pupils quickly become bored where the work does not stretch them or engage them, too often resulting in low-level disruption which has a negative impact on learning.
- Pupils make insufficient progress because teaching does not yet enable pupils to make the most of their skills and abilities. As a result, teachers are now having termly pupil progress meetings with the assistant headteacher. These focus on checking the progress that pupils are making and then planning how to set work at the right level for them.

- In the short time she has been at the school the acting headteacher has challenged and supported teachers to improve their teaching so that pupils begin to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Until very recently, teachers did not systematically check on the progress of each pupil in their class to monitor how well they were progressing over time. Some teachers are still not confident in using this information to inform their teaching. The exception to this is in the area resource centre, where teaching is of a high standard, and staff use their expertise to excellent effect in helping pupils with severe learning disabilities to make rapid progress.
- Skills in reading and writing have been held back because of too much variation in the quality of teaching and in opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, especially the skills of extended writing.
- Specific support for children with identified gaps in their learning and understanding is delivered well by teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy these sessions. Their success is starting to be effectively measured in terms of how well the pupils make progress over time.
- Marking of work is done regularly and consistently across the school. However, where pupils have made errors or suggestions are made for how work might be improved, pupils are not given the opportunities to correct and learn from their mistakes. A detailed look at pupils' books shows that too often similar mistakes are made by pupils which are then left uncorrected. Consequently, pupils' spelling and punctuation, for example, are particularly weak.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate because until recently too much time was lost to learning as a result of bad behaviour in lessons. Over time, behaviour around the school, particularly in the playground, has been very poor.
- Since last term, a new behaviour policy has been introduced with the full support of pupils and their parents. There is general agreement that this is helping pupils to take much greater responsibility for their own actions; however, its long-term impact has yet to be seen.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. As a result of the new assistant headteacher's actions to tackle bullying and improve behaviour pupils say they now feel much safer. The number of incidents of bullying has reduced. Pupils have a greater understanding of the different types of bullying and how to deal with it when it occurs. This has been covered well during lessons and staff are playing a positive role in improving this aspect of the school's work.
- Staff, along with parents and carers, work closely in supporting pupils who display very challenging behaviour. These pupils are starting to take greater responsibility for their own actions.
- Attendance is slightly below the national average. However, it is improving as a result of the positive work being undertaken by school leaders to support parents and carers.
- The use of the pupil premium to part-fund a parent support worker has had a positive impact in reducing the amount of persistent absence. Pupils who previously had weak attendance records are now attending on a much more regular basis and so able to learn more effectively.
- Pupils in the area resource centre often display very challenging behaviour when they first arrive. Staff are well trained in dealing with this, so that over time there is a major improvement. As a result, these pupils become more confident and show much better social skills, particularly in the way they relate positively to other people.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- A long period of instability in senior leadership has left a powerful legacy of under-achievement and low standards. There has been little vision or direction and the drive for school improvement has not been sustained because of the frequent leadership changes.
- Until very recently, school leaders and governors have been unable to accurately check how well the school is working and identify where improvement is required. For example, procedures to check on the quality of teaching including teachers' planning and marking have been inadequate. Consequently, school leaders have not set appropriate targets to help teachers to develop the quality of their work and raise standards quickly.
- Subject leaders do not have a sufficient understanding of how to drive improvement in their area. They have not been supported in developing their understanding of the information resulting from checks on pupils' progress and how this can be used to improve the quality of teaching. Subject leaders have not had opportunities to check on teaching in classrooms, to model what is expected, or to lead training, to bring about improvements.
- In the past, school leaders did not track how well pupils were progressing and so did not have a clear picture of how well different groups of pupils, including those eligible to receive pupil premium were achieving. Consequently, challenging targets were not set and school leaders and governors did not ensure equality of opportunity for pupils in the school.
- The changes to develop a curriculum based around topics and themes are not yet all in place. This means that key areas such as science and humanities are not fully covered, and pupils lack opportunities to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.
- The local authority has brokered arrangements for a series of acting headteachers to support the school as well as training governors so they could begin to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. This has not been effective in halting the school's rapid decline since the last inspection.
- Despite significant turbulence in leadership at all levels, staff remain committed to the school and its pupils. Current senior leaders are building on this commitment to create a more positive climate for improvement to take place. As one staff member put it, 'The current acting headteacher has done a great job in improving morale. I'm proud of this school and the work we are now doing together.' This work is beginning to have a beneficial impact for pupils and staff.
- Teachers are now aware of the links between their performance and pay. Previously there was little expectation that those on the higher pay scale would take a greater responsibility for improving the quality of education and lead important aspects of the school's development.
- The additional primary school sports funding has been used effectively to improve teachers' expertise through good quality training from local specialist sports colleges and professional coaches.
- Positive links with parents and carers are now being fostered. One parent writing about the difficulties that the school has faced wrote: 'Since the new acting headteacher took over, there have been significant improvements and hopefully things will continue to improve.'
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed appropriately across the school. For example, the Saint Piran's Day festivities that took place during the inspection enabled Cornish music, dancing and tradition to be celebrated and enjoyed by the many families that attended.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors carry out all their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding. They realise the importance of appointing a new permanent headteacher is a priority if the school is to improve at the rapid rate required. The local authority has provided support and training and so governors have a clearer view of their role and are better able to provide challenge; for example, they better understand the school's current checks on pupils' progress and now appreciate they did not previously have a clear view of the school's effectiveness. Governors now know how their school compares with others and that there is an urgent need for improvement but still rely too much on being given information about the quality of teaching rather than seeking it out other ways to ensure it is accurate. Performance targets for the headteacher were in place but monitoring and progress in recent years has been severely

hindered by prolonged absence and significant leadership changes. Governors are aware of the arrangements for monitoring the performance of teachers and the link between their performance and pay. The governing body monitors funding, including the allocation of the pupil premium and sport funding. Analysis of the impact of this funding is at an early stage of development.

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	111973
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	441227

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	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Scoles
Headteacher	Lynn Nash (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	February 2011
Telephone number	01822 832550
Fax number	01822 832550
Email address	enquiries@delaware.cornwall.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

