

Nancealverne School

Maddon Road, Penzance TR20 8TP

Inspection dates

1–2 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is very ambitious for the future of the school. Since her arrival she has worked tirelessly to improve pupils' achievements through high-quality training and checks on teaching which has led to improvements in pupils' learning.
- Effective systems to check pupils' achievement and progress ensure no one falls behind because they can quickly catch up.
- The governing body has improved. Governors now have a good range of skills which they use well to manage the budget and to form an accurate view of the school's work. Governors ensure that additional funding enables eligible pupils to achieve as well as their peers.
- Parents are very pleased with the school. They say that their children make good progress.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They say they feel safe at school.
- Improvements to the range of subjects offered engage pupils particularly well. Effective provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that their personal development is good.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Strong relationships and well-planned tasks engage pupils well.
- Pupils across the school achieve well in English, making good progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils also make good progress in mathematics, enjoying the practical tasks set for them.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children get off to a positive start in the early years provision. They settle well and make good progress.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Students gain a range of appropriate qualifications.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all pupils have sufficient access to signs and symbols to communicate their needs, or make choices.
- Older pupils do not have enough access to work-related experiences, to better prepare them for their futures.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 lessons, some of them jointly with the senior leaders. In addition, they also listened to some pupils reading.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and watched them at play in the playground.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the Chair and three other members of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and pupils' work.
- The inspectors took account of the 11 parental responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View). They also received a few emails expressing parents' views. The 22 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Smith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational needs for their severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- About 20 per cent of pupils have a diagnosis of autism and a few others have additional sensory or physical difficulties.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- Additional primary school sports funding is provided for primary-aged pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is provided for the few pupils in that year group.
- Off-site training for sixth-form students is provided by Truro College and Penwith College.
- The Nursery and Reception-aged children share a classroom.
- The school has grown in numbers since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of the Penwith Educational Trust with 15 local schools. The school has inclusion links with local primary and secondary schools including Alverton Primary School, Pensans Primary School, Mounts Bay Academy, Gulval Child Development Centre, St Maddons School and St Ives Primary School. These schools provide joint opportunities for all pupils.
- The school does not enter pupils early for examinations.
- The headteacher was newly appointed to the school in January 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the provision to develop pupils' communication skills so that all pupils have a means of indicating their needs and can respond to questions.
- Increase opportunities for pupils in Year 10 and above to engage in community activities and work experience.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- There has been a rigorous drive to improve all aspects of the school in the past year. Since her appointment the headteacher, together with other leaders and staff has successfully raised achievement and ensured that all pupils receive the best possible education. As a result, achievement is improving in all areas of the school.
- Key leaders and managers, including middle leaders, have high expectations and are fully committed to improvement.
- Together with the governing body, leaders have built successfully on previous good performance. They model high professional standards in their work and have created a culture of high expectations for all pupils.
- The school's view of its own performance is thorough and accurate. Policies are well thought out to ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Governance has improved following an external review last year. Members now regularly challenge leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements have improved.
- The effective range of subjects on offer engages pupils well and ensures that they enjoy learning. This contributes well to pupils' academic achievements, their physical skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Together, these aspects promote pupils' good behaviour and understanding of safety well.
- Rigorous systems for checking pupils' progress have been developed, ensuring that all pupils' achievements are regularly assessed so that any pupil falling behind can quickly be supported to improve. Disadvantaged pupils now achieve as well as their classmates, and sometimes better.
- Parents are very pleased with the school and a few who wrote to the inspector said that they cannot speak highly enough of the school.
- Partnerships with local schools have improved because of shared funding for sports. This has enabled all pupils from the local area to take part in tournaments together and to receive training from experienced staff to improve their skills.
- Procedures for setting targets for teachers are fully established and leaders ensure that salary increases are not awarded unless staff have met their targets, based on pupils' progress. As a result, leaders have improved teachers' skills.
- Leaders ensure that all staff have regular training in aspects such as safeguarding of pupils, ensuring consistent practice across the school.
- The school receives good support from the local authority who expressed confidence in the actions of the headteacher. Links with the wider community are improving; however, older pupils and those in the sixth form do not have many opportunities to engage with the local community. Work experience offers are limited, hindering preparation for pupils' futures.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk of harm.
- Leadership and management are not outstanding because there is more to do to sharpen all pupils' communication skills and to increase work-experience opportunities for the older pupils.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is well led and provides support and good challenge to leaders. Following an external review several months ago, all aspects of governance have improved. The governors are now fully involved in checking teaching and behaviour and looking carefully at how well pupils are doing. They regularly check on the effectiveness of the school, so that they have a view of what is working well. Governors have received training so that they now have a good range of skills which they use to benefit the school. They understand the use of data and know how it compares with similar schools. Improvements in governance have resulted in improvements to teaching and learning. Frequent checks and full involvement in evaluating the pupils' achievement through the school's review of its performance mean that members know how effective the school is. Good management of finances means that the additional government funding is used to improve the learning of those pupils for whom it is intended. It is used very well to provide additional support and resources so that eligible pupils' achievements and progress are at least as good as those of their classmates, and sometimes better. Governors rigorously ensure that the best teachers and staff are rewarded and they understand the process of setting targets for teachers well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is evident in and around the school and in school documentation where very few incidents are recorded.
- Pupils' good behaviour is promoted by positive relationships with staff and between pupils. There are some marked improvements in behaviour over time for individual pupils.
- Low-level disruption is rare, but just occasionally the challenging behaviour of one or two pupils disrupts the learning of others. This is why behaviour and safety are not outstanding.
- Pupils told the inspectors that there is no bullying at the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are promoted well by the good range of relevant learning for all groups. As a result, there have been no exclusions in the past two years.
- The promotion of pupils' personal development is good, through the positive support that they receive and the exciting activities they experience. Leaders promote tolerance for all pupils and help them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain through their study of different faiths, cultures and lifestyles.
- Effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils includes good quality links with local schools. Pupils understand right and wrong and there is a balanced approach to pupils' broadly Christian religious education which encompasses world faiths.
- Pupils are prepared well for their lives after leaving school through their good quality achievements and accreditation. However, there are not enough opportunities for older pupils to gain work experience to prepare them even better for their futures.
- Students in the sixth form behave well in lessons and in their free time.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and most show this by their regular attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Older pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe and said that they know about the importance of staying safe in the community and while using the internet. Risk assessments are of good quality and ensure that pupils' individual needs are fully taken into account for any activity or visit.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage behave well. Children in the setting are safe and secure in class and in the outdoor play area.
- Students in the sixth form are safe and secure in their accommodation.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching over time in most subjects is consistently good. As a result, pupils make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics. The proportion of good teaching has increased over time because of high quality training and rigorous checks by leaders.
- Good and sometimes outstanding teaching enables all groups of pupils to make good or better progress.
- Expectations in lessons are high, ensuring that pupils deepen their knowledge in order to make good progress in their areas of learning.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well. The teaching of mathematics typically engages pupils because of the exciting tasks. In Years 10 and 11, for example, pupils thrived on the challenges set as they made outstanding progress in estimating and measuring objects. Very effective questioning extended their understanding.
- Good levels of support in literacy lessons help pupils to improve their skills so that they can complete their tasks and make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is effective because of the regular teaching of sounds and letters (phonics) and reading practice. As a result, the most able pupils achieve well and can read simple stories. The teaching of writing benefits from good use of resources and some clear guidance to help pupils gain the confidence to write or tell their ideas.
- The teaching of communication is variable because the use of signing and/or symbols is not always evident in lessons. At these times a few pupils find it difficult to respond to questions or give their ideas, and their progress dips. As a result, teaching is not outstanding.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked. This is often verbal but is always typically helpful, giving examples of how pupils can improve their skills and what they could try next time. This is particularly evident in English and mathematics.
- Teaching in the early years provision and in the sixth form is good.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The pupils' attainment on entry is usually well below that expected for their age, because of their learning difficulties. However, progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects is consistently good and evidence shows that pupils achieve well. Inspection evidence and school information show that achievement in English and mathematics is good.
- All groups of pupils, including those who receive additional funding, those with a diagnosis of autism, or sensory or physical difficulties, achieve well.
- Just occasionally, pupils' achievement dips slightly when they do not have sufficient access to signing, symbols or modern technology to support their speaking and communication skills. At these times a few, often those with autism, find it difficult to interact, to ask and respond to questions and take a full and active part in lessons.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is similar to, and sometimes better than, that of other pupils in the school so that gaps between pupils are closing.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs receive effective support to enable them to work alongside their classmates. They make similar progress because of the additional expertise provided for them.
- Pupils' sports skills are improving due to additional funding that has enabled the school to pool its resources with other local schools to provide extra coaching. Pupils are developing very healthy lifestyles because they are able to take part in physical activities regularly and are challenged by their inclusion with some mainstream schools.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and students in the sixth form achieve well.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start to their school lives. They benefit from appropriate accommodation and enjoy playing in the classroom and outdoors.
- The education offered has depth and breadth across the seven areas of learning and provides some exciting resources and a wide range of activities.
- The quality of teaching is good and all adults plan activities that are set at the right level. For example, children enjoyed playing in the sand-pit, filling and emptying their buckets. Expectations are high. Children's learning opportunities are well organised. The planning contributes well to the development of children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, children showed that they were confident to make choices and explore different areas.
- Children are taught phonics daily, providing opportunities for more able children to learn how to match letters and sounds through playing games.
- Staff work extremely well with parents keeping them well informed about their children's progress.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies are implemented well so that children are safe and secure.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the importance of staff training and development so that all staff have appropriate qualifications to support children. Monitoring is regular and ensures that there is continuous improvement. Leadership of the early years provision is good.
- Children behave well and most are beginning to interact with adults and other children.
- The early years provision is not outstanding because signs and symbols are not used regularly enough to quickly improve communication skills.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The sixth form is good. Leaders have an accurate view of the sixth form. Programmes and accredited courses are in place and these meet students' individual needs and abilities well.
- Relationships between students and staff are good and staff are proud of their students and keen for them to do well. Students are well supported in lessons and in their free time. Staff are friendly and students know that there is always someone to talk to.
- Progress is good. It is not yet outstanding because students do not spend enough time in work-related experiences to ensure that they are well prepared for their future lives. This is why the sixth form is not

outstanding. However, leaders are working to improve this provision and students are given some opportunities to follow vocational courses at local colleges.

- The sixth form curriculum ensures that students have opportunities to learn about the wider world and to develop their independence. They have regular trips, for example, into the local area to shop for ingredients.
- Achievement in English and mathematics is good because of the high focus placed on these areas. Students in the sixth form make good progress on their accredited courses.
- Students attend local colleges, mainly at Truro, Penwith or Camborne to undertake vocational courses.
- Teaching in the sixth form is relevant to the ages of the students. A good start has been made in social development, through working together in groups.
- Students' behaviour is good and they told the inspector that they enjoy the sixth form.
- Students feel safe and secure in their accommodation.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good and the range of qualifications on offer is improving. College links are improving and students' work is regularly checked to ensure that they are making good progress.

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	112087
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	447953

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	12
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Evans
Headteacher	Sarah Moseley
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 February 2012
Telephone number	01736 365039
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