

Mullion Community Primary School

Willis Vean, Helston, TR12 7DF

Inspection dates 24–25 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are good. Leaders have rectified the issues identified for improvement in the previous inspection. They have taken decisive action to bring the school forward during a period of staff change.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, have worked well together to secure effective teaching. Their teamwork has been successful in ensuring that pupils of all abilities, and increasing numbers of pupils joining from other schools, make good progress.
- All staff develop very supportive and caring relationships with pupils and strongly promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum is well planned and enables pupils to have a wide range of exciting learning opportunities.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are eager to learn and behave very well in class.
- The pupils' enjoyment of learning is reflected in their above average attendance, which has also been encouraged through productive links between staff and parents.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe, and parents support this view.
- Teaching is good. Pupils respond well to guidance about what they need to do to improve their work, and achieve well.
- An increasing number of pupils across the school, including in Year 6, are working at levels higher than might be expected for their age. This is especially the case in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics.
- Provision in the early years is good. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well during their time in the Reception class.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' weaker handwriting skills sometimes inhibit their ability to write fluently.
- At times, pupils do not use their phonics skills (the sounds that letters make) carefully enough to help them spell words accurately.
- Pupils do not always take as much care in presenting their work in books as they do when discussing and explaining their ideas in class. This restricts their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors attended two assemblies and a concert presented by pupils from Key Stage 1 and Reception classes. Inspectors looked at learning in 15 lessons, and saw the work of eight teachers. They were accompanied by the headteacher and the assistant headteacher during most of these visits to lessons. The inspectors also observed the breakfast club.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school's analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Inspectors examined the school's systems for checking pupils' progress, records of checks on the quality of teaching, and reports of visits to the school made by the local authority.
- The inspectors talked to pupils about their work, and listened to individual pupils from Years 1 and 2 read. They also looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes, especially writing.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff. They also met with pupil members of the school council. Inspectors spoke to individual pupils in lessons and around the school. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 59 online responses to Ofsted's (Parent View) questionnaire. They also gathered the views of some parents during informal meetings at the school during the inspection, and considered two written submissions. Questionnaires from 17 members of staff were also analysed.
- Inspectors considered the school's use of primary sport funding.
- Inspectors examined the school's work in updating procedures for checking pupils' progress within the new National Curriculum.

Inspection team

Alexander Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alison Botarelli

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mullion Community Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is broadly average and varies significantly from year to year across the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after) is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in receipt of early years provision attend the school's Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school has experienced a significant amount of staff change since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning so that all pupils to make the best progress possible by:
 - strengthening the teaching of handwriting to develop pupils' ability to write more fluently
 - improving pupils' spelling by encouraging pupils to use their phonic skills more carefully
 - ensuring that the care taken by pupils in presenting their work in books is raised to match the high quality of their oral responses in class.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have brought about improvements at the school since the previous inspection. They have restored staff confidence in the school after a period of change, securing a culture where good teaching and behaviour flourish.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher work closely as a team, driving forcefully the school's increasing success. They provide good support for middle leaders, some of whom are new to the school. Widened team leadership is now quickening the pace of improvement, but has not yet been in place long enough to establish typically outstanding teaching and learning in all classes.
- Leadership at all levels plays an improved and effective role in checking the way teaching impacts on pupils' learning. Governors are also playing a very supportive role in holding staff leaders to account and ensuring that teachers are provided with appropriate support to improve their skills.
- The headteacher ensures that challenging targets are set for teachers. Movement along the salary scales is closely linked to the impact teaching has on pupils' progress. As a result, teachers are accurately identifying pupils who need extra help, and are providing the good support they need to achieve well.
- This approach ensures that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. These checks are also used well to make sure that the additional adult support funded by the pupil premium enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve at least as well as other pupils.
- The way all staff diligently work to help all pupils succeed reflects the school's strong promotion of equality of opportunity. Discrimination is not tolerated at the school. Parents who spoke to the inspectors appreciate the supportive relationships they share with staff in helping their children to learn.
- The increasing standards across the school, especially in reading and mathematics, also show the school's secure capacity to continue its improvement.
- The school's systems for keeping pupils safe are implemented effectively and meet the statutory requirements.
- The curriculum is carefully planned and places a well-balanced emphasis on all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' learning is enriched by frequent visits to local shops and opportunities for pupils to experience the stimulating coastal features at first hand.
- Staff are working cooperatively with other schools to develop a system for checking pupils' progress that meets the raised expectations of the new National Curriculum.
- The school strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, visiting speakers lead assemblies on themes such as baptism and pupils learn calypsos and songs from around the world, which they sing for parents. Some pupils also widen their awareness of other communities, for example by taking part in a residential visit to Paris.
- Staff promote British values effectively throughout the school. For example, pupils visit London, take part in elections to the school council and discuss the democratic process in lessons. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses the primary sport funding very productively to broaden and enrich the sporting opportunities provided for pupils. The school works in partnership with other schools to increase the range of sporting activities available. The schools employ a specialist sports coach to enhance the skills of teachers and pupils. Records of school checks show that pupils' participation and skills in physical activity continue to increase impressively.
- The local authority has provided good support for governors and staff leaders, especially in improving the way they check the performance of the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors play a strong role in helping the school to improve. They have responded diligently to the review of governance that followed the previous inspection. They have undertaken a significant amount of training to improve their skills and to strengthen the way they fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Governors fully meet all their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding pupils. Enriched by new members and improvements in leadership, governors have strengthened the way they check information about pupils' progress. They keep themselves well informed about the quality of teaching and the curriculum through a range of activities, including visits to classrooms. They also meet regularly with staff leaders and ask probing questions about the work of the school. Governors work very effectively as critical friends of the school to ensure good standards and hold staff to account when improvements are needed. Governors know how the targets that are set for teachers are being used to prevent underperformance and to reward good teaching. They have been very supportive of the

headteacher in managing a significant amount of staff change efficiently since the previous inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils indicate that behaviour is good. Those parents who spoke to an inspector, and most parents who completed the Parent View questionnaire, agree.
- Most pupils behave well at break and lunchtimes and enjoy each other's company. Behaviour is not outstanding as, at times, a few pupils get too excited, resort to over-robust play and need adult guidance to act sensibly.
- Most pupils respect each other and enjoy very supportive relationships with each other and with adults, including when attending the breakfast club. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors and are clearly proud of their school.
- Pupils work well together. They are very eager to learn in class and are particularly enthusiastic when responding to teachers' questions, and clearly relish explaining their ideas.
- During class discussions, pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning. This is evident in the way pupils neatly present their work in mathematics. However, pupils' writing is not always presented at the same high standard. It is sometimes weakened by under-developed handwriting skills which do not reflect the same degree of pride in their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All required information provided by staff is fully checked prior to appointment, and health and safety arrangements are implemented effectively.
- Although a few parents express concerns about how bullying is dealt with, inspection and school records show that bullying is rare. Pupils confirm this view, saying, for example, 'We have lots of friends and look after each other. Adults are kind and help us to sort things out.'
- Pupils know about the different forms that bullying might take. They talk knowledgeably about cyber bullying and racial abuse, and appreciate the way staff teach them how to use computers safely.
- Pupils enjoy their time at school. They say that they feel safe at school and this is evident in their above average attendance. Pupils' improved attendance also reflects the work of school leaders and their positive partnership with parents in promoting the importance of learning at school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has considerably improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have strengthened the way they draw out and develop pupils' ideas through focused questioning.
- Pupils are particularly keen to answer questions. Their enthusiasm in sharing ideas and explaining them significantly enriches their learning. For example, pupils in Year 4 eagerly offered ideas about what sort of resources they would need to calculate the time they need to spend studying mathematics each week.
- Pupils use the wealth of information on display in all the classrooms to enrich their learning. They welcome the way teachers display samples of their work to help other pupils learn and to celebrate their efforts.
- Teachers have improved the way they mark pupils' work. Pupils say that they appreciate the clear information provided to them about what they have done well. Pupils also respond well to the guidance they receive about what they need to do to improve their work and this is quickening their progress.
- Pupils develop strong self-help skills. As they grow in confidence and develop their understanding, pupils become accomplished at helping each other to learn. For example, when using percussion instruments during music in Year 4, pupils collaborated well to harmonise their interpretation of raindrops.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work and plan learning well together to ensure that activities meet the needs of all pupils, so that all make equally good progress. For example, closer adult support is often used to boost the confidence of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and help to improve their basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge and use this well to help pupils develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills. This was seen to good effect during mathematics in Year 6. The teacher conveyed very secure subject knowledge, enabling pupils to significantly advance their understanding of how line graphs

can be used to work out algebraic equations.

- Pupils' expressive and descriptive writing skills are well taught. For example, pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class knowledgeably discussed how adjectives and adverbs can enrich their sentences. They knew how prefixes change the meanings of words and went on to write some carefully crafted descriptions about a sea view.
- Teachers do not always emphasise the importance of good handwriting and presentation skills consistently enough when pupils write. Consequently, pupils are not always developing their handwriting skills to the best of their ability.
- Reading is taught effectively. Parents are also encouraged and supported by staff in helping their children's reading at home. Pupils also benefit from regular opportunities to read books at school, either individually or in groups, and by using hand-held computers to undertake research. Pupils are not always required to think carefully enough about the sounds that letters make, and this leads to inaccurate spelling.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils respond well to the consistently good level of challenge and expectation set by their teachers. Consequently, they make good progress overall and achieve well. Across the school, and particularly in Year 6, pupils work at levels higher than those expected for their age.
- Inspection shows that while standards dipped in Year 6, in 2014, the school's checks of pupils' developing skills showed that the pupils made good progress from their differing starting points during their time in this school. This is because the school's leaders have ensured that earlier and more effective checks of pupils' skills have been used to make sure the pupils are given the right type of support as soon as possible.
- Leaders' actions continue to quicken pupils' good progress through the school, especially those joining later than the usual time from other schools.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, and become capable, confident readers as they move through the school. Parents also provide good assistance by helping their children to read regularly at home.
- Pupils quickly come to be able to identify the sounds that letters make (phonics) and, as a result, by the end of Year 1 a higher proportion than average reaches the expected levels in the national reading check. Pupils generally use their understanding of phonics to read, but not always well enough to help them to spell accurately.
- Pupils also make good progress in writing. They make use of their very-well-developed speaking and listening skills to share ideas, and their extensive vocabulary to write imaginatively and descriptively. Too often, though, weaker handwriting skills mask the otherwise good quality of their expressive writing.
- The school has raised the level of challenge presented to pupils since the previous inspection, including the most able. Teachers have also strengthened the way they check pupils' developing skills to ensure that pupils are increasingly reaching the standards of which they are capable.
- Consequently, the most able pupils make good progress. This is especially the case in mathematics, which has been changed from a relative weakness to a strength. More than half the pupils currently in Year 6 are working at higher levels than expected. For example, during a mathematics lesson, pupils reflected their good understanding when explaining what is meant by a negative number.
- The needs of disadvantaged pupils are carefully assessed as soon as they start school. Teachers in all classes provide them with suitable additional adult support and learning activities. As a result, their progress at least matches, and sometimes exceeds, that of other pupils nationally.
- Currently, in Year 6, disadvantaged pupils are outperforming their classmates in writing and mathematics and matching their performance in reading. They are also working at levels which are about the equivalent of one term's progress above other pupils nationally in all these subjects. This represents a substantial rise in standards compared to previous years.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They receive well-planned and sensitive adult support that raises their confidence and increases their readiness to learn. As a result, they happily work alongside, and share ideas with, their classmates to develop their skills.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good. They are strengthened by the close

teamwork between the new early years leader and senior leaders of the school to bring continued improvement. This is evident in the high quality of outdoor learning facilities, which, for example, are used very effectively to promote the children's personal and physical development.

- The children start school with skills and abilities which are broadly typical for their age, but sometimes skills are weaker in communication, language and personal development.
- Children make good progress during their time in the Reception class in response to effective teaching, and are well prepared for their future education by the time they enter Year 1.
- An increasing and slightly above average proportion of children reaches a good level of development. This represents good, but not yet outstanding, achievement in relation to their differing starting points.
- Good teaching stimulates children through the range of interesting activities provided for them. Children were seen responding well to the teacher's challenges during numeracy and writing activities by writing their answers on whiteboards. The children developed their skills and understanding further by responding enthusiastically to the teacher's questions.
- Adults provide good opportunities for children to experience and learn well across all the areas of learning set out in the early learning framework. For example, during questioning, as children made water channels in the outdoor sand pit, children extended their language skills by talking about visits to local beaches. This enabled the teacher also to make good use of the opportunity to remind the children of the need to stay safe near water.
- Teachers ensure that learning continues to equally good effect when children choose their own activities and when undertaking activities that are more closely supported by adults. For example, when writing recognisable letters and words when modelling with pasta, the children talked about the activity and their writing to advance their learning.
- Children are taught phonics and other early reading skills effectively. They are provided with good opportunities to learn how to hold and use pencils to write intelligible letters, words and numbers.
- Staff ensure that children are kept safe and secure. Adults and children share excellent relationships, and learning activities are often fun. As a result, children's behaviour both in the classroom and secure outdoor area is exemplary.
- Parents appreciate the way that staff provide very caring support to raise children's self-confidence and help the children feel safe at school.

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	111817
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	453726

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicole Barnett
Headteacher	Carleen Hannaford
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 March 2013
Telephone number	01326240585
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