

# Probus Community Primary School

Ladock Road, Truro, Cornwall TR2 4LE

**Inspection dates**

14–15 June 2016

**Overall effectiveness**

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Weaknesses in leadership and management over time have resulted in an inconsistent approach to the monitoring and development of teaching and learning. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has not improved sufficiently since the previous inspection.
- It is too soon to see the impact of the changes being made by the headteacher on improving the school.
- Middle leaders lack the skills to drive improvements in their subjects. As a result, they have insufficient impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- Strategies to improve the quality of teaching are not yet consistently applied by all staff.
- The most able pupils in key stage 2 do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in writing as they move through the school.
- Provision in the early years requires improvement because children are not challenged effectively to achieve their potential.
- Pupils do not successfully develop their skills in writing. This is particularly evident in the early years for boys and in key stages 1 and 2.
- Although attendance has improved and is in line with the national average, there remains a small gap between the attendance of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities and other pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff have created an atmosphere where pupils are safe, supported well and able to articulate their views.
- Pupils are keen to develop their learning. They enjoy their lessons and show respect for one another and their teachers.
- Additional adults are being used effectively to support pupils in their learning, particularly the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The staff share the vision of the newly appointed headteacher.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by developing the role of middle leaders to ensure that:
  - they take an active part in the close monitoring of pupils' progress
  - they are fully involved in the monitoring and improving of teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- Strengthen teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make consistently good progress by:
  - planning consistently challenging work for pupils, especially the most able, so that they can achieve to the best of their ability
  - accelerate progress in writing, particularly for those children in Reception and for boys in key stages 1 and 2.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has experienced changes in leadership and management since the previous inspection. As a result, the school's performance has not improved quickly enough. Although the headteacher is implementing the changes needed to bring about the significant improvement required, it is too soon to see the impact of this work.
- The school's work to check and evaluate the quality of teaching over time has lacked rigour and negatively affected pupils' progress. This is now being tackled by the headteacher. However, there has not yet been enough time to ensure that strategies to improve teaching and learning have been fully implemented by all staff.
- The work of middle leaders has not yet had sufficient impact on their areas of responsibility. They lack the training and skills to be able to drive improvements in their subjects.
- The school has introduced a curriculum which enables pupils to develop their knowledge across a wide variety of subjects. Pupils are encouraged to learn beyond the classroom, for example designing and building a racing car which they plan to service and drive in a competition. The school is working hard at developing the new national curriculum, for example a specialist modern foreign language teacher is taking up post in September. In addition, teachers are incorporating science planning into the revised curriculum to ensure that there is an increase in practical investigation work.
- The headteacher has the support of the staff. She is developing an ambitious culture for the school together with her senior team, which is beginning to have a positive impact on the aspirations and the outcomes of some pupils. Parents also commented on liking 'the ethos of the new headteacher'.
- The headteacher has identified the areas of teaching, learning and assessment which need to be improved. She has provided staff with individual guidance and this is closely linked to their professional development. This is having a positive impact on teachers' classroom practice. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching still remain.
- Pupils take part in regular and numerous educational trips and residential visits. The opportunities for children include musical events, science activities, camping and visits to the coast. As a result, children learn in a stimulating environment and one which encourages them to learn to cooperate and work together effectively.
- Sports premium funding has improved the quality of physical education provision for pupils. The school has used this funding well to become part of the Roseland School Sports Partnership. This has resulted in high-quality professional development for staff and an increase in competition levels for pupils, as well as providing additional sports opportunities, for example seaside water sports for Year 6. The school also runs after-school clubs. As a result, more pupils take part in sporting activities and their sporting and social skills have improved.
- Leaders carefully plan the use of pupil premium funding. This funding is used to support learning in classrooms as well as enrichment activities. As a result, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are closing in key stage 2, especially in reading and writing.
- The school provides care at the beginning and end of the school day for the pupils from the on-site pre-school and the school. This safe and secure environment is appreciated by the families who use it.
- The school engages very well with parents. The views expressed in response to Parent View and in conversation with parents are mostly very positive, particularly about how the school cares for its pupils and looks after them.
- Pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain and are able to talk about what this means for them. A number of activities in the curriculum link to this, for example designing their own phone apps, considering money exchange in other countries and sessions on democracy in Britain and across the world.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors recognise that the school is on a journey of improvement and are honest in their self-evaluation.
  - They have worked effectively with the local authority and acted swiftly in recognising the need to bring in a new headteacher. They are now supporting and challenging the headteacher well and continuing to work to secure the future of the school through consultation with parents and discussion with a multi-academy trust.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements. Safeguarding record-keeping and training are accurate and rigorous. Leaders engage effectively with parents and carers. Pupils are supported and safe in school. Volunteers receive appropriate training relating to safeguarding issues.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been inhibited by changes in leadership. Under the headteacher it is improving. However, some teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This means that work is sometimes too easy for pupils, or pupils spend too long going over work they already know.
- Pupils enjoy being challenged. When this happens they can articulate what they have learned and how they have improved. For example, pupils in Year 6 were able to explain what different methods they were using and why when solving mathematical problems
- Writing is taught well in some classes but not all. The leaders in the school recognise that the development of writing is an area which needs further work.
- Additional adults who work alongside class teachers support pupils well. They are trained effectively and demonstrate this in their questioning of pupils to check their understanding and develop their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils benefit from high-quality, individual and personalised support. As a result, they make good progress.
- The most able pupils at the school are not consistently challenged; this limits the progress that they make.
- The marking policy of the school is consistently applied by staff but teachers do not always pick up basic errors in pupils' work. As a result, pupils are not always able to identify mistakes in their work and correct them. Where teaching is at least good, teachers show higher expectations and adapt their planning to suit the progress of each pupil.
- Reading is taught consistently well. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to read aloud to adults and to each other. Pupils in all years are making good progress in reading. During the inspection pupils read to an inspector fluently and with good expression. Those who found reading difficult used their skills in phonics to sound out unfamiliar words.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All staff care passionately about the pupils they serve. As a result, pupils are self-confident, self-aware, and understand what they need to do to be successful learners.
- Pupils are welcoming to visitors and genuinely interested in engaging in conversation about their work and what they do in school.
- Pupils are very clear about what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including physical, racist and cyber-bullying. They are also clear about the difference between bullying and 'falling out'. Pupils told inspectors that there is very little, if any, bullying in the school. Any incidents that happen are quickly dealt with by adults.
- Pupils are aware of the need to stay safe and are regularly informed by their teachers and in assemblies about, for example, the safe use of the internet.
- Pupils are respectful and considerate of others. Pupils identify a clear moral code and understand right and wrong. For example, older pupils support younger pupils in and outside of the classroom at breaks and lunchtimes. They play well together and have a system for supporting pupils who might be on their own.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is good and observations carried out by inspectors and responses from parents support this view.
- Pupils comment that it is 'cool' to learn at school. They engage in discussion with teachers and with one another freely and in a respectful manner. They are keen to offer their opinions and prepared to listen carefully to others.
- Pupils' over-enthusiasm, at times, can prevent learning but they are quick to get back on task when this is pointed out to them.
- Pupils demonstrate strong social skills and recognise and understand that some children with additional

needs may require additional tolerance and understanding.

- Attendance is in line with the national average and improving. Persistent absence for pupils with special needs or disability is accounted for by specific cases of illness and, although there is still a gap between this group and all pupils, it has reduced rapidly in the last year.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Outcomes have fluctuated over time with no pattern of sustained improvement. Although they are improving for 2016 they are not yet good.
- In 2015 at key stage 2, outcomes improved from below average to being in line with the national average. However, this cohort of pupils has made relatively slow progress over their time in key stage 2, particularly in mathematics. Progress has started to accelerate due to the improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 are improving after a dip in 2015. The school's own data indicates that pupils are making good progress, especially in reading and mathematics. Inspectors confirmed that the school was accurate in its assessments.
- The attainment gap in reading and writing in key stage 1 between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school narrowed. It was still too wide in mathematics where disadvantaged pupils lagged behind others by about a year in terms of attainment. They remained too far behind other pupils nationally in both writing and mathematics. In key stage 2 the gap narrowed considerably and their attainment was equal to others in the school and to other pupils nationally, apart from in mathematics where they lagged behind by about half a year. However, it is moving in the right direction. The number of disadvantaged pupils in school eligible for pupils premium funding is well below the national average.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities currently in school make good progress as a result of their needs being accurately identified and high levels of support provided.
- Where individual challenge is evident through carefully planned learning, the most able pupils achieve well. For example, half of the cohort in Year 5 are on track to obtain high levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, where teaching still requires improvement there is a lack of challenge for most able pupils, and this impacts on the number of pupils who achieve more than the expected standards for their age.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- The proportion of children who reach a good level of development is improving year on year. This is preparing them more effectively for transition into Year 1. However, the most able children are not yet sufficiently challenged to achieve their potential in all areas.
- A variety of learning opportunities are presented to children but staff do not always make sure that all children, in particular the boys, make the most of these to develop their learning.
- The children enter school from pre-school with a gap between the skills of boys and girls, particularly in writing. This gap narrows during their time in the Reception class but is still evident because staff plan too few opportunities for boys to acquire the prerequisite skills for writing.
- Leadership of the early years provision is starting to improve. The school has recognised the need to make better use of the outdoor area. Robust plans are in place to develop this area to accelerate learning further.
- Children learn in a safe environment. The display and activities are designed to be vibrant and stimulating.
- The children behave well and are keen to talk about their learning. For example, the children were provided with a live crab as a stimulus for their learning and they all wanted to share their knowledge with the inspectors.
- When children choose their own activities they cooperate well and discuss their learning. For example, in using pegs to understand number lines, children took part in discussions and were able to identify which numbers were missing.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111865
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009221

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

<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>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lyn McNamara
<b>Telephone number</b>	01726 882647
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.probus.cornwall.sch.uk">www.probus.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:secretary@probus.cornwall.sch.uk">secretary@probus.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27–28 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Probus Community School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2016.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupils premium funding is well below the national average. This is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- There is a pre-school on the school site where staff are employed by the school but which is inspected separately; the inspection report is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion with a statement or education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- Pupils in the early years are taught in one Reception class and attend full time.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club that is managed by the governing body.
- The school met the current government floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of information on its website.
- The school is to become part of the Aspire Academy Trust in September 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons or part lessons, many of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governors. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors took into consideration the nine responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised during the inspection, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school development plan and data relating to pupils' achievement and progress.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtime. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors considered the 51 responses by parents to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day.

## Inspection team

Matthew Shanks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Mower

Ofsted Inspector

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