

# Quethiock Church of England VA School

Quethiock, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 3SQ

Inspection dates

14–15 September 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	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement. Teaching does not ensure that all pupils make good progress, especially in mathematics.
- Leaders' expectations are not always high enough. Directors do not hold senior leaders to account with sufficient rigour.
- Roles and responsibilities within the school are not clear. Consequently, checks on the quality of teaching have not been rigorous enough to address weaknesses in practice.
- Actions for improvement are not aligned closely enough to pupils' outcomes to ensure maximum impact.
- Pupils are not confident in their use of calculation strategies when solving mathematical problems.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always demand enough of pupils in lessons, particularly the most able pupils.
- Expenditure of additional funding such as the pupil premium is not monitored carefully. As a result, not all disadvantaged pupils make the progress that they should.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is not strong. A weak understanding of what pupils need to learn in each year group has led to underachievement for some groups of pupils, in particular the most able.
- Teachers' expectations of children's writing and mathematical development in the early years are not high enough. Fewer children achieve well in these areas than in other areas of learning.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff training and support is beginning to have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, particularly in key stage 2. Teachers have engendered a love of reading among the pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics in key stage 1 is effective because of the training and curriculum which have been put in place.
- Pupils make good progress in writing in key stage 2.
- Overall attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average. Attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- Pupils' good behaviour and the strong relationships between all adults and pupils creates an environment where pupils feel safe and are eager to learn.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - directors gather accurate information and set clear timescales to hold leaders to account for improving the school
  - senior leaders develop a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in order to drive improvements in teaching and learning across the school
  - subject leaders have the necessary support and clear guidance about the expectations of their role to support a consistency of improvement across the school
  - teachers are skilled in using assessment information effectively to set work which enables all pupils, and particularly the most able pupils, to make good progress.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching in mathematics so it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - all teachers have secure subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - teachers provide the most able pupils with the challenge and support they need to make consistently good progress.
  
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching in the early years so that children make equally good progress in writing and number as they do in other areas of learning by:
  - having sufficiently high expectations and building systematically on children's early writing and mathematical skills.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders and directors have not developed consistently good teaching. Turbulence in staffing, with considerable staff absence, led to a period of instability for the school. The head of school, with support and decisive action from senior leaders, has been effective in bringing greater stability and in restoring parents' faith in the quality of education provided. However, there remain inconsistencies in the academic progress that pupils are currently making.
- Leaders, including directors, do not have a clear enough picture of achievement and progress of all pupils across the school. Consequently, resources, staff training and support are not always directed to maximum effect.
- Leaders have not used information about pupils' progress with sufficient accuracy to drive improvement. The school improvement plan is not tightly matched to areas that require attention. The leadership team has been slow to identify and tackle some underachievement, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders have acted to strengthen leadership in mathematics but progress has not been quick enough to improve outcomes. The Trust's action plan details changes already underway. In particular, a recently established network of mathematics subject leadership across the Trust is supporting teacher's subject knowledge in mathematics. However, it is too early to see the impact of these changes.
- Middle leaders have not had sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. A mentoring programme has been put in place to support the development of their skills. Middle leaders say that they appreciate the guidance and support across the network of schools and that they feel more confident in their own practice. This work is beginning to have an impact on one class but not yet across the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive additional support, but the effectiveness of this is variable. Pupils are benefiting from some of the additional opportunities they are receiving. However, leaders do not have a sufficient overview to consider the effectiveness of interventions to support pupils. This stalls some pupils' progress.
- Procedures to manage staff performance are not securely in place. As a result, actions have not always been quick enough or rigorous enough to result in rapid and sustained development. However, leaders' decision to prioritise support in the early years has led to improvements. For example, the learning environment is suitably organised and teaching is better aligned to children's needs.
- Leaders have acted to tackle previous weaknesses in the teaching of reading. Changes to the curriculum and how reading is taught have brought about improvements. Support for those children who need to catch up has been effective and attainment in reading is good.
- Leaders are committed to providing a broad experience for the children. Pupils benefit from taking part in many extra-curricular activities. These range from numerous sporting clubs, gardening, cookery and drama to residential visits. Pupils say that these activities help them to 'be good at lots of different things'.
- Numerous community links including attending local art exhibitions, church events and fund-raising activities serve to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development successfully. This aspect of the curriculum prepares pupils well for their life in modern Britain. Older pupils are able to articulate their thoughts about national events and democracy; for example, by holding discussions on 'Brexit'.
- Pupils in key stage 2 in particular learn about a wide range of subjects and eagerly share their learning. They apply their literacy skills well in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education, writing for different audiences. Pupils were confidently responding to the class teacher in French, discussing what they were having for lunch.
- The school uses sport funding successfully to provide specialist coaches to develop the confidence and expertise of teaching staff. Pupils' participation rates in activities and tournaments have increased. The netball and cross-country teams have recently had success in the Callington Primary School Leagues. This provision is increasing pupils' self-esteem and encouraging them to pursue healthy lifestyles.
- Effective systems are in place to monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The leader with responsibility for this area has a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving. Well-matched support ensures that these pupils make good progress from their starting points, developing in confidence and academic ability. As one parent reported, 'my child has a voice and feels so entitled'.

- Leaders have been effective and resolute in addressing previously poor attendance. Attendance is currently above the national average for all pupil groups. Parents typically commented that their child 'didn't like missing a day of school'.

### **Governance of the school**

- Directors have not challenged leaders with sufficient rigour to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress. Planned actions to tackle priority areas do not always reflect a clear understanding of the school's weaknesses or set out clear and appropriate timescales for improvement.
- There has sometimes been insufficient challenge by directors due to an over-reliance on the information provided by senior leaders. As a result, directors are unclear about the effectiveness of some expenditure on pupil outcomes, for example pupil premium. However, the sport premium expenditure is clearly evaluated to ensure maximum benefit to pupils.
- The board have not always been rigorous enough in their expectations of the principal and senior leaders to secure the improvements needed in teaching, learning and assessment. Actions to tackle declining progress in mathematics have not been as effective as actions to improve reading. Standards in writing have improved in key stage 2 but are less secure in key stage 1.
- Decisions to employ external support for the school and the additional deployment of staff from within the trust have contributed to a period of stability. Improvements in early years provision, in reading and in writing, particularly in key stage 2, are testament to the effectiveness of the decisions made. Careful management of school funds and strategic overview has led to greater financial stability for the school since it has become part of the St Barnabas Multi-Academy Trust. Parents are effusive about the improvements which have taken place.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff know the children well and are quick to share their concerns. Records reflect that leaders act with determination to ensure the safety of the vulnerable pupils and their families. Close work with external agencies supports the school's work and maintains pupils' well-being.
- Leaders and governors ensure that staff are fully up to date about keeping children safe. Staff and volunteers speak knowledgeably about identifying signs that might leave pupils vulnerable to abuse or exploitation. The strong work around pupil voice in the school is empowering pupils to keep themselves safe.
- Parent volunteers were positive about the thorough risk assessments that take place before school visits and praised the head of school for the detailed guidance she provides helpers with on trips. Although policies on the website are up to date and recent safer recruitment processes are secure, some of the safer recruitment information is not well organised. Information in staff files was not recorded on the school's single central record. This administration oversight was rectified by the end of the inspection.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Turbulence in staffing and a lack of consistently good teaching over time has resulted in variable rates of progress. In particular, teachers have not provided sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. Staff training has led to improvements in this area. Actions have resulted in improvements in writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and phonics achievement in Year 1. However, there is too little consistency across the school.
- The teaching of mathematics remains a weakness. Leaders have taken action to improve teachers' subject knowledge. The introduction of a new scheme of work is supporting teachers in covering aspects of reasoning and problem solving. This is also supporting teachers to raise expectations in order for pupils to achieve the highest standards. Teachers are tackling the weaker mental recall of number facts that is slowing down pupils' mathematical fluency. However, it is too soon to see the impact of this work. Effective work to incorporate regular problem solving in Years 1 and 2 is less embedded in the older year groups.
- The teaching of writing is variable. The literacy leader has been effective in ensuring that pupils in key stage 2 apply their writing skills frequently across all other subjects. This work has been effective in improving rates of progress. Most of the pupils spoken to said that they were most proud of their writing. By the time pupils leave Quethiock, pupils' achievement in writing is in line with the national expected standard.

- Historically, the teachers' expectations have not been high enough to ensure that pupils' phonics skills are secure. Support from subject leaders has now resulted in improvements. More Year 1 pupils are achieving the expected standard than previously. However, the teachers' expectations remain variable across key stage 1. On occasions, work in books, particularly in Years 1 and 2, shows that pupils are not applying their knowledge of phonics in their writing.
- The teaching of reading has strengthened with the appointment of the literacy leader. Adults engender a love of reading in the pupils and well-considered incentives encourage pupils to read a range of books. Pupils read widely and often. Pupils who initially struggle with reading are supported effectively in school and, as a result, they make good progress in this aspect of their learning.
- Leaders' focus on improving the impact of teachers' marking on pupil outcomes is effective. Pupils' progress is accelerating as a result, particularly in pupils' writing in key stage 2. Progress is less marked in mathematics because teachers' subject knowledge is weaker.
- The homework that teachers set is helping pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers are thorough in checking on the quality of homework. The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire expressed satisfaction with the quality of homework. Teachers ensure equality for all pupils so that where there are barriers to children carrying out homework, teachers work closely with families and provide additional support in school where it is needed.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to support pupils' development. They provide useful guidance and encourage pupils to do their best. Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful. Additional support for pupils with literacy or emotional needs is effective.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being is fostered through a close support network. All adults know the children well and are vigilant to any changes.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare and that staff deal with any 'fallings out' quickly. All parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, said that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Pupils speak knowledgeably about keeping themselves safe. For example, they have a very good understanding of internet safety and know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Posters around the school act as ongoing reminders of how to keep safe.
- Pupils feel well cared for and say that they can share their worries with anyone in school. They spoke with great maturity about caring for others and respecting views which are different from their own, saying 'We celebrate being different'. The pupil voice activities that take place in school are numerous. Pupils also contribute to their annual reports and individual education plans. As a result, pupils feel empowered and take ownership of their learning.
- Pupils enjoy fulfilling roles of responsibility, such as being a member of the school council. Minutes of monthly meetings reflect democracy in action. Pupils make a range of decisions in terms of lunchtime responsibility rotas, healthy eating choices and school rewards and sanctions. This work develops pupils' skills in working with and tolerating the views of others who have different opinions from their own.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school and at playtimes. They play together sensibly in the well-maintained outside areas and are polite and responsive to adults and each other. Pupils enjoy each other's company and show respect for one another. This demonstrates the school's emphasis on fostering positive relationships.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above the national average as a result of leaders' focused work and the improved curriculum.
- The work in books over time reflects an improvement in the quality of presentation and pupils' attitudes towards their learning. Senior leaders have identified that pupils' presentation could be even better. An increased focus on the fluency and quality of pupils' handwriting is now in place. Early signs reflect an increased awareness of handwriting on the part of pupils and there is some improvement.

- Pupils behave well in lessons, sharing equipment and listening attentively to one another. On occasions, pupils lose focus on their learning if it is too easy or too hard. Staff adopt a consistent approach to rewarding good behaviour and quickly get pupils back on task. Key stage 2 pupils say that there is rarely a need for teachers to impose sanctions and that their learning is never disrupted by poor behaviour. All staff who completed the online questionnaire agreed that behaviour was good. No poor behaviour was observed during the inspection.
- The school's inclusive ethos ensures that all pupils feel valued. Teachers consider barriers to learning and plan to ensure that all pupils are included. Pupils with particular high social and emotional needs are particularly well supported and this enables them to fully engage in lessons and achieve.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Require improvement

- The most able pupils in particular are not making enough progress and, as a result, few attain the highest levels by the end of key stage 1 or key stage 2. This does not represent good progress from their starting points. The most recent end of key stage 2 information, for pupils in Year 6, suggests that the measures that leaders have put in place are taking effect, particularly in reading. The proportion of pupils attaining a high standard in reading is above the national average.
- Progress for the very few disadvantaged pupils is inconsistent across subjects. The additional support that disadvantaged pupils receive in key stage 2 has resulted in accelerated progress in writing but less so in mathematics. Information about the attainment and progress of these pupils is not always used with sufficient accuracy to ensure rapid catch-up.
- Work in pupils' books confirms that pupils do practise their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, science books show how pupils have collected information and produced charts to show their results. However, a lack of knowledge of charts results in pupils using the wrong type, for example using a line graph to show the number of votes in the 'Brexit' referendum.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is weaker than in other aspects of their learning. From number acquisition in the early years through to pupil outcomes at the end of key stage 2, attainment in mathematics is not as good as in other areas of learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress from their starting points. Well-matched interventions help pupils to catch up and are making a positive difference for these pupils. Catch-up is less strong in mathematics compared to reading and writing. However, differences are diminishing.
- Standards in phonics have risen over time. The increased focus on developing pupils' phonics skills is benefiting their reading. Where pupils have not achieved the expected outcome at the end of Year 1, recent improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have ensured that they meet the expected standard in Year 2.
- The quality of art work in the school is particularly strong. Visits to local exhibitions have been effective in motivating pupils to be creative and use their careful observation skills to replicate the art work seen.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because there is not a sharp enough focus to enable children to achieve as well as they can. Leaders have an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the early years and appropriate plans are in place to tackle weaknesses.
- Too few children are making good or better progress in the early years. Outcomes across areas of learning are variable and not as strong in writing and mathematics. When children have 'cool learning' time and make choices about what they do, they do not always have the opportunities to apply their recently learned skills.
- Teaching requires improvement. Despite the high-quality care and support for children's social and emotional development, there is not enough focus on systematically building on children's early mathematical and writing skills. As a result, not all pupils make good progress in these areas, particularly the most able children. Adults are not always precise enough in their expectations. Where letters or numbers are inaccurately formed, children are not given timely advice to help them to improve. Children's writing does not always reflect the phonics that they have learned and can use confidently when reading.

- Regular assessments of children’s development are established in daily routines. However, these assessments are not always used to develop children’s skills, knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils are not all sufficiently well prepared for Year 1.
- Constructive partnership with parents ensures that they are involved in their child’s learning and contribute to the school’s records on progress made. Parents are pleased with the communication between home and school and are overwhelmingly positive about the approachability of staff and how happy their child is.
- Support from an external adviser and an early years specialist from another school in the trust has resulted in some improvements. For example, the indoor learning environment is well organised with equipment easily accessible for children. Children are aware of how to move safely and have a clear understanding of how to use equipment safely in the classroom. They quickly learn to develop their independence and curiosity in the bright and purposefully organised learning areas.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in helping children understand how to behave. Good day-to-day management ensures that children are safe, secure and well protected. Children settle happily and quickly into school, responding well to the care and nurture provided by the staff.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140477
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10019434

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>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	32
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The board of directors
<b>Chair</b>	Father Michael Brown
<b>Principal</b>	Julie Simpson
<b>Telephone number</b>	01579 343 588
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.quethiock.cornwall.sch.uk/">www.quethiock.cornwall.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:secretary@quethiock.cornwall.sch.uk">secretary@quethiock.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school with very small cohorts. Some groups may represent one individual.
- It has two mixed-aged classes: a combined Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class, and a key stage 2 class comprising pupils from years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- The school converted to academy status in December 2013 and is part of the St Barnabas Multi-Academy Trust. This is a group of six schools. There is a principal who oversees the school's work along with that of the five other schools in the Trust. The head of school at Quethiock has responsibility for the daily running of the school.
- The school hosts a mother and toddler group run on a voluntary basis.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil 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.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also well below the national average.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club.
- Information published on the school's website related to pupil premium expenditure was out of date at the time of the inspection.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the funding arrangements and relevant business and pecuniary interests of directors and their dates of appointments.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspector made visits to lessons in both classes; all but one were joint observations with the principal.
- Meetings were held with the principal, head of school, other senior and middle leaders and the director for school improvement from the St Barnabas Multi-Academy Trust. A telephone conversation took place with the director responsible for safeguarding and the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector scrutinised a number of documents, including board meeting minutes, school improvements plans and records in relation to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out work scrutiny in writing and mathematics with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a group of pupils to seek their views about the school and took into account the online responses of 21 pupils. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons and at lunchtime. The inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, in lessons and at play.
- The 10 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account. Inspectors considered comments provided by text message and paper questionnaires, and spoke to parents informally at the start of day one of the inspection. The online responses of six staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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