

Boscastle Community Primary School

Fore Street, Boscastle, Cornwall PL35 0AU

Inspection dates

20–21 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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has not maintained good standards of teaching or achievement since the previous inspection. Stronger aspects of leadership seen at that time have not led to improvements.
- Pupils read well but their attainment in writing and mathematics has been too low; their standards in these subjects have declined over time.
- Teachers do not set high enough expectations to challenge pupils to achieve their best in all year groups. The most able and disadvantaged pupils make steady, but not good, progress in writing and mathematics. There are signs that these pupils are beginning to catch up but there is more to do.
- The organisation and delivery of the curriculum do not help pupils to progress well in a wide range of subjects.
- The headteacher and governors have an over-optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. Having seen recent improvements in teaching, leaders and managers believe pupils are making better progress than they are.
- Monitoring by senior leaders is not placing a sharp enough focus on finding out whether pupils' progress and learning are good and what needs to improve.
- Governors have been too ready to accept the overly positive view the school gives them. This makes it difficult for them to challenge the school's performance and identify accurately points for improvement.
- Changes are happening for the better but these have not yet had time to make a difference to pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school and engage in lessons well. They stick to tasks and try their best. Pupils are friendly, feel safe and well cared for and behave well.
- There are positive links with parents who are strongly supportive of the school.
- Pupils achieve well in phonics and the early years.
- Teachers show passion and determination to improve their practice. The school is moving in the right direction.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress so that it is at least good, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - checking that teachers give pupils regular opportunities to develop their writing skills and that writing is given a high priority in all classes
 - ensuring that the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils are given work that challenges them to work in greater depth
 - making sure that pupils experience a well-planned programme of study that fully meets the requirements for the national curriculum in mathematics
 - using the information about gaps in pupils' learning effectively to plan the next steps in their writing and mathematical development.
- Improve teachers' knowledge of the requirements of the new national curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics so that pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - monitoring the quality of teaching, with a sharp focus on how well pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged, are learning
 - using the findings from monitoring and evaluation to plan improvements to the quality of teaching and regularly checking whether these plans are working
 - strengthening governance so that governors hold accurate information on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and can provide the right degree of challenge to hold the headteacher to account.

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

- The school has not maintained a successful journey of improvement since the last inspection. Despite being listed as a priority in the school improvement plan, work to raise standards in writing has had only a limited impact. In 2016, Year 6 pupils' outcomes fell short of the national performance in writing as well as in mathematics.
- The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching through a range of activities. This approach is designed to give a rounded view of what teaching is typically like in each class. Teaching over time is judged as good, but this is not the case. Reports focus on what teachers do, rather than pupils' learning over time. There is little analysis of how successful learning is for pupils who are disadvantaged or the most able pupils. These are two key groups who are not yet making good progress across the school.
- The system for checking pupils' progress and attainment is not yet fully embedded. Leaders can offer case studies that show their awareness of the progress made by some individual pupils. However, the information collected on pupils' overall academic performance is not always analysed to identify patterns and trends, such as the weaker performance of boys in writing over time, or used to inform plans and bring about improvements.
- The legacy of some previously weaker teaching lower down the school has not yet been fully overcome, especially concerning older pupils' understanding of number and how to spell accurately. Recently teachers have undertaken training which is helping to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- The school's development plan follows a rolling programme of priorities based on core subjects. The plan does not state clearly what teachers and pupils need to get better at. This makes it difficult for governors to know when improvements have been achieved so they can ask the right questions to assure themselves that planned actions are proving successful.
- Staff at all levels have the backing of parents. Those who spoke to the inspector during the inspection, and almost all who provided additional written comments, praised the nurturing, happy ethos at the school. Many singled out how well their children were cared for, encouraged and supported.
- The ethos of the school supports pupils' personal, social, health and moral development well. Staff foster good relationships which are reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their respect for others. Pupils are encouraged to be proactive in their support for the wider community and develop as responsible and tolerant citizens of the future. The interesting topics teachers plan capture pupils' interest and develop a strong sense of identity and community, for example studying local Cornish heritage.
- The school's work supports pupils' awareness of social, moral and cultural development, alongside their understanding of fundamental British values. Leaders are aware that there is more that needs to be done to actively promote pupils' better understanding of equal opportunities for those protected groups identified in the Equalities Act 2010. Plans are underway to develop this area of learning.
- The additional funding for physical education and sports is put to good use. Training for staff, coaching, sports clubs and extra resources are increasing pupils' participation in sporting activities. Pupils enjoy taking part in competitive activities planned with local schools.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not challenged the headteacher with sufficient rigour to ensure that the quality of teaching improves and that all pupils make rapid and sustained progress. Governors are knowledgeable about their role and the contribution they should be making to the overall leadership of the school. However, they have not systematically evaluated the impact of actions, such as those being taken to improve the quality of teaching. Governors have not checked that action plans have specific benchmarks to compare pupils' performance against other pupils nationally.
- Governors have received support from an external consultant to evaluate the school's effectiveness. Reports show relevant challenges and actions to address weaknesses in pupils' writing and mathematics. However, the findings from external reports are not used strategically to bring about lasting improvements.
- Governors are aware of their accountability for the expenditure of additional funds received. However, no evaluation has taken place to check whether pupil premium funds have been used to improve disadvantaged pupils' academic achievement or for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Effective leadership of this aspect of the school's work ensures that support for vulnerable pupils is personalised. Close liaison with outside agencies means that all pupils are catered for with care and attention to detail. Staff are well trained and experienced in dealing with complex issues, and engage well with all parents and carers to be sure that all pupils are safe. Risk assessments are comprehensive, including for those pupils who have specific learning needs. Staff act as effective role models for pupils; in turn, pupils follow these examples in the way they talk, act and treat each other. Staff are up to date with relevant training, including raising staff awareness of how to prevent pupils from the risks associated with extreme views. Record-keeping is well maintained and meets all current requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is now improving and pupils' progress is rising, but this has not been the case for long enough to have made the necessary difference to pupils' attainment. Consequently, teaching is not yet good.
- Teaching is not helping pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who are the most able to make good progress over time. When visits to lessons occur, or pupils' work is scrutinised, the spotlight is not placed precisely enough on how well these groups of pupils are learning. Feedback to help teachers develop their practice is too vague to ensure a high degree of challenge over time.
- Pupils' books show some inconsistency in teachers' practice to develop pupils' writing. The most able show their true potential in some pieces of writing but this is not sustained over time to help them forge ahead. On occasions, writing across the curriculum is promoted well. Trips, visits and visitors provide a good stimulus for writing activities, such as the recent residential trip to London where pupils made good use of technology to write effective accounts of their experiences.
- Recent changes to the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who need emotional support, are proving effective. A new

approach with more specific and targeted help is now in place. There are some early signs that these groups of pupils are moving on more quickly.

- The use of additional adults to support pupils' learning over time is variable across the school. In some cases, adults provide specific, targeted intervention for individual pupils to accelerate their progress. At other times, adults are not always well directed to use effective questioning that checks pupils' understanding thoroughly.
- Teachers check pupils' work in line with the school's policy. At times, extra activities are provided to pupils before they have fully grasped the concept being taught. Information from marking and feedback is not always used to inform teachers' planning and to guide pupils' next steps carefully enough.
- Training is improving teachers' questioning and subject knowledge in mathematics. Pupils' conceptual and procedural development is now improving due to the sharp focus on developing their reasoning skills. It is clear that the quality of teaching is on an improving trajectory. More pupils are now making better headway in their learning but this has not been the norm, meaning that pupils' progress is not yet consistently good.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- This is a school where care for pupils has a high priority. Pupils are supported effectively and known well by adults. They feel safe.
- Teachers have regular contact with parents who appreciate that they always try to be available if concerns arise. Parents know that any worries about their child's welfare or work can be brought to teachers' attention, and that teachers will listen. Pupils who may be facing difficult times at home are given particularly good care.
- Most pupils take pride in their work and try to do well. Pupils have been working on their handwriting and presentation. A few boys do not have good attitudes to producing the highest-quality work when not given clear enough guidance or expectations.
- Pupils act out the values the school is determined to promote. They tackle challenges and show resilience and confidence when attempting familiar work. However, when presented with unfamiliar challenges or concepts their confidence and resilience drop, limiting their progress.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe outside school and when using the internet. They talk confidently about using passwords and protecting personal information.
- Staff provide sensitive support for those pupils who become troubled or upset. They administer first aid appropriately and ensure that pupils are comforted and able to return to their learning or play.
- Pupils' attendance has fallen below average since the last inspection, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. This year, attendance rates are beginning to pick up as a result of the steps being taken to work with parents.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are respectful to each other and adults. They behave well in lessons, around the

school and in the playground. They organise themselves quickly in lessons, without fuss in most cases, so that time is not lost when they have to change activities.

- Pupils who spoke to the inspector felt that behaviour was typically good and that other pupils behaved well. They are positive about the happy, friendly atmosphere in the school, where they play and work with other children of all ages. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire echo this view.
- Pupils help and support each other in lessons. They work well together in pairs or in groups. Instances of poor behaviour are rare because adults model how to act and treat each other. Pupils emulate their actions.
- Pupils report there is little bullying in the school and are confident that staff deal quickly with any issues, no matter how small; pupils feel they can go to anyone with their worries and they will be listened to and helped.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment is showing signs of recent improvement and some pupils are now achieving more successfully than in the past. However, too little has been done to maintain the standards in writing and mathematics reached at the time of the previous inspection.
- Weak teaching has been tackled and pupils are now beginning to make better progress, but it is not yet consistently good enough. Some most-able pupils are not provided with enough challenge and depth of work for them to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The two main reasons why outcomes require improvement are, firstly, the slower than expected progress in mathematics and, secondly, inconsistent progress in writing, particularly for the most able pupils. In some classes, pupils, especially boys, who are capable of writing sentences or paragraphs, are not challenged to do their best work.
- In 2015, pupils moved on to their secondary schools with attainment in reading above the national average. However, their attainment during 2014 and 2015 in writing and mathematics remained below that expected for their age. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was below other schools nationally in these subjects. No disadvantaged pupils achieved this standard in the past two years.
- In Year 1, for the last two years, all pupils reached the standards expected in the national phonics check. Effective teaching gives careful attention to the sounds pupils know, understand and blend when reading and writing.
- Improvements to the teaching of mathematics are now closing gaps in pupils' understanding of the relationship between numbers. Pupils are secure when completing calculations using familiar formal methods. However, insecurities in their conceptual understanding are exposed when faced with challenges that require them to apply their knowledge of number in different contexts.
- By Year 6 in 2016, disadvantaged pupils achieved similar standards to those seen by other pupils nationally in reading, but the difference between these two groups in writing or mathematics did not diminish. This remains a weaker aspect of pupils' outcomes. Funding to support these pupils is not closely targeted at gaps in pupils' knowledge, skill or understanding in writing and mathematics.
- The design and implementation of the curriculum is not resulting in pupils achieving good outcomes in a range of subjects. When carrying out historical enquiries, pupils do not have secure knowledge of how reliable different historical sources are. In addition,

pupils lack some basic geographical knowledge, such as the names of continents and oceans.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter school with skills and experiences broadly typical for their age. This varies year to year due to the small cohort sizes. Some children need help with personal, social and emotional development, and adults make sure these children are nurtured and supported. Children leave Reception well prepared for Year 1, with above average attainment.
- Children are confident about making choices and persevering with the activities they choose. The outside area has been developed to provide a suitable range of activities across different areas of learning, experiencing nature through the new forest school, for example.
- The school has chosen to keep all recorded evidence of children's progress by capturing work produced in books electronically. Evidence across different areas of learning is included, with good examples of evidence to support children's progress in writing and mathematics. Parents are now able to contribute more to this process through the electronic format.
- The early years leader is enthusiastic about children's development and is clear about the strengths in provision, as well as those areas still needing attention; this explains why children learn better in this class than other ones. Writing and phonics still remain priority areas to make sure standards remain good. Writing has a strong emphasis and children are encouraged to write frequently across different areas of learning.
- Phonics sessions happen on a daily basis and children's understanding is secure. Children are resilient when tackling new sounds and do not rely on adult help when they become stuck. Most work out the sounds they need to write accurately. Occasionally other adults do not focus and listen closely enough to children's enunciation to check that errors are not creeping in.
- Children learn and explore in a safe and happy environment. Adults are attentive to children's welfare and safety and provide sensitive support for their individual needs. They show children, through their own example, how to form positive relationships and be understanding of each other. Children behave well and move around the class and outside sensibly. They form good relationships with one another and are interested in learning. Many happily sustain their concentration for the duration of the activities they have chosen.
- Parents are happy with the early years provision. They feel well informed and comfortable about coming into school and talking to adults should the need arise. As in the rest of the school, they are encouraged to play a full part in their child's development.

School details

Unique reference number	111929
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10000526

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Townsend
Headteacher	Sarah Duffy
Telephone number	01840 250 329
Website	www.boscastle.cornwall.sch.uk
Email address	secretary@boscastle.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 November 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is federated with Port Isaac School. An executive headteacher leads both schools and a single governing body also serves both of them.
- The school is part of the Moor and Coastal Partnership Cooperative Trust. This is a trust of eight primary schools and one secondary school which share common values.
- Pupils are taught in three mixed-aged classes. Children in the Reception Year are taught with pupils in Year 1.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed lessons, looked at pupils' books in all classes and at evidence of children's work in the early years. The executive headteacher joined the inspector for these activities.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, all teachers and four members of the governing body.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including evidence of leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's plans for improvement and records relating to safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector spoke with many pupils during visits to classes and met some Year 6 pupils to hear their views of the school. Several parents were spoken to when picking their children up from school; their views were taken into account, along with the 22 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Richard Light, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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

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

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

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2016

