

St Mabyn Church of England Primary School

St Mabyn, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 3BQ

Inspection dates

31 January–1 February 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have taken effective action since the previous inspection to improve any teaching that did not meet their high standards. Consequently, teaching is consistently good across the school and pupils' outcomes are improving.
- Teachers plan work that is interesting and that allows the pupils to apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. However, when setting challenging work for the most able pupils in mathematics, teachers need to ensure that pupils are clear about their expectations.
- The teaching of reading is particularly effective. Children are taught the core reading skills when they first start in school and these are successfully built upon as pupils move through the school.
- Governors provide effective support and challenge. They have a clear view of the school's performance and are prepared to take bold steps in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school.
- There are small numbers of disadvantaged pupils and of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers ensure that work is tailored to meet the needs of these pupils and so they make good progress.
- Outcomes for children in Reception have been variable over past years but are now improving. As a result of the good teaching they receive, children get off to a positive start in the early years and make good progress.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development well and pupils demonstrate, through their good behaviour, the core values that are at the heart of the school's work. Pupils know how to stay safe and believe that the school places a high priority on their well-being.
- The school's values and nurturing ethos contribute to improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- During recent years, overall attendance and the attendance of boys have been below levels found nationally. Leaders have acted successfully to improve attendance and current rates are in line with national averages. Maintaining high rates of attendance remains a priority for the school.
- The school provides a stimulating and varied curriculum with many opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in music, sport and creative arts.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to strengthen the quality of teaching in order to further raise outcomes for pupils, especially the most able, by:
 - ensuring that pupils fully understand their tasks in mathematics, particularly in problem-solving activities so that they can apply their skills and reach the highest standards
 - ensuring that the development of skills in mathematics is consistently good across the school, matching that in reading and writing, so pupils achieve in line with their capabilities.
- Further improve the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that the improving rate of attendance for all groups of pupils is maintained.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher provides strong leadership based on her depth of understanding and ability to accurately assess the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. She is extremely well supported by the head of school. Both share a commitment to providing high-quality care and education for pupils and families.
- School improvement has been based on accurate assessments of teachers' performance and pupils' learning and their progress. Leaders make careful checks to make sure that any pupils who are at risk of falling behind are identified, with interventions put in place to avoid underachievement. This has successfully addressed a key improvement point from the previous inspection that required the school to regularly monitor the progress being made by pupils. Leaders recognise that some of the most able pupils could still be doing better to reach the highest standards as they move through each school year.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers effectively and have taken action, since the previous inspection, to address any teaching that has not been of a sufficiently high standard. Teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils make and their performance is reviewed regularly.
- Leaders have ensured that the pupil premium is used well to maximise opportunities for the small number of disadvantaged pupils in school. Additional one-to-one support is provided, where needed, and the school uses funding to enable all pupils to take part in all of the opportunities that the school offers. Leaders assess the impact of spending and can describe how disadvantaged pupils are progressing at similar rates to other pupils from similar starting points.
- The school skilfully tailors the curriculum to meet the needs of each year group and the challenges presented by the wide range of abilities in mixed-age classes. Teachers successfully plan learning so that pupils can attempt activities at a level suited to their development. Pupils are encouraged to select their starting point from a range of options during lessons and they enjoy the challenge of moving on to harder tasks.
- The curriculum is enhanced through visits to places such as the Eden Project and Truro Cathedral. The school makes good use of visitors to introduce pupils to other faiths and cultures. A close link with the local police force resulted in pupils being actively involved in monitoring the speed of motorists passing through the village and their efforts have improved road safety for the community.
- The school successfully promotes a strong emphasis on the British values of tolerance, respect for democracy and equality. This prepares pupils for life in modern multicultural Britain. Pupils have many opportunities to debate and present their views in a democratic forum, for example when debating whether Brexit is going to benefit children and young adults.
- Leaders make sure that the sports premium is used extremely well to provide a good range of opportunities and resources for pupils to take part in team games, sports and other activities that promote healthy lifestyles. In addition to receiving specialised

coaching from visiting specialists, pupils take part in competitive sports and team games, multi-sports events and sailing, surfing and tennis. A further impact of the effective use of funding has been the success of school teams in regional tournaments.

- School leaders rigorously monitor the attendance of individual pupils and key groups, such as disadvantaged pupils. They are quick to act when they see attendance rates falling and their actions have successfully improved overall attendance and that of key groups, particularly boys. They have identified why attendance rates were below national averages in 2015 and 2016. Current attendance rates are in line with national averages for all groups of pupils.
- School leaders have earned a good reputation across the county and beyond for their training and staff development skills. The executive headteacher and head of school have delivered training and advice across the trust and to schools across the local authority.
- The school is effectively supported by the director of schools for the Diocese of Truro, who carries out monitoring visits that accurately evaluate the quality of education being provided by the school. The principal of the multi-academy trust also provides strong support based on a thorough understanding of the school.
- The school's Christian and core values underpin actions taken by leaders, staff and governors to build an ethos where pupils can safely share their views and have respect for everyone's beliefs, values and customs.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide strong, supportive and challenging leadership.
- The chair of the governing body, who has a detailed knowledge of the strengths and areas for improvement at the school, leads the governing body effectively.
- Governors are regularly provided with assessment information and they compare the performance of the school's pupils with that of pupils across the multi-academy trust and with pupils nationally. They thoroughly investigate issues when it appears that pupils' performance is not as strong as they expect. A good example of this was when governors made a full, informed assessment of pupils' progress in mathematics following disappointing outcomes in 2015.
- Governors do not hesitate to make challenging decisions in order to improve the quality of education at the school, such as making strategic staffing decisions.
- Governors hold school leaders to account for the progress being made by all pupils and this includes checking that the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, special educational needs funding and the primary school physical education and sport premium, is effective and is raising standards.

Safeguarding

- Leaders and governors have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that staff recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous. Records are detailed and of good quality.

- Staff and governors understand their roles in relation to child protection procedures. They know what to do and whom to ask for advice about the welfare of pupils and how concerns are referred to the relevant bodies.
- Governors and staff keep up to date with legal requirements and make sure that welfare requirements are met, including those for the early years.
- Parents and pupils spoken to by the inspector and those who responded by online questionnaires were unanimous in their belief that pupils are safe in school. As one pupil explained, 'I feel really secure and safe!'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching across the school is now consistently good. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection where it was judged as requiring improvement, especially in mathematics and writing. The quality of teaching in lower key stage 2 has been variable because pupils have been taught by different teachers but this is now resolved and standards are rising.
- Teachers provide a range of challenges for pupils so that they can move forward in their learning from their varied starting points. Clear examples of challenge for the most able pupils, leading to the achievement of high-quality work in writing over time, are apparent for Reception children and Year 1 pupils. A number of these pupils are already using spelling and punctuation at the level above expectations for their age.
- All pupils are expected to identify an appropriate level of challenge in each lesson and aspire to achieve as highly as they can. While this is usually effective, for some of the most able pupils in mathematics there is sometimes a delay in starting tasks when pupils do not fully understand the challenge.
- Leaders and teachers use assessment information well to ensure that all pupils make good progress and additional funding is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive high-quality support. Specialised intervention programmes are carefully designed to meet the needs of specific groups and individuals. This is particularly effective for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to make good progress. One parent told the inspector how delighted she was at the help provided for her child and in particular the high quality of support from the teaching assistant.
- Pupils learn to read well as they move through the school. An effective whole-school approach to the teaching of phonics starts in the Reception Year that forms a solid base on which pupils continue to build. By the time they leave the school, pupils develop a love of reading; they can describe their favourite authors and they display excellent reading and comprehension skills.
- Pupils are encouraged by teachers to discuss their work with their classmates and to reflect on how well they have achieved in lessons. This is introduced in Reception and continues in each class. Pupils' discussions are purposeful and help to develop good listening and speaking skills as well as providing the opportunity to share ideas and different approaches.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Pupils are keen to respond to questions and they listen very carefully to their teachers and teaching assistants.

Teachers use questions well to extend pupils' knowledge and to encourage pupils to review their work and identify what could be improved.

- Teachers and additional adults plan well together and this results in the provision of effective support for pupils in all classes. Teaching assistants often lead teaching activities for groups of pupils. For example, they provide support to help pupils learn to tell the time using analogue and digital clocks. One pupil told the inspector, 'I only started learning how to tell the time like this yesterday and now I can find twenty-five past nine!'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The atmosphere throughout the school is calm, friendly and exciting. Pupils care for each other and are courteous and polite to others. They respond positively in class and can describe what it takes to be a successful learner.
- There is a strong emphasis within the school on staying healthy. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were clear about what makes a balanced diet and the benefits of eating plenty of fruit and vegetables. The school offers a wide range of sporting opportunities led by sports specialists and there is a good range of after-school sports clubs. The school has a successful record in a variety of inter-school sporting events including netball and tennis.
- Pupils feel safe and are aware of the actions taken by the school to keep the site secure and to teach them about how to keep safe in different situations, including when online.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is and why it is unacceptable. They say that bullying is rare and is dealt with effectively by staff when it does occur. One pupil described the impact of the approach taken by staff that involves asking pupils to quietly think about their actions, 'It made me think about what I had done. Thinking about what I had done made me realise how it feels to be in their shoes.' Pupils are taught about the threats posed by social media and they are able to explain what they could do to find help if they became aware of cyber bullying.
- Leaders and staff are successful in teaching pupils about discrimination and extremism in an age-appropriate manner. Pupils can describe opportunities that they have had to discuss and debate current world issues and their descriptions show that they understand how important it is to be able to listen to and understand the views of others. As one pupil explained, 'Democracy is putting everyone's opinion in mind so you can decide which one might be best.'
- Special topics, cultural and religious festivals plus a wide range of educational visits and visitors improve pupils' knowledge and understanding and contribute to pupils' cultural development. One pupil commented, 'Before I came to this school, I had no idea that there were so many religions.' Daily acts of collective worship are used to give pupils opportunities to be reflective and they make a significant contribution to

the development of pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development.

- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. Members of the school council regularly gather pupils' views and suggest improvements. Some school council members and other older pupils enjoy helping younger children at lunchtime.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons, at breaktimes and when moving around the school. At the start of each school year, pupils work with their teachers to agree suitable rules. As one pupil explained, 'We make up the rules. Sensible rules. It's like a contract and we sign it.'
- Pupils are attentive and well behaved in lessons and it is extremely rare to see any pupils disrupting lessons or interrupting the work of other pupils. Pupils are keen to answer questions, share ideas and contribute to discussions.
- Staff provide effective support for the very small number of pupils who sometimes find it difficult to adhere to school rules. The caring and nurturing approach adopted by support staff throughout the school enables these pupils to overcome their difficulties and engage with their learning. As a result, these pupils are making good progress in terms of their academic work and also in improving their resilience.
- Rates of attendance for all pupils and for certain groups were below national averages in 2015 and 2016. The rate of persistent absence of boys in 2016 was particularly high. School leaders are vigilant in tracking the attendance for all pupils and are aware of the factors that led to the lower than average attendance over two years. Current attendance rates for all pupils are in line with national averages and leaders are aware of the need to maintain this improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils have fluctuated over recent years but are now improving. In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Outcomes in mathematics were well below average for certain groups of pupils. In 2016, outcomes for pupils in Year 6 were considerably stronger and even though this cohort was small, the improvement typifies the improving standards being achieved by the school. The current small group of Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve equally strong outcomes.
- In 2016, pupils in key stage 1 achieved standards that were above the national average across all subjects, with strong outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Analysis of progress information for these pupils suggests that they made strong overall progress in Years 1 and 2 from their various starting points. Pupils currently in key stage 1 are making similarly good progress.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 national phonics screening check have been above the nationally expected standard for the previous three years and this high level is being maintained currently. This is due to the highly effective teaching of early reading and the engaging methods used by teachers to enthuse pupils.

- Information gathered during the inspection, through observing pupils in lessons, checking the progress being made in their books and by reviewing the school's detailed pupil assessment information indicates that pupils across the school are making good progress in all subjects. The proportions of pupils on target to reach expected progress are high. However, school leaders have identified that the proportions of pupils that are likely to make more than expected progress are not as strong, although progress has been more rapid since the start of the current term.
- The most able pupils at the school make good progress. They are consistently challenged by the work they are set. While there is clear evidence that the most able pupils are provided with suitable challenges across the school, sometimes their progress is hindered because they do not fully understand the mathematical problems that they are given. When teachers ensure that tasks are clearly understood, the most able pupils are able to move on quickly to complete them. When tasks are unclear, the most able pupils become unsure of which mathematical skills to use.
- The small number of disadvantaged pupils make at least the same progress as other pupils nationally. This is as a result of the timely intervention of teaching staff and the wide range of opportunities that this group of pupils participate in.
- The specific needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively met with well-planned activities that help them to access learning. Well-trained teaching assistants help these pupils to fully understand what they have to do, with the result that they make good progress and in some cases rapid improvement. For example, children with speaking and listening difficulties in the Reception Year were encouraged to perform short plays to their classmates. With skilful guidance from the teacher, they confidently approached the task and entertained their friends while practising their speaking skills.
- Progress in science is good across the school because pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to conduct research and test their theories. Pupils' investigations are shared on the school website where pupils can be seen investigating chromatography, filtering and learning about space.
- All pupils are encouraged to learn how to play a musical instrument and they are given many opportunities to perform at special events and during festivals. Music is an important feature throughout the school and pupils describe how music challenges them to try something new and how it brings great pleasure when they master challenging musical tasks and perform to a high standard.

Early years provision

Good

- The previous inspection judged that children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age and this is still the case. As a result of good teaching, they make strong progress. The proportions of pupils who attain a good level of development have fluctuated over time but are now above the national average.
- The leadership of the early years provision is good. The leader has identified the need to improve outcomes in communication and language and provides many opportunities

for pupils to learn how to become good listeners and speakers. For example, it is usual for children to end their lessons by sitting with a learning partner to listen to them describe something that they have learned. Children then tell the teacher about their friend and how well they have learned. As a result of strong leadership and good teaching, outcomes in communication and language have risen and almost all current children are on track to reach a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year. Children are very well prepared for their next stage of their education when they move to Year 1.

- Children make a good start in developing early reading skills. During the inspection, children were observed eagerly sounding out words that described familiar well-known objects using their phonic knowledge and then choosing to write down as many words as possible. Children spoke enthusiastically about this and displayed excellent listening skills with sustained concentration. They correctly spelled words such as 'hair' and 'chair', forming letters accurately. When the children were asked by the teacher what sort of learner they had been, one replied, 'I am a persevering parrot because I kept going!'
- Indoor and outdoor learning spaces are used effectively to stimulate children's interest. For example, during the inspection children were visiting a shoe shop and deciding which shoes to buy for different occasions. Their discussions illustrated that they understood how to take turns and to show respect and consideration for others.
- The school has recently admitted children of nursery age who attend on specific days each week. The children that joined at the start of the school year are making excellent progress in communication and language and in personal development. During the inspection, this group were observed using puppets and performing their own stories to each other. All of the children listened with total concentration to the stories and confidently asked questions to the puppet characters due to excellent prompting by the teaching assistant.
- The additional pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional support to disadvantaged children. As a result, they make the same good progress as other children nationally.
- Children's welfare is ensured through careful checks on their safety and well-trained staff that have a clear understanding of policies and agreed practices.
- Children make a positive start to school due to the setting up of good links with other nurseries and the positive relationships that are forged with new parents. The early years leader knows the children well before they start at the school and as a result, children settle quickly and make good early progress.

School details

Unique reference number	139090
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10024911

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Grigg
Executive Headteacher	Karen Holmes
Telephone number	01208 841307
Website	www.thesaintsaway.org
Email address	head@st-mabyn.org
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is a member of The Saints' Way Church of England Multi-Academy Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium funding, is below average.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below that in most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The executive headteacher provides support for schools across the multi-academy trust and for schools across the local authority.
- The school is supported by the multi-academy trust and by the director of schools for the Diocese of Truro.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in eight lessons or parts of lessons. Five observations were undertaken with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including pupil assessment information and the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance. The inspector also considered school self-evaluation documentation and the school improvement plan.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school and principal of the multi-academy trust. The inspector met with three members of the governing body and spoke by telephone with the director of schools for the Diocese of Truro.
- The inspector considered the 19 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the responses to the online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Paul Hodson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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