

St Meriadoc CofE Junior Academy

Cranfield Road, Camborne, Cornwall TR14 7PN

Inspection dates

3–4 May 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This school is led and managed well. The headteacher and assistant headteacher demonstrate determination and ambition for all pupils. Their expectations of staff and pupils are high.
- Staff work well as a team and have a shared understanding of the aims and ethos of the school.
- Teaching is good across the school. This ensures that all groups of pupils make consistently strong progress from their different starting points.
- Leaders have a detailed understanding of the external factors which affect pupils' learning. They work closely with parents and a range of outside agencies to address these. The vast majority of parents are extremely positive about the school.
- The leaders of English and mathematics demonstrate an unwavering desire to raise standards and have been proactive in addressing areas in need of development. This has led to raised outcomes in writing and mathematics for pupils currently in the school.
- Pupils' progress is closely monitored through lesson observations, conversations with pupils and analysis of work in their books. However, monitoring does not focus precisely on the progress being made by different groups of pupils.
- Leaders, including governors, have an increasingly accurate view of the school's performance. Identified developments are leading to improvements in all areas of the school's provision but are not sufficiently focused on what different groups of pupils can and cannot do.
- The local governing body provides effective support and challenge for leaders. Governors use their detailed knowledge of the school to inform their work.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. However, leaders do not consistently check which initiatives are proving the most effective.
- Leaders are proactive in addressing pupils' absence and, as a result, the attendance of all groups of pupils is improving. Nonetheless, attendance is still below the national average.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Pupils take pride in their work and standards of presentation are consistently high.
- Pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum. Leaders have tailored learning so that it meets pupils' needs well.
- The school's safeguarding procedures are effective and all staff contribute to a safe and caring environment.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the school's performance further by ensuring that:
 - targets in the school development plan focus precisely on pupils' outcomes
 - all leaders, including subject leaders, carefully evaluate the impact of teaching on the learning and progress of all groups of pupils
 - leaders monitor the impact of additional spending in order to identify which initiatives are proving the most effective
 - mathematical activities provide pupils of all abilities with opportunities for further development of their reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Raise attendance for all groups of pupils so that it is closer to the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, governors and other senior leaders set a clear and ambitious vision. They have accurately identified where, historically, learning has not been as effective and have addressed these areas thoroughly and without compromise. As a result, there have been improvements in all aspects of the school's work, including in the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour and academic outcomes.
- Leaders have a detailed knowledge of the barriers that affect pupils' learning but are vociferous in ensuring that these are not used as an excuse for underachievement or poor attendance. Instead, leaders encourage the school community to work collaboratively to maximise learning opportunities for individuals and groups of pupils. This is having a demonstrable impact on pupils' emotional resilience, attendance and, consequently, their outcomes.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for further development. Action planning is detailed and leaders distribute accountability for areas of the school's development plan throughout the school effectively. As a result, staff demonstrate a collective drive for improvement and this is proving a key component in the continuing development of the school. However, planning does not yet have sufficient precision and focus on the outcomes of specific groups of pupils.
- Leaders hold teachers to account for the quality of their teaching rigorously. They regularly carry out a range of monitoring activities and provide teachers with incisive feedback and recommendations for improvement. However, while this monitoring considers the impact of teaching on pupils' outcomes, it is not precisely focused on the progress being made by different groups of pupils.
- Performance management arrangements are robust and closely checked by leaders and governors. Whole-school priorities are translated into targets which focus on pupils' outcomes. The performance of teachers is reviewed regularly. Poor performance is challenged swiftly and support put in place. A comprehensive training programme supports the continuing development of all staff.
- The support provided by the Rainbow Multi-Academy Trust is developing in its impact. It is now more tightly focused on monitoring standards in the school and holding leaders and governors to account for the progress that different groups of pupils are making.
- The trust's newly appointed chief executive officer has a good understanding of the school's needs. She has provided the headteacher with valuable support in making changes to staffing.
- Subject leaders, especially those responsible for English and mathematics, are providing a significant contribution to school improvement. Senior leaders and governors have invested in developing the skills of these leaders through a range of tailor-made coaching and training sessions. Following the 2016 national assessments, leaders identified areas for improvement and made swift changes to the curriculum as well as in approaches to the teaching of writing and mathematics. As a result, current pupils are making better progress and outcomes across the school are improving. This

is especially the case for the most able pupils.

- Pupil premium funding supports the needs of disadvantaged pupils well. A broad range of initiatives are helping to make sure that disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. However, although leaders monitor the progress made by this group of pupils, they do not measure precisely the impact of individual initiatives to check which ones are having the most effect. Similarly, plans for future spending do not have clear success criteria for each area of spending. Consequently, leaders and governors are not able to ensure that funding is targeted on what is working most effectively.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Additional funding for these pupils is used effectively.
- The additional government funding to promote sport and physical education is spent effectively. It is used to provide professional development and training for staff in, for example, the teaching of dance. Leaders monitor levels of participation in after-school activities and funding is targeted on increasing the involvement of less active pupils. This has led to the addition of dodgeball, table tennis and climbing to the school's after-school offer.
- Leaders have established a curriculum which is rich, varied and enthuses pupils. Pupils talk positively about more 'active learning'. For example, Year 5 pupils told an inspector how much they had enjoyed a lesson in which they explored the properties of 3D shapes, using marshmallows and spaghetti.
- Leaders have recently reviewed the content of the curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of St Meriadoc pupils and maximises opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and understanding. It now also focuses on local geography and history, including, for example, a topic on Cornish tin mining.
- Leaders have overseen the creation of an exciting and vibrant learning environment which celebrates pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values and talk knowledgeably about democracy, the rule of law and tolerance of others. Pupils were very clear in saying they 'accept everyone for who they are'.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school very well. They play an active part in the life of the school. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, as well as the impact of new initiatives.
- The governing body has carried out an audit of its members' skills and recruited new governors to address gaps in experience and expertise. This has included the recent appointment of someone with an educational background to assist the governing body in a more detailed analysis of the school's assessment information.
- Governors hold leaders to account through asking challenging questions and through the precise monitoring of progress towards school development targets.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. They have received appropriate training and challenge leaders to ensure that all pupils are kept safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead is resolute in providing a safe environment for all pupils. A strong culture of safeguarding permeates all aspects of school life. The checks made on staff who work at the school meet requirements and all relevant documentation is in place. The school site is well maintained and secure.
- All staff receive regular training covering, among other topics, child protection, radicalisation, children missing education and female genital mutilation. Staff understand the need to remain vigilant and are clear on what to do if they have a concern about a child.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have a detailed knowledge of the most vulnerable pupils and their families. They work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that effective help and support is provided.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good across the school. The work in pupils' books shows that all groups make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, good progress is evident in other subject areas including history, geography and science.
- Teachers know their pupils extremely well. They use this knowledge to plan teaching based on what individual pupils have previously learned and what they understand. Teachers clearly communicate their expectations of what pupils are expected to learn and ensure that pupils know what they have to do to be successful in their work. Pupils say they value the guidance given to them.
- Teachers have high expectations of what all groups of pupils can achieve. They ask probing questions which explore pupils' understanding and provide opportunities for pupils to apply their skills across a range of subjects. However, expectations are not always high enough in some classes and, at times, work does not provide sufficient challenge. Where this is the case, progress is slower and the behaviour of some pupils falls below the standard expected by the school.
- Leaders match the skills of teaching assistants to the identified needs of individuals and groups. This ensures that learners, including the most able, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils benefit from sharply focused support.
- Pupils, especially the most able, are now making greater progress in mathematics. Teachers' precise knowledge of what pupils can already do enables them to plan activities which build on prior learning and develop a secure understanding of different concepts. In addition to this, teachers do not set limitations on what pupils can achieve and, as a result, pupils frequently exceed expectations. This is particularly the case with lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders state that pupils of all abilities, not just the most able, now require more opportunities to apply their understanding and skills.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Pupils find reading enjoyable and

challenging. Comprehension skills are good and pupils read with fluency and expression. Teachers are persistent in encouraging pupils to read at home and this is regularly checked on and rewarded. Pupils talked to inspectors with confidence about different authors and genres that they enjoy. Leaders have invested in a wide range of engaging books which are sustaining a thirst for reading among pupils of all ages and abilities.

- The teaching of writing has improved. Teachers have focused on spelling and the basic skills of grammar and punctuation. This has ensured that greater numbers of pupils across the school are now writing at the standard expected for their age. Following the 2016 national assessments, leaders recognised that there were not enough opportunities for the most able pupils to practise their skills in longer pieces of work. Changes to the curriculum and raised expectations from teachers have led to these pupils now consistently producing writing more in line with what they are capable of. Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are equally high across other subjects, for example in writing up scientific experiments.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel safe, are proud of their school, and enjoy attending.
- Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and the importance of a balanced diet. During the inspection, Year 3 pupils visited a local supermarket and gained a full understanding of the need to reduce their sugar intake. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at home, in school and online.
- Leaders have created a nurturing, caring ethos where pupils and their families feel secure. They have an in-depth understanding of pupils' needs and ensure that support is tailored to reduce any external barriers to learning.
- Staff work collaboratively with a range of outside agencies to provide assistance where it is needed. Parents value this work. One comment, which summed up the view of many, was that 'Since joining the school, my daughter has blossomed and that is solely through the care and support the whole team have given her... this school helps her grow into a stronger person every single day.'
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders recognise the importance of raising their pupils' aspirations and have added provision for this into the school's curriculum. An example of this was a cross-curricular Year 6 topic entitled 'What's in it for me?' Through this, pupils gained a greater understanding of the workplace and the skills needed to be successful. Pupils discussed the project with enthusiasm and pride and one told an inspector how it had inspired their ambition to join the Royal Navy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school has a warm and friendly atmosphere.

- Standards of behaviour observed in the dining hall, in the playground and as pupils moved around the school were good.
- Overall, similarly good standards of behaviour were observed in lessons. Pupils exhibit positive attitudes to their learning. They show pride in their work and standards of presentation are consistently high across the school. However, where learning does not engage pupils' interest, some pupils become easily distracted.
- Records show that the minority of pupils who have behaviour issues are well supported by staff. Pupils say that their learning is very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Incidents of bullying are rare and, if they do occur, are tackled quickly. Pupils have confidence in adults in the school and say they would feel comfortable in talking to any of them if they had concerns or worries. This view was confirmed by the vast majority of parents.
- Absence rates are improving but are still above the national average. Leaders' efforts to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are beginning to pay off and attendance for these groups is rising. Good attendance is celebrated and there are clear procedures to chase up unexplained absences.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average in 2016. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standard was above the national average for reading but below for writing and mathematics. Current attainment is strong and indicates that a greater proportion are on track to meet the higher standards at the end of the year in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading. They understand the importance of developing their basic skills and read frequently in school and at home. The school's emphasis on comprehension skills ensures that pupils have an in-depth understanding of what they are reading. This leads to pupils acquiring higher-order reading skills, such as inference and deduction.
- Progress in writing is good. Pupils understand how to write in different styles and they make high-quality selections of vocabulary in their stories. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in spelling, grammar and punctuation was above the national average in 2016. Leaders recognised that spelling was a relative weakness and changes to how this is taught have led to improved outcomes for current pupils.
- In mathematics, teaching builds on what pupils can already do, and, where required, addresses misconceptions swiftly. This ensures that pupils of all abilities, including the most able, are making good progress from their starting points. Greater numbers of pupils are currently on track to reach the higher standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress and attainment are well supported through an effective use of pupil premium

funding.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good academic and pastoral support. Funding is used effectively to support these pupils. Consequently, they make good progress and achieve well, both academically and personally.
- Pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum shows that they are making at least good progress. Work in humanities, science, music and art demonstrates that pupils are developing skills and knowledge in these subjects. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

School details

Unique reference number	140781
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10024894

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy convertor
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	Rainbow Multi-Academy Trust
Chair	Jayne Emery
Headteacher	Bethan Anderson
Telephone number	01209 713436
Website	www.st-meriadoc-jnr.cornwall.sch.uk
Email address	secretary@st-meriadoc-jnr.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Meriadoc CofE Junior Academy is an average-sized junior school. There are eight classes.
- The school is a member of the Rainbow Multi-Academy Trust and opened as an academy in April 2014. Local governance is undertaken by the governing body.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have both been in post since September 2016.
- The majority of pupils are White British and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special

educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above that found nationally.

- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club as well as a wide range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms and some of these visits were made jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteacher. Pupils' learning was observed in all year groups.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, staff, members of the local governing body and the chief executive officer from the Rainbow Multi-Academy Trust. Inspectors also took into account responses to questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of meetings of the local governing body. They also considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection to seek their views and listened to a selection of them read.
- Inspectors took account of 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including a number of free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonathan Dyer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Aisha Waziri

Ofsted Inspector

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