

Carclaze Community Primary School

St Piran's Close, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 3TF

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires 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

- Since the academy conversion in February 2015, significant turbulence within the school and trust has distracted school leaders, leading to a decline in pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have taken too long to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning. As a result, some poor teaching persists which slows pupils' progress, especially in writing.
- Leadership roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined and understood. As a result, some leaders lack confidence, especially in special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and in leading the pupil premium strategy.
- Leaders do not evaluate the depth of pupils' learning across the curriculum well enough. As a result, pupils' experience and their enjoyment of the full range of subjects are reduced.
- Teachers' use of assessment information is weak. Consequently, work is not consistently well matched to pupils' needs and prevents them from building effectively on prior knowledge, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough, which leads to too few pupils reaching the standards of which they are capable, including the most able pupils.
- Pupils' poor outcomes, coupled with limitations in the curriculum, mean that they are not prepared well for the next stage in their learning, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders in the early years ensure that children are nurtured in a caring and positive environment. However, the children do not make consistently strong progress to be well prepared for key stage 1, especially the most able and disadvantaged children.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' and governors' recent actions are now starting to have a discernible impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The rigorous implementation of a daily phonics programme is rapidly improving pupils' phonics knowledge and reading.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and reliable. As a result, they know where strengths and weaknesses are to be able to improve the school.
- Leaders ensure that staff morale is high. This is having a positive impact on the drive for rapid improvement.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that leaders and managers:
 - clarify key roles and responsibilities, in particular for those who have responsibility for SEN and disadvantaged pupils
 - implement a curriculum with high-quality teaching and learning in the full range of subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers:
 - use assessment information to set appropriately challenging work to build well on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, including for those who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able pupils
 - develop pupils' writing skills through high-quality and extended writing activities
 - have the skills and subject knowledge to support and deepen pupils' mathematical thinking, reasoning and understanding.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be taken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the academy conversion, leaders have been distracted by turbulence and circumstances linked to running the trust. These have caused considerable distraction in the work of leaders at Carclaze and contributed to declining outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have been too slow to identify and respond to weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, there are continuing issues which have not yet been fully remedied, for example pupils' writing outcomes. However, last year, leaders and governors recognised that the school had serious flaws and have taken effective action to start tackling these.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that key leadership roles and responsibilities are well understood by other leaders. In particular, those responsible for SEN and disadvantaged pupils are not yet taking effective action because they do not know the full range of their responsibilities. Consequently, they have not been able to complete monitoring and checks, for example assessing the impact of pupils' individual learning plans. This reduces capacity as more of this work falls to the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Leaders do not evaluate the depth of pupils' learning well enough across the curriculum. As a result, some subjects are not sufficiently developed to deepen pupils' learning and experiences, including art, religious education, information technology and science. This means that pupils are not gaining the full set of skills and knowledge to be well prepared for the next stage in their learning. However, the school's 'real' curriculum strategy, based on cross-curricular learning, is enjoyed by pupils who look forward to finding out what their next topic will be.
- Leaders' monitoring is not sufficiently focused on pupils' outcomes. Although it has been instrumental in identifying general weaknesses and in holding teachers to account, it lacks depth in checking what pupils know, can do and understand. As a result, leaders do not have enough detailed information to improve specific weaknesses in teaching and learning.
- Leaders' use of the additional funds for SEN and the pupil premium are not impacting well enough on pupils' academic outcomes. However, pupils are now starting to catch up. Over time though, this has taken too long and the attainment of some pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is still too low. In other ways, vulnerable pupils' emotional and mental health is well supported.
- Leaders' use of the additional physical education and sports funding is effective. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs to maintain healthy lifestyles and participation in sport.
- Leaders have taken essential action to improve systems of accountability. Last year, they recognised that pupils were not doing well enough and took action to start tackling this. For example, they completed rigorous checks on all teachers, which led to challenging professional conversations under the school's performance management policies. Teachers' professional development and performance are well linked to the

school's priorities.

- Leaders have implemented new assessments to accurately check pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. As a result, leaders now have an accurate view of the progress of pupils and are using this to plan staff training and support packages, as well as introducing timely interventions for pupils. However, assessments in writing remain overly generous across the school.
- Leaders have successfully implemented a daily phonics programme, which is having a marked impact on pupils' phonic knowledge and early reading skills, especially in key stage 1. Leaders have a clear rationale and focus, which has led to effective training and deployment of teachers and teaching assistants to deliver a high-quality programme.
- Leaders promote pupils' moral and social development well. School strategies aimed at building pupils' moral understanding and empathy, such as through 'stay safe' buddies, mean that pupils are aware of how to look after each other. However, pupils' understanding of other cultures and world faiths is not well developed.
- School leaders ensure that the school delivers a range of extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities. These include sports, choir and 'times-table' clubs. Pupils recognise this as a strength and enjoy the further learning and experiences these bring. Parents and carers endorse the work of school with an overwhelming majority who would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders have used an external improvement adviser effectively to help identify and target specific areas for improvement. External advice has focused leaders successfully on key areas of teaching and learning, enabling leaders to directly intervene and challenge underperformance. This support has also challenged school leaders to implement effective processes for checking pupils' progress and increasing rigour in holding teachers to account.

Governance of the school

- The trust and local governing body have not been effective in securing improvements since the academy conversion in February 2015. Poor strategic planning, which has been exacerbated by difficult and unforeseen circumstances, has slowed improvement. Since the school's predecessor school was also judged as 'requires improvement' in June 2014, there has not been enough improvement since joining the Peninsula Learning Trust (PLT).
- Recent leadership changes on the trust board and the local governing body have reinvigorated the leadership with fresh ideas and impetus for change. Following disappointing results in the 2017 national tests, governors and trustees recognised the need for urgent improvement. As a result, they have introduced a range of new strategies and expectations which have increased rigour and accountability within the school. These are starting to secure the improvements needed for the pupils.
- Since September 2017, governors have revised the school improvement plan with the aid of an external adviser. The introduction of the 'Raising Attainment Plan' (RAP) has sharpened the focus on teaching, learning and assessment. This is monitored and checked by governors every three weeks through the newly formed 'Raising

Achievement Group' (RAG). Consequently, governors know the school well and are using their knowledge to provide appropriate challenge to school leaders. For example, governors have completed visits linked to the school improvement plan and have received termly reports from the mathematics and English subject leaders.

- Governors ensure that the right professional development, challenge and support are in place for staff, including senior leaders. They recognise that the school must improve outcomes for pupils and are taking positive and affirming steps to ensure that staff morale is high to meet this objective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding is at the centre of the school's work. Systems and processes for pre-employment checks and appointing staff are fit for purpose. Training and induction for staff are similarly effective. As a consequence, staff know what to do to keep pupils safe and how to use agreed processes to report, record or escalate any concerns.
- Leaders work effectively with the range of external agencies and professional services to keep pupils safe. Leaders are tenacious and respond in a timely manner to act on behalf of pupils and keep them safe, for example in working with social services and family support groups.
- Staff work effectively with pupils who have a range of complex social, emotional and health needs. For example, the learning mentor is well trained to support pupils who have particular emotional conditions affecting learning and behaviour. On those few occasions when a pupil's behaviour escalates and becomes anti-social, school leaders have effective systems to share information with those who need it and follow-up calls with parents are made. This is helping to improve the behaviour of pupils, especially those who have particularly complex or additional needs.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They enjoy coming to school and have confidence in the staff to look after them. Pupils say that they trust staff and know what to do to stay safe, including when working online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers' use of assessment information is not consistently effective in planning work that is well matched to pupils' needs. This prevents pupils from being able to learn skills and knowledge incrementally or build appropriately on prior learning, especially in writing and mathematics. In the worst cases, teachers use unhelpful and repeated objectives that bear little resemblance to what the children actually need to learn next.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough. This is seen, for example, in pupils' writing where the most able pupils are not being challenged to produce high-quality and extended writing across the curriculum. Therefore these pupils are not developing the skills, knowledge or stamina to write at length or to the highest standards at the end of key stage 2.

- Teachers are not consistently challenging common errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. The introduction of a new spelling strategy in key stage 2 and the revised handwriting policy are yet to have a consistently strong impact across the whole school.
- Mathematics teaching is not consistently good enough. Teachers use a framework for delivering mathematics content for every year group. However, their weak subject knowledge means that they do not know how to ask the next probing question to clarify or deepen pupils' understanding. There are also occasions when teachers have unknowingly taught or modelled inaccurate methods of calculation. Pupils' misconceptions are not swiftly recognised and corrected consistently.
- Teachers are not developing pupils' ability to mentally recall number facts and be able to apply these quickly to a range of situations. Teachers lack confidence in enabling pupils to use and apply their knowledge to deepen pupils' mathematical thinking, reasoning and understanding.
- The quality of teaching is starting to improve because leaders are being proactive in checking and holding teachers to account. Where there are particular weaknesses, teachers are being supported through packages of support, including through the recently appointed teaching and learning leader. As a result, the overall quality of teaching across the school is improving.
- There is effective teaching interspersed across the school. Where this is having the most impact, teachers are checking pupils' knowledge and quickly tackling pupils' errors or misunderstandings. For example, Year 2 pupils were revisiting previous multiplication problems to master inverse operations.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge for teaching letters and sounds correctly. They assess pupils' phonics skills regularly and precisely, including their knowledge of letters and sounds, as well as words per minute. This information is used well to plan ability groups for pupils to gain skills and confidence quickly and at the right stage. Teaching assistants deliver essential support to pupils through the daily phonics sessions but also at other times for other interventions.
- The teaching of reading is improving. Pupils enjoy reading and show a growing interest in books and literature. This is impacting positively where readers are now gaining ground to read with confidence and fluency.
- There are positive relationships between teachers and pupils. As a result, pupils are keen and show a willingness to learn and help each other. There is a positive climate for learning, where pupils show enjoyment and work well together.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' poor outcomes and limitations in some subject areas, such as science, mean that pupils are not consistently well prepared for the next stage in their learning or

development, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

- Pupils' learning behaviour and attitudes in lessons sometimes deteriorate when teaching is not meeting their needs or holding their interest well enough. This can interfere with the learning, enjoyment and progress of pupils in some lessons.
- Pupils do not always take pride in their work; for example, there are instances where handwriting and presentation are poor and these go unchecked or unchallenged. Pupils are not showing the resilience to complete or finish work, especially disadvantaged pupils. This lowers the overall quality of work.
- The learning mentor and other staff are well trained to support pupils through a variety of confidential personal and emotional issues. Pupils trust staff and have a good relationship with them to provide effective support and intervention. This provides a needed service for some pupils and their families.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The overall attendance of pupils is improving and marginally below the national average. School staff work with the attendance officer, learning mentor and other agencies to support pupils in improving attendance. However, persistent absence of some pupils remains too high, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils are generally polite and courteous around school and across the school day. Sometimes, pupils say that play can become a little 'rough', but staff deal with this well.
- Pupils enjoy school and make useful contributions, including through being librarians, play leaders and prefects. They enjoy taking an active role, such as through the school council, and they have a genuine voice in the running of the school.
- Pupils say there is little bullying and if this does happen staff respond effectively. Processes and systems are in place to provide support and intervention for any pupil who is being bullied or bullying another.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress in end of key stage 2 national tests showed further decline in 2017. For example, pupils' progress in writing was in the lowest 20% in consecutive years. However, current analyses and scrutiny of pupils' workbooks show that pupils are now starting to catch up well as the year is progressing.
- Current outcomes for pupils, especially in writing and mathematics, remain too variable across the school. Attainment of pupils, although rising, is still too low, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Common weaknesses in key skills thwart pupils and prevent them from reaching the standards of which they are capable, including the most able pupils. These include basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are gaps caused by previously weak teaching. Leaders have now introduced an approach to improving spelling in key

stage 2, although this is yet to have a consistently strong impact.

- Pupils continue to have weaknesses in being able to rapidly recall number facts and use mental strategies to solve problems, especially girls. They lack confidence and rely on inefficient and basic methods when they get stuck.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good progress. Poorly planned and executed individual support plans are not precise enough, which prevents them from overcoming weaknesses quickly.
- Disadvantaged pupils are behind their counterparts in both historical and current assessments of their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Their weak skills are compounded, especially if they also happen to have SEN, because teaching is not building their skills and knowledge securely or quickly enough.
- The most able pupils are not stretched or challenged to reach the highest standards of which they are capable in each key stage and every subject across the school. In particular, they are not using and applying their skills well across the curriculum, for example in science, to deepen their knowledge and higher-order thinking skills.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 improved in 2017 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this remained below the national average. Pupils' skills in workbooks show improvement in the current year, although this is still inconsistent between classes. Weaknesses in writing and for groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, remain a particular issue.
- Phonics scores in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose markedly in 2017. For the first time, the school results were above the national average and a 22% increase on the previous year. Also, at the end of Year 2, 95% of pupils had met this standard, which also exceeded the national average and was an increase of 11%. The current quality of teaching and focus on phonics are enabling current pupils in Years 1 and 2 to attain well in comparison with national benchmarks.
- Pupils are reading widely and often. There has been a concerted drive to improve pupils' reading, which is now taking effect. Pupils read with increasing confidence and expression. The introduction of a programme to support pupils in key stage 2 is working well. However, some reading books for a few pupils are not well matched to their needs.
- The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are progressing in line with their peers. Support and intervention are yet to enable them to make rapid progress.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for the children are not consistently good. In particular, too few of the most able children reach the standards of which they are capable, which holds them back as they embark on, and go through, key stage 1.
- Children who have SEN and/or disabilities, as well as those who are disadvantaged, do not always catch up quickly enough, especially in writing. This means that they are not prepared as well as they can be in readiness for learning in key stage 1. Individual

plans for children to help them catch up are not used effectively in daily lessons. As a result, some children are not gaining essential reading, writing and mathematics building blocks for the future quickly enough.

- The learning environment is lively, colourful and inviting both indoors and outside. This captures the children's imagination and makes them willing learners. The early years is well resourced, with appropriate areas to support the children's learning and development; for example, there is a reading area and construction, small world, writing and role play areas. However, the areas are not tailored well enough in support of individual needs or to meet current school improvement priorities. For example, the role play area is well resourced but does not ensure sufficient challenge to stretch the most able. As a result, children do not make strong enough progress through their own independent use of the environment.
- The staff in the early years and the leader exude warmth and care for the children. Strong transition and induction arrangements to school mean that children settle quickly into well-established routines. As a result, the children develop key personal, social and emotional skills and qualities, including confidence and independence to play and work together.
- Adults promote good relationships with the children. They interact meaningfully to help guide play or lead directed sessions, for example in mathematics. For example, some children were being well supported to add pairs of single-digit numbers and writing these in a number sentence (adding pirates' gold coins together).
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is strong. This enables the children to make strong progress in their letters and sounds to read and write simple words. This is supporting them well for their transition into Year 1 and beyond.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff comply with regulations, for example paediatric first aid training, and ensure that systems to care for children, including those who are still being toilet trained, are appropriately in place.
- Parents endorse the welcome and support of the early years staff. They appreciate the diligence and keenness of staff to give the children a nurturing and positive start.

School details

Unique reference number	141710
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10042641

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Kevin Johns
Headteacher	Simon Pollard
Telephone number	01726 74194
Website	www.carclazesch.org
Email address	admin@carclazesch.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets the government's current floor standards.
- The school converted to become an academy in February 2015. It is part of the Peninsula Learning Trust.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium is similar to the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classes to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school day on both inspection days.
- Meetings were held with the range of leaders. These included the headteacher and assistant headteacher, representatives of the local governing body, a meeting with the school's purchased improvement adviser, as well as other leaders such as the SENCo and pupil premium leader, the mathematics and English subject leaders, and the school's learning mentor.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including recent governor visits and the RAP, assessment information, the school's self-evaluation, anonymised performance management records and the school development plan.
- Documentation including the school's single central record and child protection training were scrutinised with school leaders and staff.
- Inspectors undertook learning walks and scrutinised pupils' books to evaluate the quality of work and check the accuracy of assessment information, including for disadvantaged pupils. They also spoke with pupils to check their understanding of what is seen in workbooks.
- Inspectors spoke to children through various activities during the inspection and heard a sample of pupils read. Pupils joined inspectors to talk about the curriculum and their learning.
- Inspectors observed breaktimes and met with pupils during meetings and through other walks and agreed 'tours' of the school.
- The 108 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were taken into account. The lead inspector considered comments provided alternatively, including inspectors' discussions with parents. Furthermore, the inspection took account of the 50 survey responses by staff.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Costello	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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