

Roche Community Primary School

Fore Street, Roche, St Austell, Cornwall PL26 8EP

Inspection dates

17–18 October 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	Good
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

- The teaching of phonics is weak. Lower-attaining pupils find it too difficult to read books that adults give them as they are ill-matched to their reading development.
- Leaders have recognised the need to change the approaches to teaching reading and writing. These new approaches are yet to become firmly established.
- Leaders do not evaluate the impact of the pupil premium well. They focus too much on outcomes at the end of key stage 2. Information about current pupils' progress is scant. The pupil premium strategy for the current academic year is incomplete.
- Teachers do not respond precisely enough to the emerging needs of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Across the school, there are few opportunities for pupils to apply what they have learned to their writing. Pupils' progress and attainment in writing have been below average in recent years.
- Leaders do not use assessment information well enough to plan their actions. Where they have acted, leaders do not check the impact closely enough for signs of improvement.
- Governors do not challenge leaders sufficiently. They do not have access to up-to-date information to help them ask the right questions about school performance.
- Adults in the Reception class do not capture accurately what a child can do at the start of the Reception Year. This hinders their ability to meet the emerging needs of children.

The school has the following strengths

- The teaching of mathematics is consistently good across the school. Pupils experience a varied mathematics curriculum which develops their fluency, reasoning and knowledge of how to solve problems.
- Pupils behave well. They conduct themselves well around the school, holding open doors for adults and their peers. Pupils also attend well.
- Pupils have increasingly positive attitudes towards learning. They value the new approach to the teaching of reading and writing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers respond to pupils’ emerging needs and provide sufficient challenge in lessons, particularly for the most able in mathematics
 - teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities to apply what they have learned in writing
 - adults plan phonics sessions that closely match the needs of pupils
 - pupils, particularly the least able, have access to reading books that are appropriate to their phonics development, including in the early years.
- Improve leadership and management so that:
 - leaders use information about pupils’ progress and precise monitoring to identify what needs to improve and take appropriate actions
 - leaders monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions, particularly on pupils’ outcomes
 - recent changes to the way that reading and writing are taught are embedded across the school so that pupils’ progress improves, and a greater proportion work at the levels expected for their age and the higher standard
 - the school’s approach to teaching of phonics is improved, leading to an increased proportion of pupils meeting the standard expected in the phonics screening check by the end of Years 1 and 2
 - governors challenge leaders sufficiently about school improvement, using up-to-date information to support their evaluations and following up areas of weakness.
- Improve the quality of the early years by:
 - ensuring that baseline information, which captures children’s starting points, is completed in a timely manner and is accurate
 - using the baseline information to plan activities that closely match children’s needs, resulting in stronger progress
 - providing children with regular opportunities to write, so that a greater proportion of children meet the early learning goals in writing.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders' actions have not improved pupils' outcomes quickly enough. Pupils' progress has been weak and until recently showed no sign of improvement. Although provisional results indicate an improvement in outcomes in reading and mathematics, current pupils' progress and outcomes in writing remain low.
- Leaders are aware that pupils' outcomes are not strong enough and can demonstrate their response through the actions they have taken to make improvements. However, leaders are not yet using the full arsenal of information they have available to ensure that actions are precise enough. They have not delved into pupils' books and assessment information with enough rigour. Furthermore, leaders are not monitoring their actions closely enough to evaluate how effective their work has been.
- Leaders do not use the pupil premium effectively. At the time of the inspection, leaders had not evaluated the impact of this funding during the previous academic year. Where leaders have completed early analysis, it focuses too much on outcomes at the end of key stage 2, rather than the impact on disadvantaged pupils across the school. In addition, there is no strategy in place for the year ahead to show how leaders will use funding to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Worryingly, neither the trust nor the governing body had realised this work was still outstanding.
- Leaders have made several changes in recent years to improve outcomes in reading and writing that were showing little sign of improvement. These frequent changes have prevented approaches taking root and embedding across the school. Nonetheless, the most recent initiatives are showing initial signs of improving pupils' achievement, although they have not had enough time to reveal their full impact.
- The school's approach to teaching phonics is not strong enough. The school has adopted a hybrid approach by pulling in ideas from a range of existing schemes. While leaders are attempting to meet the needs of pupils in the school through an interactive approach to learning to read, it is not well enough thought through, and practice is weak in places. Leaders have an overgenerous view about how well phonics is taught.
- Leaders have benefited from support by the trust for the leadership of mathematics and, most recently, school improvement. The teaching of mathematics is stronger than reading and writing, with pupils' progress more evident. School improvement advisers have provided additional challenge and support; however, the correlation between teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes remains relatively unexplored.
- Leaders have begun to share strong classroom practice across the school and recognise this as a method of moving towards greater consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Staff have received training to help them develop their practice, particularly in the new approaches to the teaching of reading and writing.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a varied curriculum. The curriculum encourages pupils to make links across subjects, while also developing subject-specific skills, such as the use of computers in design and technology and crotchets and quavers in music. Cross-curricular links are used well, such as finding out about the Mayans through exploring maps in geography and historical sources.

- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities get the support they need. Leaders carefully monitor and review pupils' targets to ensure that they are appropriate. The SENCo attends meetings about pupils' progress to ensure added focus on pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the progress they make. Staff training closely considers the needs of the pupils at the school; this ensures that staff are well trained to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, ensuring that they have a high impact on promoting learning.
- The use of the sports premium is effective. Leaders can demonstrate how they have used it to increase pupils' participation in sporting activities.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been proactive enough in challenging leaders about pupils' low outcomes in the past. Despite the school having lots of information about pupils' progress, governors rely heavily on anecdotal evidence, which often does not get to the heart of the matter, including leaders' use of the pupil premium. Governors acknowledge this and have plans to strengthen this aspect of their work.
- Governors have been too reliant on published pupils' outcomes to evaluate the success of leaders' actions. As a result, it has left them feeling frustrated when actions have not resulted in improvements. They acknowledge that they are not monitoring current pupils' progress closely enough.
- Governors are not challenging enough when asking about progress made in the school. When governors raise questions to follow up at a later date, this is not done. This results in a lack of action. They have not had the information required to ask probing questions or to be effective in holding leaders to account for the school's performance. Furthermore, they had not noticed that the pupil premium strategy for the previous academic year had not been evaluated and that there was no strategy for the current year.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that they have robust recruitment procedures to be sure that they only appoint staff who are suitable to work with children. Once in post, staff have training that is current and wide-ranging. Training logs keep leaders abreast of any voids, should they occur. There are numerous safeguarding leaders across the school; all are appropriately trained to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.
- Where staff have concerns about pupils, they are aware of the procedures and refer these concerns to the appropriate members of staff. Leaders log concerns effectively, understanding that it can serve as a useful chronology of events, should the time come that external support is needed. Where concerns do warrant external support, leaders act proportionately to make referrals or seek advice.
- Leaders can demonstrate how their actions ensure that pupils who are at a higher risk remain under the watch of the local authority. Through regular communication with social workers, concerns are shared and acted upon. Leaders reflect on their own

safeguarding practice through completing the county's safeguarding audit. Where actions are needed to refine their practice, they take them in a timely manner.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- While there are examples of stronger practice, some teaching does not consider closely enough pupils' emerging needs. As a result, teaching is not consistently helping all pupils make strong progress.
- The teaching of phonics is weak. These sessions sometimes lack purpose and do not closely consider the needs of pupils. Adults do not use assessment information well to plan activities precisely. Consequently, pupils struggle to apply their phonics knowledge.
- The teaching of mathematics, when compared with reading and writing, is much stronger. Pupils and teachers are familiar with expectations and pupils have regular opportunities to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem solving. However, for some of the most able pupils, the level of challenge is not sufficient. Some of these pupils find the work too easy as it does not build on their prior knowledge.
- In some lessons, there are periods of time where pupils are waiting on adults to provide the next activity. During these times, pupils lose focus, which can result in low-level disruption. Pupils are too dependent on adults to move through their learning.
- The teaching of early reading is inconsistent. While middle-attaining pupils and most-able pupils read with increasing fluency, lower-attaining pupils sometimes struggle. Often, the books that these pupils read are too challenging and not closely matched to their reading ability. Consequently, pupils rely on methods such as using the pictures in the book to help them guess the word or using the first letter in a word to guess the rest of the word.
- Currently, the teaching of writing is focused too much on developing pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling knowledge without reasonable opportunities for them to apply these features to their writing. Pupils are not making the link between the knowledge they have built up and how they can use it successfully.
- Teachers are currently trying out new approaches to teaching reading and writing. Although these are in their infancy, it is clear things are moving in the right direction. Pupils speak favourably about the new approaches. In class, shared reading lessons are focused, and pupils have opportunities to think more deeply about what they have read. Teachers give bespoke support to each pupil and focus on helping them meet their targets in writing. Both initiatives are still very new but there are signs of improvement.
- Where teachers closely match activities to the needs of pupils, questioning is of high quality and teachers use assessment information to plan effectively. When this occurs, lessons are focused, and pupils make strong progress.
- Teachers deploy support staff effectively. Adults support pupils' learning well and identify whether more support or challenge is needed. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities particularly well. Relationships are warm and rooted in mutual respect. Sometimes, teaching assistants are not directed as well. When this occurs, their effectiveness is reduced and their impact on pupils' learning is limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are clear about how to stay safe online. They know how to use the guidance they have been given to help them deal with problems, should they occur.
- Pupils have a clear awareness of British values. They can discuss the role of democracy and link this to their own experiences in school when voting for pupil representatives, such as for the school council and the appointment of head boy and girl. In addition, pupils are keen to share their knowledge of influential British figures such as Florence Nightingale and Jessica Ennis.
- Pupils have increasingly positive attitudes towards school. They are eager to talk about what they have been learning and describe their enjoyment of lessons, particularly mathematics, reading and writing.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe. The vast majority of parents and carers agree that pupils are safe at Roche Community Primary School.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. They conduct themselves well, acting as ambassadors for the school. When moving through the school, pupils are quiet and purposeful, adding to the sense of calm that permeates the school. Pupils hold open doors for visitors and are generous with their warm greetings.
- Pupils accept that, on occasion, some behaviour falls short of expectations. However, they are clear that the school's system for dealing with poor behaviour is effective and has led to improved behaviour across the school. Pupils are adamant that these incidents of bullying are few and, when they do occur, adults are swift in their response.
- Pupils' absence has been in line with national averages for some time. This is a result of the successful systems in place to promote good attendance and pupils' positive attitudes to school. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In recent years, progress across key stage 2 has not been good in reading, writing and mathematics. While provisional results in 2018 indicate that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics has improved, writing progress remains low.
- The progress that current pupils make from their starting points is too variable. In many classes, the proportion of pupils who are working at expectations for their age has decreased. This is particularly prevalent in key stage 1, where too few pupils build on their prior attainment at the end of Reception.

- Phonics outcomes have improved in recent years. While these are rising toward national averages, they have remained stubbornly low. Opportunities for pupils to practise what they have learned are not frequent enough.
- While pupils have learned the importance of a full stop or spelling rules to support them in their writing, their work does not reflect this. In some cases, pupils' writing is peppered with basic errors, which impedes their progress.
- In mathematics, pupils develop their fluency, reasoning and problem solving. However, the most able pupils do not find the learning challenging enough. In some cases, pupils spend time working on concepts that they have learned years beforehand. As a result, very few pupils are working at the higher standard in mathematics.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is not secure, although some pupils are making progress that is expected of them. It is unclear how leaders use the pupil premium to support them, aside from the use of support staff. In most cases, their progress is the same as or slightly worse than that of their peers.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress. Staff quickly identify pupils' needs and support is well matched. Targets closely match pupils' needs and are based on individual barriers to learning and progress.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards reading once they have mastered the basic skills. Pupils read frequently, both inside and outside of school. Reading records show that pupils read almost daily. In class, pupils savour reading and give their unwavering attention to wait for the next part of the text. Pupils enjoy the new approach to reading in school and participate well, showing their understanding.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Adults do not use baseline assessments effectively enough. Information about what children can do at the beginning of the Reception Year is incomplete or lacks precision. This hinders adults' decision making about what children need to do to make progress, because it does not accurately pinpoint gaps in learning.
- While outcomes in recent years have improved, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development remains lower than national averages. While outcomes in reading and mathematics have improved over time, the proportion of children reaching the early learning goal in writing remains low. This significantly reduces the proportion of children achieving a good level of development.
- Children in the early years have few high-quality opportunities to develop their writing. Teachers expect children to trace over adults' writing. While this supports children to develop fine motor skills and pencil grip, it limits their ability to form their own ideas, develop letter formation and apply their phonic knowledge when spelling.
- The teaching of phonics is weak. Sessions lack focus and do not provide opportunities for children to apply their phonics knowledge. The headteacher's vision for how phonics should be taught is not established. The weakness in the teaching of phonics contributes to outcomes by the end of Years 1 and 2 being lower than national averages in the phonics screening check, as children do not get off to the best start.
- Opportunities for children to play in the Reception class are underdeveloped. While

children do play, they often play alongside one another, rather than with one another. In addition, adults' interaction with children is sometimes limited. Despite adults acknowledging that children's speaking and listening is an area that requires attention, it is not clear what adults are doing to bring about improvements.

- Children do not choose to explore all of what is on offer in the Reception class. While adults provide activities for children, often these are left unused. In addition, when children do engage with activities, this is only brief, before quickly moving on to another. Children do not stick with activities for very long before losing interest, slowing their progress.
- Routines are established in the Reception class. Even in the early stages of the academic year, children are familiar with the expectations and behave well across the provision.
- Adults identify children who have SEN and/or disabilities in a timely manner and support these children. Due to this approach, children are quickly brought to the attention of the SENCo, who ensures that external agencies are alerted so that support can be accessed as soon as possible.
- Safeguarding is effective in the Reception class. Children are safe and feel safe. They confidently move around inside and outside and take advantage of the vast space available. At times, it can be difficult for adults to maintain a watchful eye on all areas due to the size of the space available, which results in some low-level poor behaviour that goes unnoticed.

School details

Unique reference number	142952
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10054423

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Burnett
Headteacher	Jeremy Walden
Telephone number	01726 890323
Website	www.roche.cornwall.sch.uk
Email address	secretary@roche.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school was sponsored by the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust in July 2016. The predecessor school was judged to be good by Ofsted in September 2014.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slightly higher than national averages. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is also above national averages.
- The school deprivation indicator places the school in the top 40% of deprived schools nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes across the school, some jointly with the headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, and academy improvement leaders from the trust. Inspectors also met with two representatives from the governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised several documents, including minutes from governors' meetings, the school's self-evaluation framework and the current school development plans and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors also considered leaders' tracking information to ascertain pupils' progress, including for children in the early years. Inspectors met with leaders about the use of additional funding, including the use of the pupil premium and sports premium funding.
- Inspectors met with the subject leaders for reading, writing and mathematics and the early years leader. In addition, inspectors met with the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks from the current academic year to establish the current quality of pupils' work and progress over time. In addition, they also listened to pupils read from key stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to groups of pupils to seek their views about the school, reading opportunities, behaviour and their awareness of British values and how to keep safe online.
- The inspectors considered 34 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Furthermore, an inspector met with parents to gather their views. There were no responses to the surveys for pupils or staff.

Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Jane

Ofsted Inspector

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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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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