

Looe Primary School

Hay Lane, East Looe, Looe, Cornwall PL13 1JY

Inspection dates

29–30 January 2019

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

- School leaders, local governors and multi-academy trust leaders have taken decisive action to rectify concerns identified in the previous inspection. Consequently, pupils achieve well. Their progress and attainment are increasingly strong across all subjects.
- School leaders provide accurate information about strengths and areas for development. This helps governors to hold staff to account and to improve teaching and learning.
- As a team, the headteacher and executive headteacher sustain a strong and passionate drive for improvement. The headteacher has moulded a strong team of senior and middle leaders and secured high staff morale.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with rich and varied learning experiences. The curriculum captures the pupils' interest and contributes well to their personal and social development.
- The arrangements for safeguarding and securing pupils' welfare are strong. The school works supportively with parents and carers and this is improving pupils' attendance.
- A strong sense of community and a focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable pupils to understand their place in modern society and have knowledge of British values.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use their skills well to match learning experiences to pupils' needs and to motivate and develop them as learners. The most able and disadvantaged pupils are challenged well and make strong progress.
- Teachers plan thoughtfully to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). On occasion, their individual learning plans are not used to best effect to enrich learning and progress.
- Teachers have improved pupils' ability to write meaningfully and expressively. They recognise that pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar require further improvement.
- Teachers set high standards of pupils' work in writing and mathematics books. They are not as rigorous in securing similar standards of writing in other subjects and books.
- Pupils behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to their learning. They behave respectfully towards each other and adults. Relationships are strong and aid learning.
- Pupils achieve well in the Years 1 and 2 phonics screening checks. However, some pupils do not use their phonic knowledge to improve their reading.
- Children in the early years settle quickly into well-established routines. They respond well to effective teaching and make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the focus on improving pupils' reading and writing and strengthen the teaching of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar, by:
 - raising expectations and ensuring that pupils write to an equally high standard across the full range of subjects and writing activities
 - developing pupils' phonic skills and understanding across early years and key stage 1 classes more precisely so they can use and apply this knowledge to improve their reading.
- Improve leadership and management further to ensure that:
 - the learning plans drawn up for individual pupils with SEND are used more productively in classes to meet their needs and improve their learning and progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides clear direction and vision for the school. Since starting their duties at the school in 2017, the headteacher and executive headteacher have developed a strong inclusive community ethos based on achieving the very best for the pupils. As a result, pupils' achievements in all parts of the school have improved year on year and securely demonstrate the school's capacity to bring further improvement.
- Leaders have communicated their vision well to a motivated staff. Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. Middle leaders, in particular, help to secure good and better teaching and drive improvement successfully. Leaders manage teachers' performance effectively.
- The overwhelming view of parents who spoke with an inspector and responded to the online survey acknowledge this improvement. Typically, one parent wrote, 'Many positive changes have taken place within the school since being under new leadership and they have all benefited the children immensely.'
- Senior staff are well supported by skilled and dedicated leaders across the multi-academy trust and within the local governing body. They work well together to provide effective oversight in holding school leaders to account for improving pupils' outcomes.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that pupils' developing skills are assessed and evaluated accurately. She has enabled the headteacher to use expertise across the multi-academy trust to support staff training and performance. Leaders at all levels check the performance of the school very carefully. Consequently, they have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and ensure that detailed plans identify appropriate areas for further development. The school's current development plan accurately sustains a continuing focus on raising levels of attainment by improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar and handwriting skills.
- Leaders ensure that additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are spent effectively. This includes improving pupils' attendance as well as supporting their individual learning needs. The special educational needs coordinator works productively with staff and external agencies. Most pupils with SEND make strong progress from their starting points, but at times their individual plans are not used to best effect to improve progress in class.
- Leaders make strong use of the sport premium. They provide many opportunities for pupils to engage in physical activity and develop healthy lifestyles.
- The school's broad and balanced curriculum is well planned. The school's motto of 'Creating Lifelong Learners' lies at the heart of the many learning activities organised for the pupils. The curriculum focuses strongly on English and mathematics, but also provides pupils with wide opportunities to develop a keen interest in learning through carefully chosen stimulating experiences. When questioned, pupils talked enthusiastically about frequent visits around the local community, to museums and the library, and singing at the lifeboat station. The provision for supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils say, 'We have open and honest discussions about the news and everyday life.' They understand fundamental values

and the need to treat people from different backgrounds and beliefs equally. They say, 'We're all the same on the inside.'

Governance of the school

- Those responsible for the governance of the school fulfil their duties diligently and effectively. Senior leaders of the multi-academy trust have utilised the expertise of the governors of Polperro Primary Academy to enhance the local governance at Looe and have now established a joint local governing body. This has widened the range of relevant knowledge and experience available to the governing body and strengthened its ability to contribute to school improvement.
- Local governors visit the school regularly and receive detailed evaluations of the performance of the school from senior and middle staff leaders. Consequently, they have an accurate understanding of pupils' experiences and how well pupils are learning.
- Leaders of the trust and local governors are articulate and passionate about promoting high standards. All governors are fully trained in line with government guidance and, for example, ensure that safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and implemented effectively. They understand their roles and responsibilities and communicate closely to jointly hold school leaders to account for ensuring that agreed actions bring the desired improvement. This is evident in the improved, and now effective, way that additional funding is used to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and improve their progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a very strong culture of safeguarding at the school that supports pupils' safety. Staff and pupils know each other well. Pupils trust the adults and know who to talk to if they have any concerns. All staff have training on safeguarding, at least at a level appropriate to their role. Several staff with leadership responsibility have higher qualifications in safeguarding. Consequently, staff are vigilant in spotting signs that children may be at risk of harm. They understand and follow the school's clear strategies for raising and reporting concerns. Leaders, especially the headteacher, pursue any concerns over pupils' welfare and attendance tenaciously and records are maintained in an exemplary manner.
- The checks carried out on adults who work at the school are thorough and well organised. Senior leaders, including governors, monitor records to ensure that the school meets the requirements for recruiting and appointing new employees. Staff have established good communication with parents and external agencies when they have concerns about pupils. The headteacher keeps a 'watching brief' and open lines of communication to ensure that pupils receiving outside agency support continue to have their needs met and are kept safe. The vast majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, and most who spoke to an inspector stated that their children feel safe and are well looked after at school. Their views were captured by one parent who wrote, 'Each of my children feels very safe and loves coming to school.'
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and know how to stay safe in school. They

said that they trust school staff and say that, 'They care about us and listen to what we have to say.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Leaders have strengthened the focus on raising pupils' achievements and have provided effective training to develop teachers' and teaching assistants' expertise. Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The whole-school focus on widening pupils' vocabulary, including technical subject language, lies at the heart of the pupils' rapidly improving progress. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use assessment effectively to get to know the pupils so they can challenge them at the right level. These aspects underpin the teachers' ability to ensure that disadvantaged pupils learn at least as well as their classmates.
- Teachers deepen pupils' thinking successfully through probing questioning. Teachers are particularly effective and sustain high expectations in developing pupils' calculation and reasoning skills in mathematics. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 took extra care in explaining how they solve decimal calculations in response to the teacher's challenging questions. Pupils are also taught how to incorporate increasingly complex words to enrich their expressive writing. These skills are clearly evident to good effect in pupils' mathematics and writing books, which show increasing proportions of pupils working at greater depth. In Years 5 and 6 pupils captivated the reader with typical sentences, such as, 'But every night Hannah and Dan heard the ear-piercing scream and saw shadows leaking past the bedroom windows.'
- Teachers and teaching assistants generally provide good support for pupils with SEND and include them well in day-to-day classroom topics to promote effective learning. At times, however, work is not matched closely enough to the specific needs identified in their individual learning plans and this limits their progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants mostly give helpful feedback to pupils in accordance with the school's assessment policy. Pupils respond well to this and correct their misconceptions to further develop their understanding. This is particularly successful in English and mathematics. Teachers' and pupils' expectations are not as consistent in ensuring high standards of spelling, grammar and punctuation when writing across other subjects.
- Effective teaching leads to pupils deepening their understanding in other subjects. In science for example, Years 5 and 6 pupils responded well when challenged by the teacher to explore how components, such as switches, can be incorporated into electrical circuits. Teachers plan imaginative learning experiences and use displays well to celebrate pupils' achievements and provide additional guidance. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them, understand the purpose of the activities they undertake and sustain their enthusiasm and interest.
- Teachers liaise well with parents and enlist their productive support in extending pupils' learning at home, for example in reading and topic work. They deploy teaching assistants and volunteers effectively to provide pupils with good opportunities to read widely and often. The basic skills of phonics are taught effectively across the school. This is reflected in the above-average proportions of pupils who are successful in the

Years 1 and 2 phonics screening checks. Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read and noted their enthusiasm for reading and, for most pupils, their strong progress. However, some previously lower-attaining pupils were not clear or lacked sufficient ability to use and apply their phonic knowledge to tackle new and more complex words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Most pupils take pride in their work and are especially careful when recording their calculations in mathematics and stories in writing books. Currently, pupils do not demonstrate the same care when recording their work in other subjects and books. Pupils collaborate well with one another during lessons and when playing games outdoors. They are proud of their school and share very supportive relationships with each other and with staff.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities seriously. These all entail helping other pupils and include acting as class counsellors, house captains and 'sugar smart leaders' at breaktimes. Pupils respect each other's achievements. They appreciate the way adults value their efforts and contributions and respond well when challenged to think for themselves. The school has a strong sense of community, which deepens pupils' self-confidence and helps them to understand their place in society. One parent noted this when writing, 'Our daughter seems to feel she is part of a community at the school. Interaction between the younger and older children at the school has created a sense of responsibility in our daughter.'
- When questioned, pupils show their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, for example, talk knowledgeably about the school's values. The school places a sustained and effective emphasis on supporting the pupils' physical health and well-being. All pupils benefit and can choose from a wide range of sporting activities. As a result, a large and increasing proportion of pupils have been encouraged to participate in team and individual sports.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. At times, behaviour is exemplary, for example when movingly singing the school song 'Looe is our home' during assembly and when stimulated by interesting topics in class. This was evident in Year 6 when pupils discussed the emotive terms that best described how a boy with a facial disfigurement might be feeling. Most pupils concentrate and engage well during learning activities. On occasion, a small number of pupils need and receive adult reminders and support to remain focused on their learning.
- The school offers a caring environment where pupils feel safe and well looked after. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They say that incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are rare and that if they do happen, staff resolve them

quickly. Pupils say that they feel safe and looked after in school, where other pupils and staff are 'really nice and always there for you'. Pupils are clear on how to stay safe inside and outside of school. For example, pupils know how to use computers safely and say that they would not provide personal information when using the internet.

- Parents who spoke with inspectors and the large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school ensures that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils' attendance has been improved in recent terms and is now close to the national average. School leaders continue to rigorously monitor absence and work closely with parents and outside agencies to increase the rate of attendance. Leaders remain focused on working with the families of a small proportion of pupils who are still prone to persistent absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Good teaching, particularly over recent years, has ensured that pupils make consistently good progress. Outcomes in national assessments in 2018 showed consistent improvement in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2. The school's accurate assessments show that pupils in all classes made strong progress over the past year in English and mathematics.
- Pupils, including the most able, achieve well. They respond well to the increasing challenges brought to their learning this year. Their responses in class and work in books show a continuing trend of improvement stemming from the consistently good and better teaching and learning across the school.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading and phonics are mostly strong. In recent years, an above-average proportion of Year 1 and 2 pupils have met the standard in the phonics screening checks. Pupils enjoy reading and sharing books. They speak with interest about books and authors. However, some previously lower-attaining pupils, mainly boys, across Reception and key stage 1 are not yet clear how to use phonic knowledge to tackle new words.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported. Pupils with SEND also benefit from additional adult support and generally make good progress in relation to their personal and academic needs. At times, less progress is made because teachers do not make best use of their individual improvement plans to more precisely target their needs.
- Leaders and teachers have strengthened the way they use additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. They now provide a wide range of strategies more frequently, to enhance learning in class. This ensures that these pupils perform at least as well as, and often better than, their peers across the school.
- Pupils make improved and now good progress in developing their writing skills. Pupils are widening their vocabulary well and incorporate increasingly complex words to deepen the meaning and expression in their imaginative writing. Currently, however, some pupils have not yet acquired the knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar at the level expected for their age.
- Pupils make consistently strong progress in mathematics and show fluency in using

basic number skills to calculate and reason when tackling problems. Pupils say they enjoy the interesting problem-solving challenges presented to them, as in Year 3 for example, capably choosing and calculating the cost of party food. Pupils sustain good progress across the range of subjects. For example, they show age-appropriate scientific knowledge and excel in sport.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment in early years are effective. This is evident in the year-on-year increase in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development. This securely matches the national average and shows that children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Adults work very effectively with parents and pre-school providers to settle children and boost their interest in learning. Staff develop children's skills well through a stimulating range of learning activities. They provide timely and effective challenge and support, including for the most able children. Adults know the children well. They take care to identify the children's learning needs, especially for those with SEND, and then build their confidence to 'have a go', explore and experiment.
- Effective leadership sustains particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development and in advancing the children's communication, language and literacy skills. All adults, including several valued volunteers, maintain children's safety and welfare. Consequently, children clearly feel safe and behave well in the knowledge that they are well looked after. Children are encouraged to play and interact supportively, including to resolve disputes during games and role play learning activities. For example, children happily shared ideas and deepened their understanding when washing teddy bears and drawing polar bears as part of their topic about bears.
- All children, including boys and the disadvantaged, make similarly good progress across the required areas of learning, including developing their knowledge of number. For example, children accurately counted along a number line to 21 and could explain that 21 is more than 15. Children are now developing their early writing and mark-making skills well in response to the wider range of opportunities now provided. The teacher acknowledges that currently not enough children are exceeding expectations in this aspect. Phonics and early reading skills are taught well and enable children to learn tricky words and understand terms such as 'phonemes'. However, at times adults are less precise in helping some children, particularly disadvantaged boys, to use this knowledge to make better progress in reading.

School details

Unique reference number	140020
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10058308

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Lucy Finnimore
Headteacher	Janine Waring
Telephone number	01503 262 172
Website	www.looeprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@looeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 September 2016

Information about this school

- Looe Primary Academy is a member of the Bridge Schools Trust.
- Governance is undertaken at a multi-academy trust level by a trust board of directors and at school level by members of a local governing body.
- This academy is broadly average in size.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- Children experience early years provision full time in a combined Reception/Year 1 class.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons and learning activities and saw the work of nine teachers.
- The headteacher and executive headteacher accompanied the inspectors during these visits to lessons.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school's self-evaluation.
- The inspection team examined the school's systems for checking progress and records of checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors talked with individual pupils during lessons and breaktimes about the school and their work. They listened to individual pupils reading. The team inspector also interviewed a representative group of pupils. The lead inspector attended an assembly. The inspectors joined by school leaders looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. He also met with the chair and other representatives of the local governing body and the chair of the trust board and of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and individual teachers and spoke informally with other teachers, teaching assistants and support staff.
- The inspectors examined the views expressed in 43 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, and in 39 parents' additional written comments. The inspectors gathered the views of several parents as they brought their children to the school and during three meetings requested by individual parents at the school.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils expressed in 30 questionnaires.

Inspection team

Alexander Baxter, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stewart Gale

Her Majesty's Inspector

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