

Trewirgie Infants' School

Trewirgie Road, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 2SZ

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have not been swift enough to identify and respond to signs of decline. Consequently, pupils' achievement is not good.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is not wholly reliable. Some overly positive views of the school have slowed the rate of improvement.
- A high turnover of staff, particularly in the early years, has contributed to weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Leaders are not sufficiently stringent or robust in monitoring the quality of education. This impedes improvement in different classes or subjects, particularly in the early years.
- The curriculum is not planned with sufficient detail to provide a consistently broad range of skills and knowledge that pupils need to acquire, particularly in science.
- Despite marked improvements in the teaching of phonics, there are a few unresolved weaknesses that slow some pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not consistently plan to meet the precise needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of pupils, including the most able, to reach the highest standards.
- Teachers do not consistently identify errors or misconceptions in pupils' work or check that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are overcoming particular barriers.
- The high absence of some pupils directly interferes with their readiness for the next stage in their education. Leaders are tackling this, but there is more to do.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders' actions to identify and tackle the right priorities are having a positive effect, particularly in key stage 1.
- Governors are committed. Their actions are now helping to secure improvements to teaching and learning.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe. There is a strong culture and ethos of care, respect and tolerance among pupils.
- Pupils enjoy a range of experiences and different activities. These support pupils' moral, social and personal development well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good, particularly in the early years, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use reliable and accurate information to plan work that meets the precise needs of pupils, including those with SEND
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, including the most able
 - targeting errors, misunderstandings or misconceptions in pupils' work and addressing these quickly to enable pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to overcome barriers.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that accurate and reliable self-evaluation informs the school's strategic decision-making and improvement planning
 - developing leaders' skills and their ability to monitor effectively and hold teachers firmly to account
 - re-evaluating and implementing the curriculum to provide a broader foundation to support pupils' learning, particularly scientific investigations and enquiry
 - continuing to make necessary adjustments to the teaching of phonics so that pupils get off to the best possible start in reading, particularly in the early years.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by continuing to tackle the high absence of pupils so that they can achieve well and be well prepared for the next stage in their education, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken 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 previous full inspection, senior leaders and governors have been slow to identify or respond to signs of decline. This has led to poor achievement. However, following the disappointing end of key stage 1 results last year and the school's section 8 inspection in October 2018, leaders are now taking the right actions and are reversing this trend.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is, in some parts, unreliable and lacks accuracy. For example, their view that leadership and management are, in some parts, good or outstanding is inaccurate. Consequently, leaders have been too slow to comprehend the urgency of some weaknesses in the school.
- Some senior and middle leaders are not sufficiently rigorous in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. They complete a range of activities that provide useful information, including through scrutinising pupils' work and observing lessons. However, leaders sometimes fail to identify areas for improvement or to follow these up robustly, for example in Year 2 writing. This slows the rate of improvement in these areas.
- Lines of accountability are not firmly agreed or clearly understood. This leaves room for ambiguity as to which leaders are taking responsibility for any given subject or area. This delays improvement and leads to some confusion among staff.
- Middle leaders are now starting to have an impact through their work. However, the quality of this remains variable. For example, the writing and reading leaders are implementing appropriate plans for improvement, but the mathematics co-leaders are new and their work is less well established. However, effective support from external academy improvement advisers is enabling these enthusiastic leaders to make some discernible improvements in this academic year.
- The deputy headteacher is effective in her role. The support she provides to other leaders and teachers is well respected. This is slowly building capacity so that other leaders are taking greater responsibility in their areas. Effective continuing professional development is being provided to support middle leaders. This includes visits to other schools and the use of national training programmes, such as the National Professional Qualification for Subject Leaders (NPQSL).
- The deputy, who is also the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and pupil premium leader, ensures that the additional funding for SEND and disadvantaged pupils is spent appropriately. She has implemented a system to specifically target each disadvantaged pupil. However, individual plans for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are not yet sufficiently precise or checked to ensure that these pupils make good progress.
- The curriculum provides a range of different activities and experiences. As a result, pupils enjoy learning about themselves and the world around them. There are activities which strongly promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, such as sprinkling poppy seeds for Remembrance. These activities reinforce British values and enable pupils to talk with empathy and understanding about matters of national and local importance.

- However, there are some aspects of the curriculum which lack sufficient depth and coverage to prepare the pupils fully for the next stage in their education. For example, science is not well planned to ensure that there is progression in pupils' investigative and enquiry skills.
- Leaders' assessment and tracking systems are not well understood, which leads to confusion for some teachers. As a result, some unreliable information is gathered, particularly in the early years, which weakens leaders' attempts to generate more rapid improvement.
- Leaders ensure that the additional sports and physical education (PE) funding is well used. Pupils have access to a wide variety of sporting events and activities. Furthermore, this is checked to ensure that disadvantaged pupils widely benefit from planned activities. The take-up of after-school clubs is high.
- Leaders have been effective in improving the teaching of phonics. A review of practice and additional training are successfully leading to more consistently strong teaching, particularly in key stage 1. However, some weaknesses persist in the early years due, in part, to limited monitoring being undertaken in this part of the school.
- Leaders and governors are engaging effectively with external support. This has helped to ensure that some critical improvements have had sufficient impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to start improving outcomes for the pupils.
- Parents and carers have mixed views of the school. Many who spoke directly to inspectors emphasised their support and praised school staff, particularly in establishing a positive and supportive ethos for the pupils. However, just under a quarter of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, said that they would not recommend the school. A view held by some parents is that the school is 'playing catch-up'.

Governance of the school

- Governors fully accept that they have not been effective in identifying or responding quickly enough to previous signs of decline. However, they have 'regrouped' and re-evaluated what must be done to make the necessary improvements.
- Following published performance results and the section 8 Ofsted inspection in 2018, governors have worked assiduously to make a difference. The impact of the change in external advice has been very positive and the school is now on the right path for improvement.
- Governors are dedicated. They are now challenging school leaders with renewed rigour and determination. However, strategic plans and actions still lack precision in some areas. For example, the reading element of the school improvement plan is not set against precise timescales with clear success criteria.
- Governors undertake monitoring and checks in line with their responsibilities, including safeguarding. They have a calendar of visits to monitor the school. However, visits with subsequent 'follow-up' are not yet established well enough.
- Governors continue to face challenges in the high turnover of staff. They understand the consequences this has on securing consistently good teaching and learning. Their actions are now starting to improve this situation, except in the Nursery where frequent staffing changes are particularly disruptive.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Leaders, staff and governors work diligently to ensure that pupils are safe. The school has well-established systems for checking, reporting and escalating any concerns staff may have about pupils, including to the police, social services and the local authority. For example, leaders successfully tracked cases of pupils who were at risk of being missing from education.
- Senior leaders, including the headteacher and designated safeguarding leader, liaise well with other agencies and external services. They ensure that pupils and their families receive timely and appropriate support when this is needed.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the school's recruitment, vetting and training processes are robust. Staff are fully aware of what to do in the event of different safeguarding and child protection situations. They are knowledgeable and alert so that pupils can stay safe.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe, for example they can recite an internet safety song about staying safe online. Pupils have confidence in adults and trust school staff.
- Leaders ensure that current risk assessments and practice relating to the school site, after-school clubs (and staffing ratios), fire evacuation drills and visits are in place and reviewed, to mitigate against known risks to the pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable across different classes, subjects and key stages. As a result, pupils do not make consistent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not plan well enough for the range of abilities in their classes. Although they know which pupils require different challenge and support, they do not ensure that lessons are routinely planned well enough to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers' planning and their next steps for pupils with SEND are not sufficiently precise to build well on prior learning. This holds some pupils back. However, pupils with medical needs typically receive well-targeted support in line with the advice from external experts.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are also variable between classes, subjects and situations. Some weak assessment practice means that pupils are not consistently challenged well enough to achieve the highest standards, including the most able pupils. For example, there are times when the same writing activities are provided to all pupils. This prevents most-able pupils from being expansive and creative in their written work, including in their choice of vocabulary and how to present their writing.
- At times, teachers are not quick enough to identify and tackle errors, misconceptions or mistakes that pupils make. Teachers do not routinely monitor these to ensure

improvement. As a result, some pupils repeat common errors, which lowers the quality of their work.

- Phonics teaching is improving. The structured approach to synthetic phonics and the revisions to this are now having a good impact, particularly in key stage 1. The programmes of work and focus groups led by teachers and teaching assistants are well organised so that most pupils are now making positive gains.
- However, assessment information is not used well enough to create precise plans for low-achieving readers in Reception and when they move into Year 1. Furthermore, pupils at this elementary stage are provided with reading books which are sometimes beyond their phonics knowledge. This compounds some of the issues that these pupils face and stops them from reading with fluency and understanding.
- Teachers engage well with pupils. There are positive working relationships fostered by adults so that pupils want to learn. Classrooms are inviting and provide a conducive environment for learning.
- Those responsible for delivering interventions for English and mathematics, including teaching assistants, have a good understanding of their function and the context for their work with pupils. This ensures that most interventions support pupils well. The deputy headteacher checks these, including for disadvantaged pupils, and uses information to adapt interventions as needed. Overall, these are working well for most targeted pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- During those lessons when teaching is not holding the pupils' attention, pupils show learning behaviours and attitudes that are not consistently good. Pupils sometimes become easily distracted and play with objects or talk idly. This interferes with their achievement and enjoyment of lessons.
- Similarly, when work is not matched well to pupils' ability, or if pupils are unsure of what to do, they scribble or doodle in their books. There are also other times when pupils do not take pride in their work, including titling or lacking care in their handwriting. Teachers do not consistently challenge this, so the standards seen in some workbooks are not good enough.
- Pupils show a strong awareness of moral dilemmas. They talk convincingly about what is right or wrong and make astute comments about issues such as global warming.
- Pupils are keen to take additional responsibilities and contribute to their school and community. For example, health and safety monitors are highly visible and ensure that their peers are kept safe. These are democratically elected, which provides an opportunity for learning about democracy.
- Most pupils and parents feel that this is a happy and nurturing school. There is a strong culture and ethos of care, respect and tolerance among pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school in a harmonious environment. However, some staff indicated through the online staff survey that, at times, they do not feel well supported by leaders to deal with incidents of highly challenging behaviour.
- Leaders are being proactive in tackling the high absence rates of pupils in the school. There is clear evidence to show that their current actions are gradually lowering the number of pupils with high absence and the overall school absence figure.
- However, while improving, too many pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, are not attending well. This has an adverse effect on their achievement and readiness for junior school.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. They have confidence in the school staff to handle any concerns they may have and to deal swiftly with any aggressive behaviours and bullying.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the previous full inspection, there has been a decline in pupils' outcomes in national tests and assessments. In particular, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development, the expected development at the end of Reception, has fallen year on year and is below the national benchmark. This has also been reflected in the Year 1 phonics screening check results.
- In addition, key stage 1 results in reading, writing and mathematics fell markedly in 2018. These figures were also below the national averages and represent weak progress based on pupils' prior attainment.
- The outcomes for some vulnerable pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or those with SEND, are not good enough. This leaves some pupils not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be. Pupils' academic achievement lags behind the quality of pastoral care and guidance for vulnerable pupils.
- Current work shows that pupils in key stage 1 are now catching up. For example, Year 2 pupils are reading with pace and fluency. They show an interest in reading and talk enthusiastically about their reading books. There is also an increase in the proportions of pupils meeting age-appropriate standards in mathematics and English, including at the higher standards for the most able. However, although this is encouraging, there remains a core of pupils who still need to catch up quickly.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged across the range of subjects to make strong links between subjects or to deepen their understanding. Some limiting activities, seen in pupils' workbooks, show that pupils' thinking and reasoning are stifled. For example, they are not given enough high-quality opportunities to try their ideas or record their thoughts in science.
- Some pupils with SEND and lower-ability pupils make variable academic progress. This is because work or resources are not matched well to their particular needs, for example poorly matched reading books do not build sequentially on pupils' prior

knowledge. Some pupils who find it difficult to read short words are faced with text that includes phonetically undecodable words. This type of mismatch impedes their progress.

- In mathematics, the focus on number and fluency is enabling pupils to gain increasing confidence in manipulating numbers. However, pupils are not altogether proficient in using and applying their knowledge to solve a range of different problems. Pupils' reasoning is rightly being targeted as a priority.
- Pupils are writing for different reasons and purposes. There is now clear progress seen in pupils' workbooks, particularly towards the upper end of the school. This includes the most able pupils writing with improving structure and composition. However, pupils are still prone to basic errors or omissions, particularly in punctuating their writing. As a result, pupils' work does not always make sense or convey the author's meaning.
- Pupils' handwriting is inconsistent across the school. The school's preferred approach to this aspect has had minimal impact. Pupils are not consistently acquiring the skills to write neatly and legibly.
- The quality of pupils' work in other subjects is variable, with some that is good. For example, art work is strong. Pupils also enjoy being expressive and creative, including through performing arts, dance and sport.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- High staff turnover and turbulence have had a detrimental effect on the quality of teaching and provision in the early years. Too many changes have meant that agreed actions and strategies have not had the opportunity to become well enough established.
- There has been a downward trend in the proportion of children meeting the nationally expected good level of development at the end of Reception. This includes disadvantaged children. The difference for these children remains. Consequently, there are a few children who are not as well prepared for Year 1 as they can be.
- Some adults and key workers lack the professional knowledge to make accurate assessments of the children. This means that some assessment information is still unreliable, including in tracking the children's progress in their letters and sounds. As a result, children are not consistently getting off to a quick enough start, particularly in phonics.
- Phonics is an established part of the school day. Children in Reception enjoy learning their letters and sounds through structured sessions, games and play. In the Nursery, children are taught age-appropriate letters and sounds, for example identifying 'p' at the start of some words linked to a story. There are also activities for children to hear stories and sing nursery rhymes and songs. However, there is not yet a robust phonics strategy in place. Consequently, some children are not being identified or targeted to get off to the best possible start.
- Leaders' actions are now starting to have a positive impact. Recent external support and challenge have enabled staff to provide an environment that promotes children's enjoyment, curiosity and independence in the early years.

- Children interact well with each other. For example, children were observed busily building pirate boats or independently trying to blend sounds to read simple words on pirate coins. This has shown a marked improvement from the start of the academic year.
- The early years is set up to promote the range of learning across the early years curriculum. As such, children are receiving their full entitlement, including daily outdoor education. However, teachers do not adapt or modify different activities well enough to support and challenge children of different abilities, including high-quality reading, writing and number as part of the wider provision.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff have completed all required training and there are identified first-aid and paediatric-trained staff. During the inspection, the early years was staffed appropriately to ensure children's safety.
- Parents are widely supportive of the staff and their children's experiences in the early years, including those with SEND. A minority of parents expressed some frustration at the changes to staff and the effect this has had on their children.

School details

Unique reference number	136881
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10086895

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

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nadine Francis
Headteacher	Paula Sharpe
Telephone number	01209 216111
Website	www.trewirgie-inf.cornwall.sch.uk/
Email address	head@trewirgie-inf.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in 2011. Since then it has worked with other local primary schools and academies as part of the Redruth Learning Group.
- The school is located on the site next to the junior school. The Nursery is located on site and has easy access to the rest of the school.
- Most pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is similar to the national average. However, this is increasing rapidly, with a larger than average increase in the percentage of disadvantaged pupils between 2017 and 2018.
- The school's website does not contain the latest published end of key stage 1 assessment results.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils in lessons in all classes across the school; these observations were usually accompanied by a senior leader.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, deputy headteacher/SENCo and other middle leaders, including an early years leader and English and mathematics subject leaders.
- Additional discussions were held with the school's purchased academy improvement adviser.
- The inspectors gained the views of pupils throughout the inspection, including through discussions at breaktimes and other interviews, such as a discussion with an inspector about mathematics.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work in books to evaluate the quality of work and standards of current pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils read from different year groups, including from Reception to Year 2. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' daily reading records and assessments to evaluate the accuracy and appropriateness of what was being taught.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and parents to seek their views of the school. The 43 surveys from Parent View and corresponding free-texts were considered by inspectors. In addition, information from staff and pupil surveys was taken into account.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including meeting minutes, governors' visits and minutes, improvement plans and information relating to behaviour, safety and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector also met with representatives of the governing body.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ann Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Chown	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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