

Inspection of a good school: Portreath Community Primary School

Penberthy Road, Portreath, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 4LU

Inspection dates:

1 October 2019

Outcome

Portreath Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Portreath is a school which is very much at the heart of its community. Pupils have a strong sense of the contribution they can make, both locally and globally. For example, pupils have worked with local residents to form the neighbourhood development plan. They are proud that their school has achieved plastic-free status. These examples show staff's commitment to encouraging pupils to be socially aware and to put their ideas into action.

Pupils recognise that teachers are eager for them to be kind to each other and not to give up when things become difficult. These values underpin the work of the school and are celebrated each week with parents. Pupils receive leaves from the 'kindness tree' and are recognised as 'wonder workers' when they have done well. Pupils display positive attitudes when they are in their lessons and during social time. Around the school, inspectors saw many examples of pupils working well together, supporting each other with learning and offering to help teachers to set up for the afternoon activities.

Pupils told inspectors that their school is an 'anti-bullying' school. Staff want pupils to feel listened to and be confident that things will happen as a result. Leaders consider it important to support pupils' emotional well-being. Pupils know that they can talk to teachers about their worries and can easily share information about 'what I want my teachers to know about me'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have thought carefully about how they promote individual subjects within the broad themes they have chosen for each half-term. They lead the way for other schools in the multi-academy trust to identify what they want pupils to learn about in geography. Teachers use the distinctiveness of their local area or make use of current events, such as the Rugby World Cup in Japan, to provide a real-life context for what pupils learn.

Teachers build well on what pupils have learned before so that they are prepared for what

will come next. For example, pupils use atlases in Year 1 and 2 to pick out countries, continents and physical features. They then use this knowledge in Years 4 and 5 to find the plate boundaries that give rise to earthquakes. Pupils develop this understanding further in Year 6 by using technical and scientific terms.

The teaching of mathematics is now a strength of the school. Teachers want pupils to explore the 'wonder of number', as is shown by the recent visit of the 'maths magician'. Pupils regularly practise their calculation and number skills before moving onto more difficult problem-solving activities. Pupils say that teachers expect them to explain their answers and the steps that they have taken to get there.

The school is excited about its 'Year of Reading'. Teachers have named '20 Books to Read' for each year group. Pupils use these recommendations to read books that they would not usually choose for themselves.

Children start to build their understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Reception. The large majority of pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Leaders are extending the choice of books so that they are better matched to the sounds that pupils are learning in class. Teachers use these foundations to develop pupils' reading skills as they move through the school. Where teachers do this well, pupils are confident to talk about how authors choose words to create characters and settings. Sometimes, this approach is not fully embedded.

Pupils regularly think about issues that are important to their personal development and safety. They speak of their work on 'stranger danger' and how they keep themselves safe when online. Pupils read books that help them to consider issues beyond their immediate experience and can talk sensitively about these.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are known and cared for well. Trained staff successfully support pupils' social and emotional needs. However, in some cases, teachers do not plan precisely enough to support these pupils' academic needs. The same is true for disadvantaged pupils.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Governors are mindful of the demands on staff time. Trust leaders and governors support school leaders and visit the school regularly. Trust leaders also take advice from external partners so that there is an independent view of the school's work.

Children in Reception settle into their new routines well. They quickly begin to learn letters and sounds, how to count and then how to write letters and numbers. Teachers extend children's vocabulary through their topic work. For example, children recently welcomed a visitor who brought in an ambulance. This helped them to deepen their understanding of 'people who help us'.

The early years environment is organised to promote a range of skills. Children are enthusiastic and work well together. However, these activities sometimes lack direction so that they do not always guide children to build on what they have learned. This is particularly true for children who are not confident when counting or forming letters.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and are watchful for the signs that all might not be right. Staff are well trained and know how to report concerns. Leaders act on these referrals conscientiously to ensure that pupils get the support they need. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions they take and seek advice from external agencies when necessary.

Pupils say that they feel safe and are looked after well. The parents who responded to the Parent View survey agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have successfully promoted the importance of reading for enjoyment. Leaders need to continue to embed the agreed approaches so that all pupils continue to develop more complex skills of comprehension, inference and analysis as they move through key stage 2.
- Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are well cared for pastorally. However, the plans in place to support them academically are not always precise enough. Teachers need routinely to identify the barriers to learning for such pupils and plan to support pupils to overcome these.
- There needs to be greater clarity in the early years phase about how activities and the environment are organised to cater for the differing needs of children, so that they are well prepared for Year 1.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Portreath Community Primary School, to be good on 22–23 May 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	143441
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10111575
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Hosking
Headteacher	Cassie Pamplin
Website	www.portreathschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- In Oct 2016, Portreath Community School became part of Crofty Multi-Academy Trust. This trust consists of nine primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with a member of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer and the school improvement officer from the multi-academy trust. Inspectors also met with three representatives from the local governing body, senior leaders, the early years leader and a group of staff.
- Inspectors considered the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of reading, mathematics and geography. Inspectors discussed the curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from the lessons visited.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding, checked the school's single central record and scrutinised policies relating to safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed a sample of case files.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors

spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, to discuss their views about their school.

- Inspectors considered 37 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, along with 21 additional free-text responses.
- Inspectors took into account 13 responses from staff to the questionnaire issued at the beginning of the inspection.

Inspection team

Sarah McGinnis, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Martin Bragg

Ofsted Inspector

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