

Inspection of a good school: Garras Community Primary School

St Keverne Road, Mawgan, Helston, Cornwall TR12 6AY

Inspection date: 29 September 2021

Outcome

Garras Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone works as part of the team at Garras to make sure that pupils learn well and are kept safe. Leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for all pupils. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the richness of their local community and to play their part. Leaders place a strong emphasis on nurturing in pupils the values and skills they need to be successful in school and in life. Pupils enjoy spotting examples of the virtues that they have learned about. They can describe examples of 'friendliness' or 'curiosity' that they have seen.

Pupils are polite and behave well. They settle very well in the school because of the close links to the pre-school. Pupils talk about caring staff who will sort out any problems and are there to help. Pupils say that there is no bullying. Parents and carers are very positive about the school, describing it as 'amazing' and 'wonderful'.

Recently, leaders have invested a great deal of time and energy in improving the site. This has led to better classroom spaces and outdoor areas, giving pupils more opportunities for learning and play. Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum.

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

Pupils' early reading is developed well. Children get off to a strong start. They learn new sounds as soon as they arrive in the Reception class. More complex sounds are then introduced in a logical order. Children are motivated by interesting and fun activities. Sounds are emphasised through the day by staff to help children remember them. Staff carefully select reading books to ensure that children and pupils can practise the sounds that they learn in class. Staff provide extra help when pupils need it.

Learning to read and enjoying reading are key priorities of the school. Staff have given careful attention to building up a consistent approach to developing reading, including by supporting parents. Staff keep a careful eye on the progress of pupils. They give more support if a pupil needs to read more regularly or needs help with understanding. Staff

provide a range of high-quality books and texts, often linked to the topic that the class is studying. Pupils become confident readers and can talk about their favourite books.

Leaders have carefully considered the structure and content of the curriculum. The mathematics curriculum identifies the important things that pupils should remember. Content is taught in a logical order. Teachers check what pupils know and use the information to plan future learning.

In other subjects, teachers make sure that pupils in the mixed-age classes cover the curriculum and learn through interesting topics. Pupils remember what they have been taught recently. However, pupils are not always clear about how this knowledge links with the knowledge they have learned before. Leaders are ambitious to strengthen and link topics even more, so that pupils' learning can be deepened further.

From an early age, in Reception, children become confident learners. Quickly, they learn to concentrate well. Pupils learn to organise their own equipment. They work together well. Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils say that if there are problems, staff will sort them out.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the help that they need. Staff are sensitive, caring and want the best for every pupil.

Leaders ensure that pupils take part in activities that are rooted in their local community. The school has close contact with the local church and care home for the elderly. Pupils wrote letters to the residents of the care home during lockdown. This was captured on the national news, highlighting the special relationships that were forged. Litter-picks on beaches, donations to the foodbank and a commitment to being environmentally aware are all ways in which pupils improve their spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils and parents value the range of activities on offer to develop pupils' cultural understanding. These include forest school, gymnastics, swimming, nature walks and the opportunity to learn musical instruments.

The local governing body, and leaders from the multi-academy trust, support the school well. Staff welcome the support and training they have received. Effective teamwork between staff is a strength of the school. Adults communicate well with each other. Consequently, they are consistent and flexible to best meet the needs of pupils. Staff were well looked after during the pandemic so that they could continue with their roles. They praise the headteacher for her care in ensuring their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a deep understanding of the pupils and their families. This underpins the school's approach to safeguarding. Leaders ensure that staff are able to identify when pupils may be at risk of harm. Training and support from the trust is used well. Consequently, there are strong systems within the school to keep pupils safe. Leaders' recruitment and record keeping procedures are effective.

Pupils say they feel safe. Leaders have recently strengthened the curriculum. This means that issues that pupils might encounter in life are systematically addressed in lessons as well as discussed when they arise.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some minor inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum across the school. As a result, a few pupils do not build on what they have already learned. Leaders should ensure that in all parts of the curriculum, pupils deepen their knowledge and build their learning by making links with what has gone before.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Garras Community Primary School, to be good in December 2010.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	143975
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10200935
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	64
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kevin Thomas
Headteacher	Lucy Wandless
Website	www.garras.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Garras Community Primary School converted to become an academy in June 2017. The school joined the Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust at that time.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has three classes: one for Reception and Year 1; one for Years 2 and 3; and one for Years 4, 5 and 6.
- The executive headteacher is also headteacher of two other schools in the multi-academy trust. Currently, the local governing body at Garras works in partnership with the governing body of one of the other schools.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the chief executive of the Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust, and the chair and members of the local governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and teachers, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans.
- Inspectors looked at the policies and procedures used to keep pupils safe. They reviewed the checks carried out by leaders on the suitability of adults who work in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They considered 14 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 14 free-text responses, and the seven responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Stephen McShane, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David New

Ofsted Inspector

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