

# Inspection of Wendron Church of England Primary School

Wendron, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0PX

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school does not support pupils to fulfil their potential. Expectations are too low. Staff do not challenge pupils sufficiently and routinely accept low-quality work. Pupils' workbooks are often poorly presented, lacking care and attention.

Pupils do not learn a meaningful, challenging curriculum. In most subjects, they miss out on large chunks of knowledge, so do not learn everything they should. This leads to significant gaps in their knowledge. When pupils fall behind, they do not get the extra help they need and continue to struggle.

Pupils are respectful, courteous and polite. Pupils are safe while at school and attend well. They are adamant that bullying does not occur. In lessons, pupils often lose focus and struggle to re-engage with their learning. This happens when lessons do not support pupils to know and remember more. In addition, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not identified quickly enough so they do not get the support they need.

Pupils are not prepared well for life in modern Britain. They are clear about their own Christian faith, but they have a weak understanding of other religions. Pupils are unfamiliar with fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance. They are confused about mental health, equality and different cultures.

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

Trustees and governors do not know the school's weaknesses. They have an overgenerous view of the school, so under-performance remains unchallenged. Efforts to improve the school have been ill-informed, minimal and ineffective. Trustees have delegated responsibilities to the local governing body which governors struggle to fulfil. Out-of-date policies have gone under the radar. Confidential information has been inappropriately published on the school website.

School leaders do not have the capacity to bring about improvements. They rely on out-of-date assessment information to determine improvement priorities. Curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff have not had the training they need to support pupils well enough. There are systemic weaknesses in the quality of education across the school.

Curriculum leaders have not noticed that curriculum plans are not fit for purpose. Leaders and teachers prioritise providing pupils with engaging activities rather than what it is they want pupils to know and remember. Curriculum plans are incomplete, incoherent and lack ambition.

Teachers' implementation of the school's curriculum is poor. Teachers do not meet the varying needs of pupils. Teachers do not know how to sequence lessons effectively. Pupils learn a series of disconnected facts, which does not prepare them

well for future learning. Teachers' deployment of support staff is weak. As a result of these weaknesses, pupils underachieve.

Children in the early years get off to a poor start. Staff have a weak understanding of the early years foundation stage. In some areas of learning, there is no meaningful curriculum in place. Children have few opportunities to learn independently. They are too reliant on adults. The curriculum is confused, and expectations are low. Children have few opportunities to practise their writing or to develop their understanding of number. Instead, children are given activities such as colouring in.

Staff do not identify pupils with SEND swiftly enough. Even when staff identify pupils' needs, they wait too long to put support in place to help them. This has led to frustration among some parents of pupils with SEND.

The school's bespoke phonics programme does not help pupils to learn to read well. Teachers' knowledge is poor. For example, some staff insist that pupils 'sound out' words when it is not possible to do so. Also, books do not match the sounds that pupils know well enough. They contain sounds that pupils do not yet know. Other pupils read books with ease because their books lack challenge. In addition, pupils who have fallen behind do not get the help they need.

Pupils are polite and respectful. Their behaviour and attitudes are not barriers to them knowing and remembering more. But staff have low expectations of pupils. When the curriculum is poorly matched to their learning needs, pupils lose focus and are less enthused to participate.

The school's approach to supporting pupils' personal development is ad-hoc. As a result, pupils do not know or understand British values. They have little understanding of different faiths or beliefs. Pupils struggle to recall strategies that help to keep them safe when they are using the internet. They confuse personal, social, health and economic education with collective worship. Pupils misunderstand key messages about equality and mental health. Pupils are poorly prepared for life in modern Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that recruitment processes are robust. They only appoint adults who are suitable to work with children. Leaders store recruitment checks on the single central record appropriately. Staff have the training they need to keep pupils safe. They know when to record concerns on the school's electronic monitoring system. Designated safeguarding leads consider concerns closely, taking appropriate action where needed. They work with external agencies, such as the local authority, well.

Governors' knowledge of safeguarding is less secure. They have not challenged school leaders well. However, this has not impacted on the day-to-day safeguarding culture negatively.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Trustees and governors do not know the school well enough. This has led to a lack of decisive action to bring about much-needed improvements. Trustees and governors must gain a precise and accurate evaluation of the school. They need to challenge leaders about the underperformance of the school and provide support that is effective.
- Leaders have been reliant on outdated assessment information when deciding school improvement priorities. As a result, actions to improve the quality of education have been ineffective. Leaders need to take more precise action based on reliable assessments so that the school's quality of education improves.
- Curriculum plans across most subjects are not fit for purpose. Pupils' knowledge is poor because plans are either incomplete, incoherent or lack ambition. An urgent review of the school's curriculum is required. Leaders must ensure that suitable curriculum plans are in place so that pupils know and remember more.
- Teachers do not understand how to assess pupils' knowledge, sequence lessons or support pupils well enough. Therefore, pupils struggle in lessons and over time. Leaders must ensure that teachers can adapt the curriculum to support all pupils well.
- The school's approach to teaching phonics is poor. Many pupils fall behind when learning to read. Leaders need to make sure there is a systematic synthetic phonics programme in place which children begin to learn from day one. Reading books need to be matched to the sounds that pupils know. There needs to be a system in place to help pupils with gaps in their knowledge to catch up and keep up.
- The early years provision is poor. The curriculum does not meet children's needs well enough and expectations of them are too low. Leaders need to ensure that there is a suitably ambitious early years curriculum that enables children to learn to be independent.
- There is a piecemeal approach to supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils have huge holes in their understanding of British values, faiths, cultures and beliefs. Leaders need to provide a meaningful, age-appropriate curriculum that prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The identification of and support for pupils with SEND is weak. Some pupils wait too long to have their needs identified. Leaders need to ensure that there is an effective identification process in place so that pupils with SEND get the support they need in a timely manner.
- Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144004
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200920
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Kevin Thomas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Hunkin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wendron.cornwall.sch.uk">www.wendron.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2015.

## Information about this school

- Wendron Church of England Primary is a voluntary aided school. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2019.
- The school converted to become an academy school in June 2017. When its predecessor school, also called Wendron Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of Southerly Point Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust. The school joined the trust in June 2017.
- The executive head of school is responsible for two schools across the trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is arranged into four mixed-age classes: Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3, Years 4 and 5 and Years 5 and 6.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector looked at curriculum plans for physical education and geography. He also considered pupils' workbooks in geography.
- The lead inspector met with designated safeguarding leads to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. He considered the school's recruitment procedures, records of concerns and its engagement with external agencies, as well as staff's induction and training. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector considered responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires. He also considered 27 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tracy Hannon

Ofsted Inspector

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