

Grampound Road Village Church of England School

South Street, Grampound Road, Truro, Cornwall TR2 4DY

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2016

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have dealt with underperformance robustly. Staff training and clear guidance from the head of school has accelerated pupils' progress.
- The head of school is well respected and leads with determination to galvanise and inspire a relatively new staff team. This has led to improved outcomes for pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- The St Piran's Trust has provided strong leadership. The work of middle leaders across schools in the trust has effectively supported school improvement.
- Leaders' decisive action to tackle persistent absence, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, has resulted in much improved rates of attendance.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school, with a common understanding of the need to protect pupils against all possible risks. Leaders are vigilant in supporting vulnerable pupils and their families.
- The school's expenditure of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has led to accelerated progress, particularly for those who had fallen behind.
- Strong leadership in the early years has led to significant improvements in a short time. In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development exceeded the national average.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because staff understand their needs well and plan tasks to meet these needs.
- The school's work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are confident and willing to take on responsibility.
- Leaders make good use of the additional sport funding to encourage pupils' healthy lifestyles.
- The school's good work to celebrate diversity and promote equality engenders a culture of tolerance and respect among pupils in the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management further by ensuring that leaders:
 - share best practice so that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently strong in all subjects across the school
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have the highest expectations of standards in spelling, punctuation and handwriting
- Improve pupils' progress and achievement in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - work planned is well matched to pupils' abilities and provides appropriate challenge for the most able pupils, particularly in key stage 1.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The head of school and executive principal have been a formidable force in driving school improvement. They have dealt with underperformance rigorously. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved considerably.
- Leaders are honest and mostly accurate in their self-evaluation. Their determination to tackle weaknesses is unrelenting. Programmes of improvement and staff training are well planned to tackle previous variations in pupils' achievement. Senior leaders have tackled ineffective teaching swiftly and effectively, and have put successful systems in place for coaching and supporting new teachers.
- New teaching appointments have increased the capacity for improvement by complementing the skills of the current staff. This has already had a significant impact on standards. For example, improvements in the early years and in the teaching of reading have been swift.
- Guidance from 'subject champions' and middle leaders across the trust develops teachers' subject knowledge effectively. For example, teachers' understanding of strategies to support pupils with dyslexia has been enhanced. Consequently, these pupils develop in confidence and make good progress.
- Leaders have made effective decisions when spending the additional funding for the few disadvantaged pupils. Tailored programmes in reading have enabled pupils to catch up. Specialist support for pupils who struggle emotionally has been effective in helping pupils' readiness to learn.
- The additional sport funding is used effectively to encourage greater involvement in sporting activities. Records show high participation in the range of after-school sporting clubs. Pupils speak with particular enthusiasm about the school's running club and describe how sport helps them to be fit and strong. Lunch and playtimes are a hive of activity, with pupils enthusiastically joining in team games such as hockey, or developing individual skills in tennis.
- The range of high-quality work in pupils' books reflects the importance leaders place on supporting pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across different subjects. Local topics such as the Cornish mining heritage develop pupils' sense of identity and help them to understand the changing physical geography around them. Pupils and their parents speak positively about homework, in particular about the choices of written homework.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very effective. Families are overwhelmingly positive about the good communication that exists between home and school for pupils who need extra help with their work.

- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The many opportunities to take part in residential visits with pupils in other trust schools help pupils to socialise and build their confidence when facing new situations and challenges. The school's personal, social, moral, health and economic (PSHE) education programme is supporting pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain. Pupils demonstrate respect for each other and for those of different cultures or traditions. In discussions, pupils speak confidently about their beliefs, other religions and their customs. Pupils demonstrate tolerance of the views of others and an astute awareness of democracy, equality and fairness.

Governance

- The academy trust and the local board govern the school effectively. Directors have established rigorous systems and protocols for reporting on the school's effectiveness. Clear plans for improvement and specific steps for success enable directors to check on the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Directors hold leaders to account for the way in which pay increases are used to reward good performance, as well as for tackling underperformance.
- Directors make astute strategic decisions linking funds to identified priorities. Staff appointments have secured greater capacity for leadership. This has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, most notably in the early years.
- The trust's board oversees the school's work in aspects such as finance, staff, and health and safety. Leaders use funding effectively to support improvements in curriculum provision. For example, renovations to the early years learning environment has successfully provided children with vibrant and safe areas in which to learn. Improved facilities in the playground have supported pupils' physical development and helped them learn to play cooperatively together at play and lunchtimes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of keeping children safe. The trust's training programme ensures that all staff are up to date with current legislation. This includes training for staff to teach children how to resist being influenced by extreme views or opinions.
- Checks made on teachers before taking up their appointments are thorough, as are the induction procedures to ensure that all staff follow school policies and procedures whenever they commence work at Grampound Road.
- Comprehensive training ensures that all staff recognise and act on signs of harm or risk. Records demonstrate that leaders are vigilant and leave nothing to chance where they have concerns about pupils' welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have quickly built an effective teaching team, despite a number of staff changes. Their decisive leadership has brought about rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

- Visits to lessons, work scrutiny and the school's own highly evaluative records indicate that teaching is good. As a result, the previously slow progress of some pupils has been boosted. Positive relationships in the classroom inspire learning. Pupils welcome teachers' finely tuned advice on how to improve, particularly in Years 5 and 6. A group of children told the inspector: 'Our teachers are great. They inspire us to learn and achieve more every day.'
- Teaching assistants work as part of an effective team. They stimulate learning, provide reassurance and support pupils to think for themselves. As a result, classrooms are typically vibrant and industrious places of learning. Teaching assistants contribute well to the assessment and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, ably guided by the special educational needs coordinator.
- The teaching of reading is good. Young children develop a secure knowledge of phonics and use this effectively in their reading. Older pupils are encouraged to discuss the books they read, and develop good comprehension skills. A recent initiative to encourage even more reading is having a positive effect. Pupils are eager to share the books they read.
- Teachers devise a wealth of motivating activities to encourage pupils to write, and pupils say that they enjoy writing. Teachers provide the most able writers with a good level of challenge and motivation. As a result, pupils write well and their writing demonstrates a good grasp of punctuation strategies. However, teachers do not provide similarly strong challenge for some less confident writers who are less secure with spelling and handwriting. Insufficient guidance and lower expectations of handwriting and spelling are hampering the progress of some pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics is generally good. Teachers are quick to identify pupils' misconceptions and reshape tasks well to support pupils' understanding. However, sometimes teachers set work that is not suitably pitched to challenge the most able mathematicians, particularly in key stage 1. Pupils practise their skills and develop fluency but are not challenged to apply their learning to less familiar tasks. Consequently, learning stalls for these pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The recruitment and training of new staff is thorough. This ensures that staff can recognise and act on signs of risk or harm immediately. Records confirm that staff act quickly if they have concerns regarding pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders are persistent in their pursuit of support for vulnerable families and their children.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe and learn to manage risk. The outdoor learning curriculum is carefully planned to enable pupils to learn and be challenged in a safe and controlled environment. Pupils speak knowledgeably about how to keep safe. Residential visits provide valuable opportunities for pupils to experience physical challenges such as climbing and surfing. Pupils speak knowledgeably about sea safety, the need for vigilance and the safe use of equipment such as harnesses when climbing.

- Pupils say that they feel safe and are well cared for. They feel listened to and trust adults who work with them. Safety aspects are successfully woven into the school's PSHE curriculum.
- Grampound Road is an inclusive school. The special educational needs leader and parent adviser provide good-quality support and advice for families. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to overcome barriers to their learning. Parents of children with specific medical and emotional needs are effusive about the school's work to support their child.
- Parents in general are highly appreciative of the support their children receive. They say that they cannot praise the school enough for how well it cares for its pupils. Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend this school to others.
- Parents' and pupils' comments confirm that the school regularly celebrates diversity and promotes equality. This supports an ethos of harmony and actively prevents discrimination.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Older pupils are nurturing and supportive of their younger schoolmates. The older pupils model good table manners and offer help to younger pupils if they need it.
- Behaviour records show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is good in the school and that when pupils misbehave teachers deal with it quickly and help pupils to improve. All parents agreed that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They generally take responsibility to challenge themselves when choosing tasks, and respond well to teachers' advice and guidance. On occasions, pupils lose focus if the work is too easy or too hard. Adults are quick to intervene, however, to help them refocus their attention.
- Staff and pupils demonstrate respect for one another. Pupils contribute fully to school life and beyond. For example, school council members organise fund-raising events and a 'buddy' system helps new pupils settle quickly into school. Events such as 'kindness' days, where pupils provide tea and cakes and host visits from members of the local community, help pupils understand how giving and helping can be rewarding.
- Leaders have successfully reduced the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school, including disadvantaged pupils, for whom absence rates were too high in the past. Close work with other agencies supports families in overcoming barriers to attendance.
- Similarly, while overall attendance has been good, attendance for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was below the national average. This has improved, and the attendance of all groups is now in line with national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of children in the early years achieving a good level of development in 2016 was above the national average, an improvement on 2015. Similarly, the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at Year 1 continue to be above the national average.
- By the time pupils leave Grampound Road, they achieve at least in line with their peers nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' current work shows that this is an improving picture. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points, particularly in reading and writing.
- This good progress is the result of strong and improving teaching. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education, unlike in previous years when progress by the end of key stage 2 was weak for too many pupils. The work in current pupils' books shows that good teaching and assessment have halted this decline. However, progress in mathematics is not as good as it should be, particularly for the youngest most-able pupils. Effective teaching and assessment have also ensured that boys and girls achieve equally well, where in the past there was an imbalance in favour of boys by the end of Year 6. Pupils' current work, together with the school's assessment information, shows that there are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls.
- Recent writing in pupils' books shows that progress is accelerating for some pupils. Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils are responding well. The quality and content of writing show a marked improvement on last year. Pupils in Year 2 confidently write sentences using a range of descriptive language and verbs.
- Pupils in some year groups write well-constructed sentences using appropriate punctuation. However, too often, poor handwriting skills impair the legibility and fluency of pupils' writing and impede their progress. There is still a prevalence of inaccurate spelling and poor handwriting in some pupils' books.
- The few disadvantaged pupils in the school are making better progress than in the past in reading, writing and mathematics, with work in their books showing an improving picture. The rate of improvement is not equally fast for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils with lower starting points have caught up quickly in mathematics, although their progress is less marked in writing. Conversely, the most able disadvantaged pupils are making better progress in writing than in mathematics. By the time they leave the school in Year 6, more disadvantaged pupils achieve the highest levels in writing compared with others nationally.
- The most able pupils make particularly good progress in reading and writing. Teachers plan interesting and challenging activities that inspire them to achieve their best and extend their learning. Progress in mathematics is less secure, especially for the most able pupils in Years 2 and 3.
- The majority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, particularly in their personal development. Pupils achieve well from their starting points because of teachers' effective assessment, well-targeted plans and close work with families. Training has enabled staff to quickly identify pupils' specific learning difficulties and ensure that they receive the support they need.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader has, in a short space of time, established a vibrant place to inspire children's learning. Her tenacious approach has transformed the indoor and outdoor classrooms. Resources are organised effectively to develop children's curiosity and imagination.
- Teachers plan carefully for children's individual learning, to develop their strengths and to tackle their areas of need. They focus particularly effectively on developing children's social and language skills. For example, when making 'sand cakes', the children were engrossed in the activity and were independently discussing how much water would make the perfect cake.
- The strong links teachers make with families before their children join the school help children to settle quickly when they start the Reception class. Inspectors observed children in their second week of school experiencing a calm, happy and purposeful start to the day.
- The most recent information shows that children are making good progress across all areas of learning. Over time, the early years has not secured such strong outcomes for pupils. However, good teaching and leadership have enabled children to catch up to make good progress from their starting points. The proportion achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year improved in 2016 to above the national average.
- Children learn their letters and sounds quickly. They practise their skills independently and record their ideas in the writing areas. Records of children's writing last year show that they made particularly strong progress. Over the last two terms, teachers have helped children to develop their pencil control. This is leading to improvements but there is more to be done in ensuring consistently high expectations.
- Staff form effective relationships with parents. As a result, parents work closely with the school and contribute to their children's assessment. They say that school helps them to support their children's learning at home. This is making a positive contribution to the good progress their children make. Parents typically commented, 'I can't recommend the school highly enough. Staff are so approachable.'
- Adults provide high-quality support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly with their personal and social skills.
- In the short time the leader has been in place, she has developed effective links with the pre-school. The information gained at transition helps to address children's needs in personal and social skills to help them get off to a good start in school. However, information on other aspects of a child's development is not always sufficiently tailored to accelerate the progress of all pupils on entry to school, including those entitled to the additional early years premium funding.
- Close links with the Years 1 and 2 staff ensure that transition is seamless for the children. Although in its early stages, it is clear from pupils' books that this work is closing gaps in children's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teachers have created a safe and secure learning environment. All adults are trained to keep children safe. Well-considered risk assessments for activities and visits demonstrate staff vigilance in this important work.

- Teachers are skilled in helping children understand how to behave and why this is important. Children respond well to the routines established and behave well. As a result, children quickly learn to play well with others and become successful independent learners. This ensures that they are ready for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	140466
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10019431

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The board of directors
Chair	Andrew Wade
Headteacher	Marie Cameron
Telephone number	01726 882 646
Website	www.grampoundroadschool.co.uk
Email address	grsecretary@stpiranscross.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Grampound Road Church of England Primary School converted to be an academy in December 2013 as part of the St Piran's Multi-Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2012, it was judged to be a good school.
- Since the school opened in December 2013, it has had three executive principals. The head of school was appointed in 2014, followed by the executive principal in 2015.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years (Reception class) attend full time.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what information academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in all classes across the school, mostly jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions took place with the head of school, executive principal, chair of the trustees, senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers and three representatives of the local governing body. A telephone conversation also took place with the director of the Diocese of Truro.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents, including minutes from governors' meetings, school improvement plans, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors gained the views of pupils throughout the inspection, including at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work in their books, together with the senior leaders, to establish the current quality of pupils' work and progress over time.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to two groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- An inspector conducted a walk around the school with pupils to look at curriculum displays, the promotion of British values and to find out how they feel about their learning.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of parents and considered 29 responses to Parent View, as well as the school's own survey results. Online questionnaire responses from eight members of staff were also analysed along with eight responses from the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector
Stewart Gale

Her Majesty's Inspector
Her Majesty's Inspector

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