

# Mousehole Community Primary School

Foxes Lane, Mousehole, Penzance, TR19 6QQ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils currently in the school make good and sometimes outstanding progress because they are taught well. Some teaching is outstanding.
- The headteacher and governors have taken effective action to improve teaching with the result that rates of progress, particularly in reading and writing, have increased.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding because they understand and follow the school's core values, 'careful, respectful, helpful, and hard working', which are consistently modelled by adults in school.
- Excellent use is made of the outdoor learning environment to motivate and interest pupils, who say, 'Learning is exciting; we need some skills to stay safe.'
- The school's links with, and contribution to, the local community are a strength, and give the pupils a sense of belonging and pride as well as developing their social skills.
- Pupils are provided with a wide and stimulating range of topics and activities, which are well planned to fit in with local events, such as Mazey Day, and which give them opportunities to appreciate music, art and literature. Their artwork is of a very high standard.
- The governing body provides excellent support for the school, as well as challenging the headteacher and staff to do even better. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Progress in mathematics is not as rapid as it is in reading and writing because there is not yet a clear policy for teaching mathematical skills progressively.
- Pupils are not always expected to produce enough work during mathematics lessons which would enable them to learn a concept securely and be ready to move on.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or parts of lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher. She also visited the whole-school singing session.
- She listened to Year 6 pupils reading, and heard other pupils reading during phonics (linking letters and the sounds that they make) sessions and lessons and also met with a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school. The inspector also observed the pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes and spoke to some informally.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body and had a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector scrutinized work in pupils' books and looked carefully at displays of pupils' work in classrooms and in the corridors. She also listened to pupils singing in preparation for their production of 'Gruel' at the end of term.
- The inspector held meetings with the school's special educational needs coordinator and early years leader. She also met regularly with the headteacher.
- Account was taken of 37 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as to the views expressed in several letters received from parents and carers during the inspection. Questionnaires completed by staff were also taken into account.
- A wide range of school documentation was examined, including statutory policies relating to safeguarding. Records of the school's own monitoring and self-evaluation, tracking data showing the progress of all pupils, minutes of governing body meetings, reports from the local authority, and the school improvement plan were also scrutinized.
- The inspector also visited the after-school club, which is managed by the governing body.

## Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average size primary school, with one Reception class and three mixed-age classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.
- There are very small cohorts of pupils in each year group, with considerable differences in the composition of each year group. For example, the number of boys and girls varies considerably from year to year, as does the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In addition, there are varying numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school in each year group during the academic year.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to support from the pupil premium, which is the funding provided by government to help pupils eligible for free school meals or those who are in the care of the local authority, is similar to the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is much higher than the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also much higher than the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been some unavoidable changes to the teaching staff within the school over the past two years.
- The school has gained a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools Award and the Artsmark.
- The school is a member of the Penwith Education Trust, a group of schools in the local area which are independent of one another yet work together for the benefit of their pupils and staff.

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

- Increase progress and raise attainment in mathematics by:
  - implementing a clear calculation policy throughout the school
  - increasing the opportunities planned by teachers for pupils to apply their mathematical skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Many children join the Reception class at a stage of development which is below the level normally expected for their age. As a result of well-planned activities they currently make good progress and are ready to enter Year 1 with skills and abilities broadly as expected. Over the past three years, there has been a steady improvement in the proportion of children reaching this good level of development because of changes to the way learning activities for the children are now planned.
- Good progress continues during Years 1 and 2, and the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has steadily risen, being just above the national average. Standards in reading and writing have risen because more attention is being given to the teaching of phonics, regular reading practice, and strategies such as 'talk for writing' to develop pupils' vocabulary. In 2012 most pupils in Year 1 met the expected standard in the national screening check, and this year every Year 1 pupil has met the standard.
- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 went through a period where they did not make as much progress due to unavoidable staffing changes, but the situation has settled and they are once again making the progress expected of them.
- In 2012 standards at the end of Year 6 were lower than the national average in English and mathematics. However, the composition of this small cohort of pupils changed many times during Years 3 to 6 and at the time of the SATs there were 10 boys and one girl, six pupils with special educational needs and eight pupils who had joined the school during Key Stage 2. Overall however, the cohort made good progress, compared to that of pupils nationally.
- The school promotes equal opportunities effectively. The comprehensive teacher assessment progress tracking data show that most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those entitled to support through the pupil premium are progressing at the same rate as their peers. Pupils supported by pupil premium funding reach standards similar to their peers in English and mathematics because close attention is paid to their individual needs and circumstances.
- The school's data also show that the majority of pupils are making good progress in reading and writing, and many are making outstanding progress, although in Years 3, 4 and 5 progress is slower in mathematics. This is because there is not yet a clear calculation policy showing how skills in mathematics should be taught progressively. The school is fully aware of this and increasing the rate of progress in mathematics is in the school development plan.
- Excellent use is made of the tracking of pupils' progress, which ensures that each pupil has the opportunity to succeed. The headteacher holds regular pupil progress meetings with teachers so that extra provision can be made for any pupil identified as requiring additional help. As a result, any pupil identified as falling behind is quickly brought back on track.
- Pupils in Year 6 read fluently with good use of expression. They were able to explain the features of interesting books, and spoke about a range of authors whose work they enjoyed. Their regular guided reading sessions have enabled them to progress well.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is lively and interesting, and captures the pupils' imaginations. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been working on an extended piece of work linking art and poetry. They have produced an excellent poem, based on the poem, "As I Went Down the Zig Zag" by Charles Causley, which they have related to their village. This followed a walk through the village to pick out features they could use. In an outstanding lesson observed, the pupils used other poetry from a range of authors to identify the use of personification, which they added to further improve their own version, for example, 'the harbour walls wrap around the village like two arms keeping it safe'. The teacher and teaching assistant worked in tandem to ask challenging questions and get the

best from the pupils.

- Pupils' work is carefully marked, and they are given time to reflect upon this and improve their work. Regular time is set aside to discuss work with the pupils, so that they have a thorough understanding of what they need to do next. Pupils spoken to were fully aware of their targets in writing and mathematics.
- The support provided by teaching assistants in class, in smaller intervention groups or for individuals makes a strong contribution to the success of pupils. The skills of individual teaching assistants are used to develop the pupils' artistic, musical and French abilities. In addition, having received extensive training, teaching assistants successfully support pupils in learning phonics.
- Much of the pupils' learning takes place using the beautiful outdoor environment, which they clearly enjoy. For example, in an outstanding lesson seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils were mesmerised by closely observing, through a microscope projected onto the screen, a caterpillar which they had found. The teacher's skilful questioning encouraged the children to talk about how the caterpillar moved, to make observations about its body, and how to ensure it went back to its home. This sparked their curiosity so that when the children moved on to choose from a wide range of activities, the majority chose to use magnifying glasses to observe more creatures, or to look through the wide range of minibeast books available.
- Pupils are expected to contribute to discussion during lessons, and to explain their reasoning, which they do confidently and articulately. This is encouraged by techniques such as 'lolly lotto' to select which pupil will contribute. As a result, all remain focused so that they are able to participate. Pupils like this, and said, 'It helps build our confidence.'
- On occasion, the quantity of work expected from pupils during independent mathematical activities does not give them enough opportunity to rehearse their skills and become secure in their understanding, which means they cannot move on as quickly as they should.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The pupils consistently demonstrate respect, courtesy and good manners to each other and to adults. There are excellent relationships between all members of the school community.
- Pupils of all ages play well together outside, with older pupils ensuring that younger ones are happy and safe. As one pupil said, 'It's really good, everyone plays well together.'
- There are a tiny number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour or alleged bullying, which following investigation by the headteacher proved to be generally minor misunderstandings that were quickly resolved.
- The pupils say that there is no bullying, although they have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including racist or cyber bullying. They have had lessons on how to use the internet safely, understand how to tackle discrimination and during a parents' evening, taught their parents and carers how to stay safe online.
- Pupils work exceptionally well with each other in a range of activities both within class and across the school. Older pupils have meaningful responsibilities, and there is a true sense of family during playtimes and lunchtimes when pupils of all ages sit, play and chat together.
- There have been no exclusions over the past three years.
- Attendance is closely monitored by the headteacher, who assiduously follows up the absences of pupils. Rates of attendance have risen steadily over the past five years and are now in line with the national average.
- All staff pay close attention to ensuring the pupils' safety. All safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and followed, and the school site is secure. Facilities are well maintained.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils are extremely positive about both behaviour and safety.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Since his appointment two years ago the headteacher has carried out a thorough evaluation of the school's work, and consequently has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. He has focused strongly on raising the rate of progress of pupils across the school. He has done this by sharing his ambition with staff, governors and parents and carers that all pupils are entitled to an interesting, lively and active curriculum which matches their interests and ability.
- The headteacher regularly observes teaching, including joint observations with the school's advisor to ensure his judgements are accurate. He provides teachers with valuable feedback which helps them to improve their practice. Teachers feel well supported, and have been given suitable training when required.
- All members of staff spoken to, and who responded to the staff questionnaire, were supportive of the headteacher and school, and are fully committed to working together as a team for the benefit of the pupils. As one wrote, 'We work hard because we want to.' This can also be seen in the commitment from staff to community events such as the recent Mazey Day parade as well as in the wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities provided. The after-school club is well managed.
- The views of parents and carers are regularly sought by the school. The parents and carers who responded to Parent View, and those who wrote to the inspector, expressed strongly their appreciation of and support for the school. They value the approachability of staff, the welcoming nature of the school community and the huge focus on ensuring their children are taught well in a safe and caring environment.
- Pupils' views are regularly sought. For example, through a survey of their views about how they like to learn, changes were made to the curriculum to provide more active learning opportunities. The pupil parliament and school council have been influential in getting a new play area, and have contributed to designing the new school logo.
- The promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They enjoy their links with penpals in Somerset and France, and found 'Skyping' their French penpals 'exciting but scary because we had to speak in French'. Every opportunity is taken to reflect upon the beauty of the world around us, and this is reflected in the school environment.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school via a School Improvement Partner who is the headteacher of an outstanding school in a neighbouring district.
- The headteacher and governors have made many improvements to the school in the past two years. They have clear plans and the capacity to improve the school further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is excellent. Governors receive regular scheduled reports from staff on all aspects of the school's work, and maintain their own system for checking that actions identified in the school development plan are carried out effectively. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are in place. They are closely involved in school life, being linked to subjects and classes, and closely monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. They provide a high level of support for the headteacher and staff while asking challenging questions about the achievement of pupils in comparison to pupils nationally. Governors are outward looking, and have sought training where necessary to ensure their knowledge is up to date. They hold the headteacher to account through his rigorous performance management, ensuring that pupils' progress is paramount. In the past they have provided the headteacher with strong support to challenge any underperformance. There are not, at present, any pay decisions to be made for teachers as all are at a relatively early stage in their career. Governors carefully consider the use of the pupil premium money and they keep a close eye on the impact of this spending.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111796
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	411862

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Byrne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Roynon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01736 731427
<b>Email address</b>	secretary@mousehole.cornwall.sch.uk



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