

Mabe Community Primary School

Cunningham Park, Mabe, Penryn, TR10 9HB

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- In 2012, pupils in Year 6 did not make enough progress from their starting points in Year 3 in English and mathematics.
- Teaching requires improvement. The pace of pupils' learning is sometimes too slow, for example when teachers do not cover sufficient work in the time available.
- Planning is not sharp enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils and some of the work given to pupils is too easy and this limits their progress.
- Pupils are not always given enough help for them to set their own learning targets and judge for themselves the progress they make.
- Pupils' understanding of letters and their sounds is underdeveloped and this is holding back their reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Leadership and management require improvement because checks on the quality of teaching have not been robust enough to rectify weaknesses identified.
- Governors do not have enough information about the progress of different groups of pupils in different classes. Arrangements to hold teachers fully to account are underdeveloped.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is now improving, following a period of turbulence. Initiatives introduced by leaders to improve reading, writing, and mathematics are helping to improve achievement and strengthen pupils' progress.
- Learning and progress are strongest in the upper part of Key Stage 2 because teaching here is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave well; they enjoy lessons because teachers often make learning fun.
- Teachers manage classes well and treat pupils as individuals. Relationships are harmonious and respectful. Pupils are very ready to contribute in lessons and say what they think.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school and free from bullying. They say that adults look after them well and that they are kind and considerate.
- Governors have managed the school's finances well, including unexpected costs relating to the school building.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, including six which were joint observations with the headteacher. He observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector took account of the 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' views were also gathered from informal conversations at the start of the school day.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including the school improvement plans, school checks on teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' progress. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average primary school, with pupils attending mainly from the local area.
- The pupils are taught in four classes; Reception and Year 1, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is below average. Currently, the school has no pupils who are in the care of the local authority and no children from service families.
- The headteacher joined the school in April 2011.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better, so that pupils' attainment, and progress, particularly in mathematics, improve further, by:
 - making sure that the pace of learning in lessons is brisk, for example by increasing the amount of work covered in the time available
 - improving teachers' planning so that activities in lessons fully meet the differing needs of all pupils in the class
 - giving pupils more help so that they can set their own learning targets and judge for themselves the progress they make
 - strengthening the teaching of letters and their sounds to help pupils to read better.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - driving through improvements in teaching more robustly for example, by using visits to other schools, coaching and closer checking on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils in lessons
 - improving the quality of information available about the progress of different groups, and making sure that governors and other leaders hold staff more closely to account
 - Undertaking an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **requires improvement**

- At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in 2012 was broadly average, and much higher in English than in mathematics. However, this represented weak progress from their starting points in Year 3.
- Pupils start school with expected levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. In 2012, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was average, with reading being the weaker area.
- There remain inconsistencies in the rate at which pupils make progress because teaching is not yet good. The school's records show that pupils in Key Stage 2 make more rapid progress in English than in mathematics.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not yet good because activities are not always sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning is occasionally too slow.
- Younger readers use their knowledge of phonics (letters and their sounds) suitably to help them to read a broad range of words. However, some lower attaining pupils stumble over words because they are not confident in applying this knowledge. This weakness is reflected in the Year 1 phonics screening check where, in 2012, they were below the expected national standard.
- Achievement is improving. Learning observed was strongest in Years 5 and 6. The school records and the samples of work seen show that attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 is higher than in 2012, and that pupils are on track to improve their progress in English and mathematics by the time they leave school, from their different starting points. Some pupils are on track to achieve Level 6, which is well above the national expectation.
- Pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to attain standards that are a little higher than in 2012, but still broadly average. Attainment in reading is improving but this still remains the weaker area.
- Older pupils are developing good reading habits; they express preferences for different authors and say that they enjoy the opportunities they have for reading during the school day.
- In 2012, pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained similarly to their classmates in English but better than their classmates in mathematics. Samples of work and school records show that the current progress of pupils in this group and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils.

The quality of teaching **requires improvement**

- Teaching is not strong enough to promote pupils' good progress and, therefore, requires improvement.
- The pace of learning in some lessons is not sufficiently brisk. This happens when ideas are not moved on quickly enough. For example, in a lesson for the youngest children, their learning of letters and their sounds was too slow.
- The match of work to pupils' different abilities is not always close enough and activities are not always adapted well enough in lessons to respond to pupils' needs. In a lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher's expectations for different groups of pupils were not clear enough.
- In the lower part of the school, marking does not consistently set next steps for learning and pupils' targets for improvement are not used well enough in lessons, or they are out of date. This inhibits the progress of these pupils.
- The use of targets and marking is a strength in the upper part of Key Stage 2 where pupils routinely set themselves challenges to move onto the next national curriculum level and marking identifies aspects of the work that could be improved. In writing, pupils use 'marking ladders' well to help them review the quality of their own writing.
- Activities typically take place in a positive learning environment in which the teachers value the

contributions made by pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils have good opportunities to work together in classes and learn from each other. Older pupils displayed excellent independent work skills when solving tricky problems in mathematics.

- Teaching assistants provide valuable additional individual support to help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. In Key Stage 1, for example, this helped pupils to improve their basic writing skills.
- Learning resources are well organised and pupils experience a good range of practical activities which helps them to enjoy their learning. Writing activities are made meaningful because they are often linked to topic work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are well mannered and friendly. They were happy to discuss what they most liked about the school and commented that they would like to stay longer and enjoyed the after-school clubs. Their behaviour in and around the school is never less than good and this ensures that the school is harmonious. Their attendance is above the national average.
- The school's records show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. This is confirmed by the pupils who say that their learning is not disrupted and that they appreciate the 'golden tickets' they get for being respectful and having good manners.
- Discussions with pupils confirmed that they feel safe and secure in school and are free from bullying. They get on with each other well at playtimes. Pupils have a good awareness of e-safety; they are aware of the possible dangers of giving away their personal details when using the internet.
- In lessons, pupils typically work well together and show a desire to learn. They respond eagerly to questions and like discussing their ideas with each other. They cooperated well with each other when given a practical activity which required that they work together.
- The responses of parents and staff show that they think pupils' behaviour and safety are strengths of the school. Individual written comments and discussion with parents confirmed this view.
- This area of the school's work is not better because there are occasions when pupils, mainly boys, do not concentrate well enough in lessons.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher has taken action to improve the quality of teaching and promote improvement. Staff get detailed information about the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching observed and have visited other schools to see best practice. However, this has yet to secure consistently good teaching across the school.
- Leaders have identified the right areas for improvement and can point to successes that have already been made in English and mathematics, which is strengthening pupils' progress. They recognise, rightly, that there is more work to be done, particularly in mathematics, and to strengthen pupils' use of letters and their sounds to help with reading.
- There is an effective system to accurately check the progress of individual and groups of pupils. This has been helpful, for example in targeting additional resources to boost skills. Therefore, action taken is strengthening pupils' equality of opportunity. However, this information is not yet shared with governors sufficiently well for them to hold leaders fully to account.
- The school helps pupils to deepen their spiritual, moral and social understanding well. Pupils sing different parts confidently in assembly and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere across the school. The code of behaviour is well understood by the pupils and discrimination is not tolerated.
- The support provided by the local authority is now helping the school to improve.

■ The governance of the school:

- While governors know about progress and attainment information from the school's results in Years 2 and 6 and how these compare with the national averages, their knowledge of how well different groups of pupils currently in the school are doing is less secure. As a result, they are not yet able to hold teachers fully to account, and decisions about whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale are not sufficiently well based. Governors have supported the headteacher well to make important improvements to the school to tackle weaknesses identified in English and mathematics. They have evaluated the use of the additional support provided using pupil premium funding and discussed with these pupils how well they are doing in lessons. Governors make sure that they are up to date and follow the required procedures about safeguarding children. They monitor the budget well and the school has a small amount of money held in reserve. They have managed to deal recently with some major defects in the building and have made informed decisions, for example about the renewal of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment. Governors have fostered good relationships with parents.
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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

Unique reference number	111855
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	413198

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Tisdale
Headteacher	Paul Hayes
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2008
Telephone number	01326 372662
Fax number	01326 372770
Email address	secretary@mabe.cornwall.sch.uk

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