

Mabe Community Primary School

Cunningham Park, Mabe, Penryn, Cornwall TR10 9HB

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The trustees have not implemented effectively statutory policies and procedures to keep children safe.
- Leaders' day-to-day safeguarding systems, including for pupils who may be at risk, are not good enough. There is a poor culture of safeguarding children.
- The impact of governance is poor. The better challenge and working practices of the new interim advisory board (IAB) are very recent. The use of pupil premium funding is not monitored stringently.
- The number of pupils on roll is increasing markedly. Leaders have not ensured that the good-quality teaching seen in the past has been maintained as the school grows.
- Some pupils, particularly the most able, are passive in their learning because teaching does not challenge them sufficiently.
- Teaching assistants do not have a strong understanding of the school's curriculum. Therefore, teaching assistants do not add to pupils' learning sufficiently.
- Teaching does not support those pupils who struggle to read accurately well enough. Some pupils do not use their knowledge of phonics to spell accurately in lower key stage 2.
- The school's curriculum is not demanding enough. Teaching does not challenge pupils appropriately in humanities and science.
- Some pupils with lower attainment or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not make the progress they should. Teaching does not address pupils' misconceptions consistently well.

The school has the following strengths

- The purpose-built Nursery provides a positive start for children's education. Adults use assessments well to ensure that teaching matches children's needs.
- Pupils who join the school at times other than the usual transition points settle quickly because of the strong support they receive.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend well.
- Leaders' actions over a sustained period have ensured that the school's programmes of study in English and mathematics are well planned and ambitious.
- The teaching of writing and mathematics is effective in key stage 1.
- Pupils are a credit to the school. Most are kind, thoughtful and show respect for one another.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of governance arrangements, by ensuring that statutory duties are met, including monitoring the impact of the pupil premium fund.
- Improve safeguarding arrangements urgently, by ensuring that leaders, including the trust board:
 - have accurate information about the culture of safeguarding in the school
 - are stringent in checking the accuracy of statutory safeguarding audits
 - ensure that the procedures for keeping pupils safe are clearly understood and applied by all staff, so that any actions required are taken quickly, and in line with current legislation
 - make sure that the school's internet filtering system provides effective protection for pupils when they are online
 - check that safeguarding records consistently meet the requirements as set out in the trust's policies, guidelines and current legislation.
- Leaders should improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school, including in Reception, so that it is consistently good, by ensuring that:
 - teaching assistants and support staff are deployed and trained effectively so that their impact on pupils' progress is strong
 - there is a coherent approach to teaching phonics and early reading
 - pupils use and apply their phonic knowledge well to spell accurately
 - the most able pupils are challenged across a wide range of subjects
 - pupils who have low prior attainment or those with SEND receive work that is closely matched to their needs and make strong progress.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that teaching challenges pupils so that they are not overly passive in lessons.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders and trustees have failed in their statutory duties to safeguard pupils. Day-to-day safeguarding systems are not fit for purpose. As a result, leadership is inadequate.
- Leaders identify inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Leaders are beginning to remedy these weaknesses with the assistance of trust leaders. Teachers value this additional support. They say it is helping them raise their expectations and bringing about further improvement.
- Leaders' evaluations of teaching, learning and assessment and whole-school performance are accurate. Leaders' recent action plans are focused on the right aspects for improvement. However, their actions have not yet had enough influence to bring about the required improvements.
- Senior and middle leaders have improved the quality of the programmes of study in English and mathematics successfully. They have raised teachers' expectations. As a result, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has increased at the end of each key stage.
- Leaders' actions to improve the teaching of English have been effective over time. Many pupils write with the complexity and sophistication expected for their age. However, the levels of challenge in current sequences of work have taken a downturn in recent months. This is leading to pupils making slower progress. Leaders' actions are not yet counteracting pupils' slower progress successfully. Consequently, some pupils are underachieving.
- Leaders have not provided teaching assistants with the training they need to deliver the school's curriculum requirements. Pupils do not make sufficient academic gains or deepen their understanding when working in small groups led by an assistant. Leaders' very recent action to remedy this is not yet bringing about discernible improvements.
- The leadership of SEND is improving. Leaders who are responsible for SEND have overhauled the systems used to identify and assess pupils' needs. They are working on the right aspects of improvement. However, leaders do not yet have an astute understanding of the progress that these pupils make in classes because they do not monitor the impact of teaching closely enough. Leaders' actions have not yet ensured that this group of pupils make consistently good progress.
- Leaders did not deploy the pupil premium funds sufficiently well in the past. This academic year there is a more detailed, planned strategy following the trust's intervention. Even so, the current pupil premium strategy is not yet implemented effectively and so its impact is too variable.
- Leaders and trustees have extended the school's age range to include Nursery provision. As this is a growing school, more pupils join the school at times other than the usual entry points. Leaders ensure that these pupils settle quickly because of the caring support that staff provide. Nevertheless, good teaching and pupils' progress are not being sustained as the school grows.

- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used to enable pupils to attend a range of sporting activities locally. Staff have a close working relationship with Penryn College. Visiting staff from Penryn teach pupils PE. Pupils engage well and benefit from this well-structured and high-quality provision. This has given pupils greater exposure to competitions and more varied sporting activities.
- Pupils listen attentively in assemblies and develop a strong sense of belonging. They learn about life in modern Britain and about important events in the past, such as the First World War Armistice and D-Day. Leaders foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding effectively.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school. However, a minority of parents raise concerns over the impact of leadership, including the use of the pupil premium fund.

Governance of the school

- The trust increased its oversight of local governance this year. In order to address the weaknesses found, the trust set up an IAB. Members of the IAB are receiving training to increase the challenge they provide. New roles and responsibilities have been established. Nevertheless, it is too early to see any notable impact.
- The IAB has a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance. However, the members of the IAB did not give due consideration to checking the culture of safeguarding. In the past, local and central governance did not assure itself that the pupil premium funds were being deployed appropriately. There is now a clear strategy in place; however, it is not yet implemented successfully.
- Central trust staff are providing additional support at leadership level. This is providing accurate information about the inconsistencies in teaching and pupils' achievement. Trust staff have an acute understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are taking the right action to improve teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Statutory requirements as set out in current legislation for pupils' online safety are not met.
- Previous safeguarding training is not fully understood or applied well enough by staff, including those with specific responsibilities for safeguarding.
- Trust leaders with the responsibility for safeguarding are providing advice and leadership support to improve record keeping. However, the trust did not actively check that school staff apply this advice stringently. Therefore, it was unaware of the considerable weaknesses in the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Pupils' safeguarding records are not maintained in line with current legislation. The school's systems for dealing with concerns when they arise are not fit for purpose. The trust undertook much work during the inspection to begin to remedy this weakness, including retraining and briefing staff. However, the need to take such action exemplifies a poor culture of safeguarding that has gone unchecked for some time.

- In the past year, the trust has overhauled the way in which it carries out checks on staff. Consequently, the single central record meets requirements and the induction procedures for new staff are strong and in line with the trust's policies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The impact of teaching over time has enabled most pupils in key stage 2 to read and write proficiently. However, current teaching over the last few months is limiting pupils' ability to make further progress and to deepen their knowledge and skills. Current teaching is too variable to be good. Previously good teaching has not been sustained this year. Some pupils are underachieving.
- Teachers' expectations vary from class to class. Teaching in lower key stage 2 does not challenge the most able pupils well enough. Neither does it provide pupils who struggle with mathematics with sufficient opportunities to practise and deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. As a result, these pupils are not catching up sufficiently quickly.
- When the teaching of writing is closely matched to pupils' needs, pupils draw on their previous learning experiences to apply themselves to tasks and achieve well. However, current teaching in some classes in key stage 2 falls short of meeting pupils' needs. As a result, pupils' learning falters.
- Teachers do not have enough oversight of the work of teaching assistants. Too often, pupils with the lowest attainment are taught by staff without the required subject knowledge to remedy pupils' gaps in learning. Teaching does not address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. Consequently, some teaching and learning time is wasted and this restricts the progress that these pupils make.
- Teachers usually make accurate assessments of what pupils can do, know and understand. However, they do not use their assessments to modify their teaching well enough. Therefore, pupils do not achieve their full potential in some classes.
- The teaching of the wider curriculum is not demanding enough. For example, the teaching of humanities and science does not deepen pupils' understanding of the concepts taught because some work is too easy. The standard and complexity of work completed by pupils in English is much higher than that seen in other subjects.
- Phonics teaching is too variable for previously low-attaining pupils because there is no coherent strategy across the school. Teaching is not enabling those pupils in lower key stage 2 who struggled with phonics previously to spell accurately.
- Teaching for pupils with SEND is too variable. Some pupils do not receive the quality of teaching they need. Teaching does not enable these pupils to have access to the tasks on offer because they are too difficult or not closely matched to pupils' needs. Teaching does not routinely address pupils' targets or enable them to progress consistently well.
- Teaching over time in key stage 1 is strong. Teaching enables most pupils to write with the expected complexity for their age, with many pupils exceeding this. Teaching challenges these pupils effectively and prepares them well for key stage 2.

Personal development and welfare

- Leaders have failed to promote pupils' personal development and welfare. The systems to safeguard pupils' welfare are inadequate. Pupils told an inspector that they feel safe most of the time. However, they do not have confidence in the school's systems to protect them when they have access to the internet at school. The school's online filtering systems are ineffectual.
- Pupils who find difficulty regulating their own emotions receive caring support and enjoy strong relationships with the adults that support them. However, the support and teaching these pupils receive do not yet ensure that they make good progress in their academic subjects.
- Most pupils enjoy lunchtimes. However, some games create a chaotic playtime for some pupils. Pupils who prefer quieter play activities do this among ball games and more active play. Staff supervision is adequate. However, there is limited interaction between staff and pupils to support and facilitate pupils to cooperate and coordinate their play.
- Breakfast club is a calm and enjoyable time that provides a positive start to the day for the pupils who attend.
- Pupils benefit from a range of activities to keep fit and healthy. They enjoy the sports partnership work they undertake with Penryn College and are very positive about the sailing and surfing opportunities open to them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Many pupils demonstrate excellent manners and attitudes in class and at social times. They listen exceptionally well in assembly and speak with confidence in class when asked. However, when teaching is not closely matched to pupils' needs, some pupils in key stage 2 find it difficult to grapple with new learning. Sometimes, pupils are overly passive and stop work until an adult helps them. Conversely, pupils in key stage 1 are invariably attentive and respond well to the specific feedback they receive from teachers to improve their work.
- When pupils 'fall out' or their behaviour falls short of the school's behaviour policy at lunchtimes, a record is made and given to school leaders. However, there is no system for leaders to analyse these records or provide information to the trust as to whether incidents are re-occurring or reducing. In practice, minor incidents continue.
- Most pupils present their work well in English and mathematics books. However, when teaching does not meet pupils' needs well enough in other subjects, some work is unfinished and poorly presented. This is particularly so for pupils with SEND or those pupils with previously low attainment.
- Pupils' attendance has been above the national average for the last three years. Very few pupils are persistently absent. Rates of exclusion are typically low. When exclusion is used, leaders follow appropriate systems, and provide suitable support for pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The numbers of pupils who join the school part-way through key stage 2 are much higher than average. The number of pupils on roll has increased markedly because the school has expanded to accommodate more pupils. Therefore, it is not appropriate to make year-on-year comparisons of pupils' achievements.
- Pupils' progress in some key stage 2 classes has slipped in response to inconsistent teaching in recent months. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use and apply the knowledge and skills that they have already mastered. Pupils who have made good progress across much of their time in school are not maintaining this. Some pupils' progress and attitudes to learning have lessened. As a result, pupils are beginning to underachieve.
- Typically, pupils make very strong progress in key stage 1 in writing and mathematics. Pupils write precisely, they deploy ambitious word choices, and many organise their writing into sections or paragraphs. Increasingly, pupils use and apply their understanding of number to reason and problem solve in mathematics well. However, a few pupils with previously lower attainment struggle with the more challenging parts of the mathematics curriculum because they do not receive enough practice to deepen their understanding.
- Most pupils read accurately and with a good understanding. However, a minority of pupils who struggle to read do not catch up quickly enough because they practise inaccurate phonics or attempt to read books that are not matched to their phonic development. Some pupils in lower key stage 2 do not spell accurately because they do not use and apply their knowledge of phonics well enough.
- The proportions of pupils leaving the school with knowledge and skills that are expected for their age in reading and writing are in line with those seen nationally. However, this was lower in mathematics last year. Current pupils' progress in mathematics is improving because effective staff training has developed some teachers' subject knowledge and raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, in Years 3 and 4, pupils' progress remains too inconsistent.
- Some pupils who joined the school in the last two years have gaps in their knowledge and skills. These pupils are beginning to catch up. However, sometimes they are moved on too quickly in their learning. As a result, a number of these pupils are not yet working at the standards that are expected for their age.
- Pupils with SEND make progress that is too inconsistent over time. Teaching does not support these pupils well enough to address their individualised targets.
- The proportions of children reaching a 'good level of development', the standards that are expected at the end of Reception, have risen to be above the national average.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Early years provision is inadequate because the school's procedures for safeguarding children are not effective.
- Most children have the skills and knowledge that are expected for their age in

Reception. For example, most children speak in full sentences and can expand their ideas well. They can write words and sentences effectively. However, too few children exceed the standards that are expected. This does not represent strong progress from their starting points.

- Teaching in Reception does not explore why children have misconceptions in their phonics work well enough. This means that children continue to practise inaccurate phonics when working on independent tasks and this slows their progress.
- The quality of interactions between staff and children in Reception is not consistently strong. Teaching does not build on what children can do, know and understand well enough. Adults do not move children on in their learning consistently well. Consequently, children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Children settle in Reception quickly because of effective transition arrangements into Reception and the caring support and good routines that they experience. Children become resilient and follow instructions. They show confidence when working independently or with their peers.
- Children in Nursery get off to a flying start in their learning because of the strong teaching they receive. Adults provide children with precise support. This deepens children's learning effectively. Subsequently, children settle well and enjoy their time at school. They are curious and interested in the activities and experiences on offer.

School details

Unique reference number	143170
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10088373

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Kay Crosse
Headteacher	Paul Hayes
Telephone number	01326 372662
Website	www.mabe.cornwall.sch.uk
Email address	head@mabe.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has grown from four to six classes over the last two years and numbers of pupils have increased markedly. There is now a Nursery class.
- The school is led by a headteacher who is supported by three middle leaders responsible for early years, English and mathematics. The leader of SEND has been in post since September 2019. There is an IAB in place to support the local governance structure.
- The school is one of 10 schools in The Learning Academy Trust (TLAT).
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The headteacher and English lead, who is also the substantive teacher for Years 4 and 5, were absent during the inspection. The chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust acted as headteacher during the inspection.
- Two trust leaders are providing short-term support in the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in visits to lessons across the school, including in Nursery. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work across a range of subjects. The inspection team worked in close partnership with the trust's leaders to review pupils' progress and provision over time.
- Inspectors talked with a group of pupils to seek their views about the school. Inspectors listened to pupils from Years 1, 2, 3 and 6 reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the CEO, three other staff from the trust, and middle leaders from the school. An inspector held a telephone discussion with the chair of trustees and also met with the chief operating officer.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of school documents, including the school's improvement plan, subject action plans and the school's view of its own performance. Inspectors also looked at pupils' performance information, and documents relating to school governance. Inspectors reviewed records relating to behaviour, leaders' monitoring checks, pupils' attendance information, and a range of safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at social times and around the school.
- Inspectors considered 42 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and free-text comments. An inspector also talked with parents during the inspection to seek their views of the school and of the education their children receive. Inspectors took into account the staff online survey and held a meeting with six members of staff.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Bragg

Ofsted Inspector

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