

# Inspection of Padstow School

Grenville Road, Padstow, Cornwall PL28 8EX

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Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

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

Pupils enjoy their time at Padstow School. They value their teachers. Caring relationships exist between staff and pupils and among pupils.

The school is recovering well from the decline in the quality of education that led it to require special measures. Leaders have secured year-on-year improvements in the school's work. Pupils and parents and carers say that the head of school has made a big difference. Leaders and teaching staff strive for pupils to do well. Pupils are catching up quickly. Teachers know the pupils well and are working hard to fill the gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding. However, weaker teaching in the past means that some pupils are still behind where they need to be.

Pupils behave well. They concentrate hard in lessons. Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs and activities after school. For example, baking, model hobby craft, choir and football clubs broaden pupils' experiences, interests and talents.

Pupils feel happy and safe here. They play and learn well together. They say that bullying rarely happens. On the odd occasion when it does happen, staff deal with it straight away. Parents agree.

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

The head of school has established a safe and purposeful workplace and the school is now functioning better. She has rallied the school community. Together with trust leaders, senior leaders have tackled the root causes of weaknesses well. There have been many staff changes, which has been a frustration for parents. However, staffing is now stable. Parents appreciate this. Pupils and parents are proud of their school again and value the work that takes place here.

School leaders work closely with the local pre-school and families before children start school. As a result, children are ready to learn when they join the Reception class. Staff maintain strong links with families throughout the Reception Year. Parents value this. Children play and work alongside each other well. Teaching staff have paid a lot of attention to children's early writing and number skills. Children achieve well in these areas. However, teachers do not stick to the school's phonics plans closely enough. As a result, children's knowledge of phonics is underdeveloped.

Pupils are achieving more than they have in previous years. By the end of Year 6, more pupils left Padstow School ready for secondary school than in other schools nationally. However, inconsistencies in teaching remain. Stronger teaching is helping to eradicate weaknesses. For example, pupils are achieving well in mathematics. However, weaker readers in key stage 1 still struggle. Teaching staff do not match the books that pupils read well enough to their abilities.

Teaching staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Leaders work closely with other education and health professionals and follow their advice. Provision for pupils with SEND has become a strength of the school's work.

Subject leaders support class teachers so that they know precisely what needs to be taught in each subject. For example, in mathematics, a carefully thought-out scheme of work is helping pupils to solve problems. However, teachers with weaker subject knowledge have yet to pinpoint exactly where pupils' misunderstandings lie. Some teaching assistants have not yet received the training they need to help pupils enough. There is more to be done to help pupils to catch up.

Since September, leaders have implemented a new curriculum. Teachers now have clear guidance on what to teach and when. However, in some subjects, teaching is not structured well. Pupils sometimes struggle to remember what they have learned. For example, in science, some teachers lack appropriate subject knowledge. They cover the content, but teaching does not help pupils to think scientifically. Where teachers have better subject knowledge, they are having to tackle gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Leaders make sure that they prepare pupils well to be good citizens. Pupils learn how to accept others from a variety of backgrounds and how to value differences. Pupils are encouraged to understand and exercise their rights. Leaders listen to pupils' views.

Pupils say that teachers make learning fun. Those who were once uninterested in learning are now enthusiastic. Pupils take pride in their work and are eager to learn more.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that everyone in the school is clear about their role in keeping pupils safe. Consequently, staff can identify when a pupil's welfare may be in danger. Leaders have put effective systems in place for when staff are concerned. Leaders act quickly to work with a range of partners, such as children's services, to protect pupils.

Pupils are taught how to avoid the possible dangers they might face outside school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

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

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

- Senior leaders provide staff with good support. Teachers value the support and respond well to guidance. Leaders need to make sure that this support continues,

so that all teaching staff are well placed to meet the school's ambitions for pupils across all subjects.

- The teaching of phonics in early years is weak. Leaders must make sure that teaching in early years follows school policies and approaches, so that children get off to a flying start with their reading.
- More pupils are reaching the standards expected for their age at both key stages 1 and 2. However, some pupils who struggle with their reading do not receive the right support to help them to catch up. The staff who work with these pupils have missed out on key training. Books are not suitably matched to the words they know. Pupils try hard. They don't give up, but many lack the ability to make sense of what they are reading. Leaders must make sure that staff match books more closely to pupils' abilities, so that pupils catch up.
- Subject leaders are ambitious for pupils. The school is in the early stages of implementing a new curriculum for subjects beyond English and mathematics. However, teachers are unclear about what pupils have learned in the past across most subjects. Consequently, teachers are having to backtrack and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers need to gain a clearer understanding about what children do and do not remember, so that they can plan and implement a curriculum that progressively develops pupils' knowledge and skills over time.
- The curriculum for mathematics has been carefully planned out in a clear order. However, leaders need to make sure that all teaching staff have the subject knowledge to implement these plans well.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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>	137183
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10055432
<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>	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jacqueline Swain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Whitford
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.padstowschool.org">www.padstowschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26–27 September 2017

## Information about this school

- The school has undergone significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection.
- Pupil numbers have declined. Class sizes have reduced. In September 2019, the school changed to mixed-aged year groups. There are now six classes: Reception, Year 1, Years 2 and 3, Years 3 and 4, Year 5 and Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- The lead inspector held meetings with the head of school. She met with the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Aspire Trust and the acting deputy CEO, who leads the academy improvement group. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the board of trustees and hub councillor.

- Inspectors held meetings with the leader of special educational needs and the multi-academy trust's early years leader.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, curriculum leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education.
- Inspectors made visits to classrooms. The head of school joined inspectors on some of these visits.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work, with senior leaders, in a range of different subjects to see how well the curriculum is applied. Documents related to safeguarding were reviewed. Inspectors checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively.
- Inspectors spoke to parents before school on both days. The lead inspector considered the 26 responses to Parent View, as well as parents' free-text responses.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils' work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils, and listening to children read.

### **Inspection team**

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Miller

Ofsted Inspector

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