

Upton Cross Primary School

Upton Cross, Liskeard, PL14 5AX

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are good. The executive headteacher has provided decisive action to bring the school through a difficult period of change.
- The sharing of expertise within the federation and the cooperative trust of schools has raised staff morale and skills. It has also secured the school's strongly shared drive for further improvement.
- The determined teamwork of the executive headteacher, assistant headteacher, leaders and managers, and the governing body has rapidly improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement over the past year.
- Teaching is now good. Occasionally, it is outstanding. Consequently, all groups of pupils make at least good progress and standards have risen rapidly in all classes.
- A substantially larger and increasing proportion of pupils in all classes are now making more than the nationally expected progress.
- All pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics from their differing starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Their much improved attitudes to learning are a key factor in their progress being faster than in the past.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. This view is fully supported by parents who also appreciate the high quality of care provided by the staff.
- Early years provision for children in the pre-school unit and in the Reception class is good.
- Many early years children excel in developing their self-confidence, language and mathematical skills because of the highly effective way in which they are both challenged and enthused to learn.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, pupils' weaker handwriting and spelling reduce their ability to write fluently and to express their ideas confidently.
- The less-developed ability of some pupils to quickly recall number facts limits their ability to solve mathematical problems.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about of the diverse religious beliefs and customs that exist in modern Britain and the wider world.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector looked at pupils' learning in nine lessons and observed three teachers. The executive headteacher accompanied the inspector for most of these observations, which included observing teaching assistants working with individual and small groups of pupils.
- The inspector attended two assemblies. He also observed the breakfast club, and examined records and discussed arrangements for the after-school club with staff.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures, and the school's analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. The inspector examined the school's systems for checking progress, records of checks on the quality of teaching and reports of visits to the school made by the local authority.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their work and heard individual pupils from Years 1 and 2 read. He also looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects and classes.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body and staff. He also met with pupil representatives of the school council. The inspector spoke to individual pupils in lessons and around the school. The inspector held a telephone conversation with an adviser from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in the 38 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. He also gathered the views of some parents during informal meetings at the school during the inspection. Questionnaires from nine members of staff were also analysed.
- The inspector considered the school's use of the primary physical education and sports funding.
- The inspector examined the school's work in updating procedures for checking pupils' progress within the new National Curriculum.

Inspection team

Alexander Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Upton Cross Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with such needs varies considerably from year to year and is very small in some year groups across the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after children) is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals varies significantly from year to year. There were very few pupils in receipt of free school meals in Year 6 in 2014. Currently, there are no pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6.
- An above average proportion of pupils either joins or leaves the school other than at the normal times. The number of pupils in each year group across the school varies and fluctuates significantly.
- Last year, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children start the school's early years provision in a pre-school unit, which they attend for part of the week, before moving into the Reception and Year 1 class on a full-time basis. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are taught together and the third class contains Years 5 and 6 pupils.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school is a member of the Caradon Cooperative Educational Trust set up in January 2013 with four other local primary schools.
- Since September 2013, Upton Cross has been in a federation with St Kew Community Primary School. The federation shares the same governing body and is led by one executive headteacher who shares his duties equally across both schools. Each school also has its own assistant headteacher.
- The school has experienced a significant amount of staff changes since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is typically outstanding and enables all pupils to make as much progress as possible by:
 - strengthening the teaching of handwriting and increasing the emphasis on developing pupils' ability to spell words accurately
 - improving the knowledge of pupils in recalling and using number facts to solve problems in mathematics.
- Deepen pupils' knowledge of the diverse religious beliefs and customs that exist in modern Britain and the wider world.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher's resolute leadership, strongly supported by governors, has established an enduring determination to improve teaching and pupils' achievements since the last inspection.
- The decision to share staff expertise and widen pupils' experiences with other schools by forming a federation and participating in the cooperative trust has successfully improved the school.
- This current academic year's instability in teaching have finally been eradicated, which has enabled leaders to bring about rapid improvement in pupils' progress.
- The school has also restructured and strengthened the role of the assistant headteacher and middle leaders. This means that the executive headteacher is now supported effectively by a capable leadership team.
- Team leadership is driving the school forward at a fast pace and has secured a culture where good teaching and behaviour thrives. The leaders' success in transforming pupils' achievement so decisively demonstrates the school's strong capacity to generate further improvement.
- Leaders sustain a strong emphasis on developing teaching to improve pupils' learning. They rigorously and accurately check the quality of teaching and ensure that checks of staff movement along pay scales are closely linked with raising pupils' attainment.
- Leaders also ensure that assessments of pupils' skills are carried out frequently so that work can be adapted to secure pupils' understanding and quicken progress.
- Leadership is not yet outstanding because the rapid improvements made this year have not been operating long enough to secure outstanding achievement.
- Improved management of pupil premium funds ensures that disadvantaged pupils receive effective, extra support and are able to achieve as well as other pupils. For example, the school has purchased additional computer software which successfully helps pupils to practise their number skills.
- The school makes good use of the new primary physical education and sports funding to train staff and improve pupils' fitness and skills in a wider range of sports, including basketball and rugby. Staff check how well pupils are progressing in sport and note that more pupils now participate than in the past. For example, the percentage of pupils attending after-school clubs has risen from 32% last year to 56% this year.
- Leaders ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. The few pupils who have very complex needs are assisted extremely well. As is the case for all pupils in the school, they are never discriminated against and thrive in the caring community where everyone enjoys the equal opportunity to learn well.
- Leaders are rigorous in fully meeting all statutory safeguarding requirements. Staff and governors ensure that all the regular checks of procedures and risks are carefully completed, for example completing vetting of staff and delivering training efficiently so that pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils attending the breakfast and after-school clubs are equally well cared for. Pupils participate happily in board games, exchange ideas and share friendships that secure their confident enjoyment of school.
- The school engages well with parents, as shown by the warm relationships and helpful discussions about children's learning that take place between staff and parents before and after school.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils achieve well across the full range of National Curriculum subjects. There is an increasingly effective focus on extending pupils' literacy and mathematical skills.
- The curriculum includes a stimulating range of outdoor activities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These include frequent opportunities to explore nature in the 'Forest School and pond area', tend the school garden and care for the school's poultry.
- The school promotes pupils' learning of British values and democracy well. For example, pupils take part in elections for the school council and discuss themes such as respect. They talked about the general election in assembly. Pupils also learn about what it means to be a member of a community through meeting business leaders on an 'Enterprise Day'.
- Links with a multi-ethnic school in London and religious education lessons teach pupils that other cultures exist in modern Britain. Opportunities are missed during topic work to fully develop pupils' deeper knowledge about the wide diversity of religious beliefs and customs that exist in Britain and the wider world.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school since the previous inspection. For example, it has helped the school to develop stronger systems for checking its effectiveness.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are diligent and highly effective in fully meeting statutory requirements such as safeguarding arrangements. The governors' strategic decision to federate with another school and to actively participate in a cooperative trust with other schools has brought rapid improvement. This has been accomplished by governors sharing expertise and taking full advantage of training opportunities to strengthen their skills and effectiveness.
- The executive headteacher gives the governors detailed and carefully considered reports and information on pupils' achievements and how they compare with primary schools nationally. Governors visit the school regularly to talk to staff, pupils and parents, and to see the work of the school at first-hand for themselves. They ask searching questions to challenge staff leaders and hold them to account.
- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and strengths of the school, and know what needs to be improved. This has enabled them to support the executive headteacher steadfastly in his successful efforts to rectify inadequate teaching and underperformance, and to bring about and reward better teaching. Governors have ensured that teachers' training needs and salaries are closely linked to improving pupils' progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff share very supportive relationships with pupils. In response, pupils appreciate the care they receive from staff, and adopt the same quality of relationships and support with each other. Consequently, an atmosphere of mutual care and respect permeates the whole school and enriches pupils' enjoyment in learning together.
- The school has been highly effective, especially over the past year, in strengthening pupils' attitudes and efforts in learning. This has given significant impetus to their much-improved work and progress in lessons.
- Pupils in all classes are very keen to learn. They respond eagerly when questioned by adults. Pupils also relish the adults' higher expectations that they should be able to explain their ideas. Pupils also work supportively with each other, happily share ideas and genuinely seek to improve their learning.
- Most pupils behave very well and are mindful of others when moving around the school, during assemblies, and at breaks and lunchtimes. School records of pupils' behaviour reflect pupils' good behaviour and, for example, show that no exclusions have been necessary this school year.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding. This is because occasionally a few pupils are over-boisterous in the playground at break times and do not show enough awareness of how this inhibits other pupils' enjoyment.
- Pupils on the school council take their responsibilities very seriously and, in discussion with them, emphasised the importance of the 'Ideas Box', where pupils can confidentially express their concerns and ideas. School council members diligently report the views of their classmates and treat their suggestions seriously. One, for example, led to the school's popular 'Rainbow Day' when pupils contributed to the Shelter charity and came to school in colourful clothes. Representatives on the school council also meet regularly, work closely and share ideas with fellow pupils across the cooperative.
- The school's rigorous checks and support of families in need ensures that attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- All staff follow carefully considered, effective procedures and are consistent in providing high-quality supervision of pupils.
- The staff's diligent care secures the pupils' safety, including in the well-protected 'Forest School and pond' and gardening areas.
- Pupils say they feel very safe, and parents supported this view when questioned by the inspector and in their responses in the questionnaire.
- Pupils also show an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and are mindful of their responsibility to help each other should the need arise. For example, without prompting, they use equipment such as computers and cooking materials very carefully, and make sure they are stored away safely after use.
- When asked about bullying, pupils confidently stated that, 'There is no bullying here.' Pupils know that bullying can take many forms, including physical and verbal abuse, and are particularly knowledgeable

about cyber-bullying, with some checking that school computers are fully protected!

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good. Occasionally, teaching is outstanding, especially when the work is particularly stimulating so that pupils learn with great enthusiasm.
- The quality of teaching and subsequently pupils' learning have been significantly improved in Years 2 to 6 this academic year. This is because new and relocated teachers have settled into their classes and strongly challenge pupils to work harder.
- Teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils are to achieve, of the quality of their behaviour and how hard they should work. Pupils respond extremely well to these higher expectations. They respect their teachers and get on very well with them. As a result, the positive climate of joyful, challenging learning typical in early years classes is now evident across the school.
- Pupils in Year 5 showed very good skills in using laptop computers to write instructions for younger pupils in how to make Greek Baklava. Meanwhile, Year 6 pupils enriched the quality of their persuasive writing by sharing ideas about 'bossy language' and imperative verbs.
- Teachers liaise closely with colleagues across the federation and the cooperative trust, and have shared their expertise and strengthened the way they check pupils' developing skills.
- Teachers and capable teaching assistants meet regularly to discuss pupils' needs. They use the information gathered about pupils' progress to set pupils' work at the level that matches their abilities, and needs and interests, and challenges them. As a result, teaching for all groups of pupils, including those with complex needs, is carefully adjusted to improve their learning.
- Pupils make good use of the guidance and 'clues' displayed on classroom walls to support their work. Staff also ensure that stimulating equipment, such as increasingly up-to-date hand-held computers, is readily available to support pupils' progress. In all classes, including the youngest in Reception, pupils use laptop computers skilfully to extend their mathematical skills.
- Encouraged by determined and very supportive adults, pupils work harder than in the past. Teachers use information and communication technology well to explain the activities that pupils are to undertake.
- Pupils attend and sustain concentration well; consequently, they know what they have to do and lose no time in beginning their work. Pupils in Years 2 to 4 set about converting grams to kilograms quickly and confidently.
- The teachers' secure subject knowledge and good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is seen in their skilful questions to check pupils' understanding. However, pupils are not always encouraged enough to improve their handwriting and spelling, and to secure a quick recall of number facts. This leads to some of them lacking confidence in attempting longer pieces of writing and in solving mathematical problems.
- Pupils' improved progress in reading, particularly, and in writing and mathematics is evident in their well-developed speaking skills, especially the range and quality of their use of technical terms in their answers. Year 1 pupils confidently discussed phonemes and blending letters, and showed their good progress using phonics (sounds that letters make).

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' progress has improved rapidly this academic year. Leaders have acted decisively to manage long-term staff absence. They have also eradicated weaker teaching that contributed to low standards of pupils' attainment.
- Teachers in all classes set work at a level that matches pupils' abilities and needs. They also make it clear to pupils that they should try to become better at improving their learning for themselves. Pupils do try harder and they achieve well.
- School and inspection checks of pupils' skills show more than the expected numbers of pupils across the school work at higher levels than might be expected for their age. This is especially the case in Years 5 and 6 this year, reflecting their rapidly improved and now good achievement.
- In all classes, work in pupils' books this school year and their responses in lessons also indicate above average proportions of pupils making better than expected progress. This is equally the case in reading, writing and mathematics; further evidence of the rapid pace of improvement.
- Pupils' reading is enhanced by frequent opportunities to read books at school and encouragement to read at home. Pupils in all classes, including children in Reception, also quickly extend their reading skills during numerous opportunities to research topics using computers.
- Pupils have become much better at using their good speaking and listening skills to share and explain their

ideas with each other. Their descriptive writing includes good ideas. However, at times, their fluency in fully articulating their ideas when completing extended pieces of writing is reduced by less-well-developed handwriting and spelling skills.

- Pupils are getting better at tackling mathematical problems but their confidence and skill are sometimes limited by hesitancy in recalling basic number facts quickly.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and others who join the school later than the normal time now have their needs addressed effectively at an early stage. As a result, they make good progress in relation to their abilities. The very few pupils with significant complex needs make considerable gains in their personal development because of the exemplary additional adult support they receive.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional adult support for the very small number of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, over time, their achievement is broadly similar to other pupils in the school. Currently, with better teaching, disadvantaged pupils now make faster progress than other pupils nationally.
- The most-able pupils are also making much quicker progress than in the past. This is because they are enthused by teachers' higher levels of challenge, work harder and think more carefully about how to improve.

The early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of the early years provision in the pre-school and Reception class is good. The teacher, pre-school leader and teaching assistants work well together. Since the previous inspection, the pre-school leader and staff have liaised closely and productively with early years colleagues in the partner school. This has led to significant improvement in the development of outdoor learning for children in the pre-school and in Reception.
- Children's skills on entering the early years classes vary significantly across the small year groups. Over time, their skills are typical for their age, but are often lower in aspects of their personal and language development.
- All staff provide high-quality care and implement the same carefully considered procedures to keep children very safe. Staff work supportively with parents. This enables staff to ensure that children rapidly grow in self-confidence and quickly learn how to work and play together. As a result, they behave well and greatly enjoy school.
- Children now learn and develop their skills across a wide range of stimulating indoor and outdoor activities. Indoors, children in the pre-school develop their social skills well by joyfully singing about '*The Gorilla in the Garden*' and taking turns gently holding 'Baby Beat'. Children in Reception become confident working outdoors together, for example making and exploring the impact of a 'volcano' in their 'Ocean World'.
- Teaching is good overall, with staff promoting children's enjoyment of school and strongly encouraging them to learn by finding things out for themselves. Staff extend children's personal and academic skills effectively through a well-balanced range of activities sometimes led by adults, or chosen by the children themselves. At times, teaching and learning of phonics, writing and mathematics are outstanding. This is because children are enthused by the teacher's stimulating questions and then challenged to use their skills to write and solve number problems.
- Staff check the children's developing skills accurately. They share information regularly with parents and talk to the children to explore their ideas about how well they are getting on. Staff ensure that children are provided with relevant and suitably challenging learning in all areas of learning.
- After a good start in the pre-school, all children make a smooth transition into the Reception and Year 1 class. Children of all abilities, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, continue to make good progress and enjoy their learning.
- An above average proportion of children reach a good level of development when they leave Reception. This represents good, but not yet outstanding, achievement in relation to their different starting points. Even so, children are well prepared for future learning in Year 1.

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	111956
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	462499

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lianne Sproull
Headteacher	Mark Clutsom
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 June 2013]
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