



School: St Issey Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School
SEC Officers: Liz Brand, Associate Consultant, School Effectiveness Cornwall.
Date of visit: 16th November 2017
Date of report: 19th November 2017

Introduction

- This monitoring visit took place as part of School Effectiveness Cornwall's (SEC) standard operating procedures for a school which requires improvement.
- The visit was carried out by a SEC Associate Consultant and equated to one officer day.
- This was the second monitoring visit carried out by SEC since last July. The school had a SIAMS inspection in March and was judged to be satisfactory.

Context

- The school was inspected by Ofsted in November 2016 when Personal Development, Behaviour and Safety and Early Years were found to be good and all other areas including Overall Effectiveness required improvement.
- It is a much smaller than average school with a current figure of 33 children on roll. The number of children who are eligible for Pupil Premium support and those who have English as an additional language are significantly below National expectations. The percentage of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is below the National average. All current Pupil Premium children also have significant Special Educational Needs.
- 21 children are enrolled in the new nursery that opened in September this year.
- The school has been through a challenging time with the appointment of a new Interim Head initially until summer 2017, supported by Venture Multi-Academy Trust.
- The Headteacher is now working for two days a week at St Issey and the remaining three at Trevithick as Assistant Head. The CEO of Venture MAT, based at Trevithick, spends one day a week at St Issey and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for these two leaders. There is a legal agreement in place for the Venture MAT to continue to support the school for three years.
- A new Key Stage 2 teacher has been recruited. He is a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and being supported and mentored by the Headteacher.
- Parents are very supportive of the changes over the past year.

Focus for the visit

- Leadership and management.
- Quality of learning and assessment.
- Progress since the last monitoring visit.

Evidence Base

- Lesson observations in English and Maths in both Key Stage Classes.
- Book scrutiny within lessons.
- Pupil conferencing within lessons.
- Discussions with the Headteacher and CEO.



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- Scrutiny and discussion of documents, in-school assessment outcomes and impact of actions taken to improve the quality of learning and outcomes across the school.
- Joint meeting with the Headteacher and Vice Chair of Governors.

Feedback was given to the Headteacher and CEO at the end of the visit.

Main Findings

- The school continues the trajectory of rapid improvement. Progress is good or better for almost all pupils.
- The Headteacher and her team work hard to secure continuing improvement. Provision across the school is at least good with some outstanding elements. The Headteacher is aware of the current areas of strength within the school and areas for development and the impact of strong leadership is evident.
- The School Development and Ofsted Action Plans are appropriate and fit for purpose - progress in all areas has been at least good to date.
- The Venture Multi-Academy Trust continues to support the school well with opportunities for shared training, staff visits and the moderation of writing. This is particularly effective to support NQT work.
- Aably led by the Headteacher, teachers plan exceptionally thoroughly for mixed age and ability classes in English and Maths and across the wider curriculum. This ensures full coverage for all pupils, no repeated topics or texts and a broadly based range of work to excite and enthuse. Cross curricular links are made where possible.
- Adults provide challenge and precise support for all pupils. They know the children well and are able to rapidly assess progress within lessons and move learning forward. This was highly evident in the Key Stage 1 Maths lesson observed with some pupils making rapid progress while learning about multiplication and division using arrays. Appropriate pitch and pace are a feature of all lessons and lessons are well resourced.
- Assessment is rigorous, quality assured by the Headteacher and robust systems are in place with the teaching staff collaborating positively to ensure validity of all assessment. Progress for almost all pupils is at least good. For SEN pupils or any whose progress is slower, extra support is in place. This is also true of pupils who, despite accelerated progress in the last academic year, still have some catching up to do. Teachers are well aware of individual pupils' needs and plan accordingly.
- Because of the very small cohorts, it is difficult to compare outcomes to National data sets but they are much improved from the previous year.
- Learning environments are rich and colourful and displays around the school eye catching and informative. There is, however, a lack of pupil writing on display.
- Pupils are articulate about their work and progress and clearly know what they need to do to improve.

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- The marking policy is used consistently and pupils have well supported time to edit and improve their work. The focus on high quality writing is strong and there are some very able writers using high order vocabulary to good effect.
- In September the school opened a nursery and this has been widely used by the community and led to some older pupils entering the school.
- Last year's absence figure was 3.7% which is an improving picture. The children love coming to school and are proud of it!

Standards and Achievement (unvalidated results)

The vast majority of pupils are currently working at or above age related expectations. This is clearly evident from in-school data, books and discussions with pupils.

EYFS

2016 (Cohort of 7)	School %	Cornwall %	National %
Achieving expected level (ELG)	86	67	69
2017 (Cohort of 3)	School %	Cornwall %	National %
Achieving expected level (ELG)	67	69	71

Phonics Screening	Year 1	Year 2	National (2016)
2016	83 (6 pupils)	0 (1 pupil)	81
2017	100 (2 pupils)	100 (1 pupil)	81

Key Stage 1	Reading %	Writing	Maths
2016 (6 pupils)	67	50	17
National	74	65	73
2017 (6 pupils)	67	67	67
National	76	68	75

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Key Stage 2

2016 (9 pupils)	Expected standard % school	Expected standard % national	Average scaled score school
Reading	67	66	95.6
Writing (TA)	67	74	
Maths	100	70	99.0
GPS			97.7
Combined score	School 22 National 53		

2017 (3 pupils)	Expected standard % school	Expected standard % national	Average scaled score school
Reading	67	71	105.3
Writing (TA)	67	76	
Maths	100	75	107.7
GPS	100	77	107.0
Combined score	School 66% National 61%		

The Quality of Learning

Nursery Provision

- The Nursery manager was appointed at the end of the summer term 2017 and the provision set up over the summer. Complete refurbishing of the room and purchase of resources has resulted in a purposeful learning environment, well set up for the children to access resources for the continuous provision programme.
- It currently has 21 children on roll but rarely are there more than 12 in attendance at each session to ensure being in ration for the two year olds.
- Parents have been highly supportive and forward planning for numbers on roll is positive for both the Nursery and the main school with siblings coming in.
- Both the indoor and outdoor areas are shared with Key Stage 1 and this flexibility of working provides well for the range of age groups and individual needs of the children.
- Assessment is a strength. Baselines are set up on entry and 'Tapestry' is used to assess and review children's individual needs with daily observations relayed to parents and next steps identified. There is particular attention paid to ensuring the varied use of all areas of learning and the super hero rewards in place ensure independent learning from colour coded areas (coloured sticks in the jar and a reward when all six are in place). Each child has an individual record of information on progress and this will form a basis for transfer into Reception.
- The ethos is calm and purposeful and staff work well as a team. Children were engaged and enthusiastic, well supported by adults but also able to be independent in their choices.



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Key Stage 1 (16 pupils in Reception, Year 1, 2 and 3)

- Attitudes to learning, pupil engagement and behaviour continue to be good.
- All adults are able to support children with precise verbal feedback and encourage them to move further in their learning. Challenge is inherent in all activities.
- Reception children are able to interact flexibly between the learning areas and the nursery and in all year groups they are taught in ability groupings, enabling the more able to work with older children where appropriate and the less able with younger pupils. The outdoor area is well provisioned and shared.
- Pupils are able to evidence a range of strategies to solve Maths problems independently.
- Books show clear progress within lessons and across sequences of lessons.
- Carefully planned, well-resourced and differentiated lessons enable all children to access learning at a level which challenges them. Expectations of the quality of written work are high.
- Marking is consistently in line with the school policy and pupils know how to improve.
- Higher order vocabulary and technical terms are in use by both adults and children for example one pupil was asked to make a strategy poster to explain how to divide using arrays and was able to understand and make a start on this independently.

To Improve:

- Ensure children have sufficient time to work independently with adults standing back.
- Raise expectation in spelling and ensure key words are available for learners.
- Ensure a balance of pupil work, especially writing within classroom displays.

Key Stage 2 (17 pupils in Year 4, 5, 6)

- The NQT in this class is well supported by the Headteacher as his mentor.
- Lessons are well planned to support and challenge all ages and abilities. Books show clear progress within lessons and over time.
- Adults know the pupils well and are able to move their learning forward by asking probing questions.
- Handwriting and presentation have improved since the last monitoring visit with raised expectation.
- Pupils are supported well by adults but also encouraged to be independent and work together to help one another.
- Pupils are on task, able to articulate what they are learning and are enthusiastic and motivated to improve.
- Displays within the learning environment are rich and resourceful to assist learning. The balance of pupil work and information could be improved.
- Good pace, pupils' commitment to their work and rapid transitions ensure progress for all.



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- Marking adheres to the policy and considerable time and effort on the part of the teacher ensures that pupils' work is edited and improved.
- The quality of writing is good and pupils are encouraged to focus on that high quality outcome rather than on productivity.
- High order vocabulary and technical language are used by both adults and children in English but see below.

To Improve:

- Ensure all children understand the more complicated words in use – for example 'cacophony' in an English lesson.
- Technical language is not well applied in Maths – this needs attention to detail from adults and children and should be included in the school's new calculation policy.
- Spelling still requires a strong focus for many pupils and this is a work in progress. Rapid progress has been evident in many areas of learning but this is an exception. Pupil input to displays such as 'the writing on the wall' should be spelled correctly.
- Ensure a balance of pupil work, especially celebrating writing within classroom displays. It is useful for both pupils and teachers to annotate this.

Behaviour and Attitudes to Learning

- Behaviour for learning is good and conduct around the school is excellent. Pupils are polite and helpful to one another and to adults. Relationships are good.
- Pupils are fully engaged and are enthusiastic about their work and progress.
- Pupils of all ages are able to focus well and listen to adults.

Leadership and Management

- The Headteacher now works two days a week in St Issey. She is able to evidence rapid improvement over her past year of leadership and has a well-developed and highly accurate view of the quality of provision currently in place and any areas to develop further.
- She has been instrumental in appointing new staff who have joined the team ethos and share the vision of the future of the school on its journey towards outstanding.
- Documentation is clear, systems are robust and information communicated very well with all stakeholders. Performance management for teachers has been carried out and the Headteacher is about to embark on this for support staff.
- Assessment evidence is quality assured and progress rigorously tracked and documented thoroughly on a half termly basis. The forensic analysis of this tracking for individuals underpins the planning and delivery of lessons that are challenging for all groups.



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- Planning is a strength of the school. The Headteacher works with all staff on long term plans and curriculum mapping and supports with medium and short term planning where necessary, particularly over this term for the NQT. She has also supported other schools with mixed age classes.
- The Headteacher has worked hard to establish good relationships with families and the community. Feedback from a recent parent survey is all extremely positive and parents feel well supported if they have a problem and know the school will seek to help and answer questions and concerns promptly. The transparency of approach is valued by all stakeholders.
- School leaders have introduced a range of work linked with community endeavours with a calendar of events in place. Open afternoons, clubs run by community volunteers and a variety of community functions such as a recent bonfire occasion and 'light up your bike' event have brought the community together. The nursery involvement with all these is strengthening their links rapidly.
- The Headteacher has introduced a system of 'wrap-around care' so that pupils can be looked after on site from 8am to 6pm which is very popular with working families.
- The school works closely with Trevithick using and adapting plans, documents and strategies, sharing training, moderation and NQT support and giving opportunities to St Issey pupils to work with larger groups and attend Trevithick Academy visits and residential for example Key Stage 2 trips to London and Cardiff last year. Parents are kept well informed of this link and value it and the clear benefits for their children. Some SEN Coordinators (SENCo) and administrative support is also made available.
- The Governors have undertaken a skills audit which is currently being evaluated but there is a wide range of skills within the board. There is one vacancy but leaders are waiting for the outcome of audit in order to ensure success.
- Governor monitoring is under way and Governors are beginning to use flash visits to monitor areas on the improvement action plan. Governor reports are succinct and to the point, shared with the full board and provide both challenge and support. Plans are in place to ensure the capacity of continuing good governance for the future.
- Governor roles and responsibilities are in place and two committees, one for finance and resources and one for curriculum and standards meet at least termly with the full board meeting five times in each academic year.
- Progress of pupils is reported termly in the Headteachers report for Governors and also half termly to parents.
- A new website is in the process of development for the school but in the meantime the current website is complaint for Ofsted requirements.



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To improve:

- Ensure that a full calendar of monitoring is put in place in advance for this year so that Governor Visits address all areas of the action plan.
- Ensure that Governors are aware of the expectations of HMI visits and inspection.
- Ensure that the new Clerk is taking detailed minutes that clearly indicate challenge and response and any areas to be followed up.

Progress against Ofsted Action Points

Previous action points are identified with blue italics

- *Improve pupils' progress so that it is at least good, particularly in reading and mathematics, by:*
 - *making sure that pupils experience a well-planned programme of study that fully meets the requirements for the national curriculum*
- **Outstanding progress**
- This is now a strength of the school with very thorough planning for Maths and English and a complete curriculum map for all other areas.
 - *developing pupils' better understanding of the texts they read*
- **Progress continues to be good.**
- The strong focus on reading for comprehension for all age groups continues and outcomes show a good improvement.
 - *using the information about gaps in pupils' learning effectively to plan the next steps in their Reading, Writing and Mathematics*
- **Outstanding progress has been made**
- All pupils have next steps targets and lessons are planned highly effectively to support individuals in making rapid progress. Where pupils need support it is put in place and impact carefully measured.
 - *using assessment information to ensure that work is not too easy or repeated*
- **Outstanding progress has been made.**
- Assessment is now robust, fully embedded and quality assured. Planning ensures no repeats and challenge is inherent in all tasks
- *Improve teachers' knowledge of the requirements of the new National Curriculum and the expected standards so that they can ensure that pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects and are well prepared for the next step in their education.*
- **Good progress has been made.**
- With new teachers in place and thorough planning this has been achieved.
- *Improve leadership and management by:*
 - *monitoring more accurately the progress that pupils make*
- This is fully embedded and carefully tracked and analysed half termly.



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- *using the findings from monitoring and evaluation to plan improvements to the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1*
- Teaching is now good or better and almost all pupils in the school making good or better progress. Where this is not in evidence, for example for some SEND pupils, further support is being provided.
- *strengthening the membership of the Interim Governing Board to ensure that they have the range of skills required to support and challenge leaders*
- This is now fully in place and in a stable situation with plans for continuity and sustainability.
- *ensuring that the Interim Governing Board protects the school's fragility and maintains the continued rapid improvement*
- **Good progress has been made overall**
- A permanent board of highly committed Governors is in place with one vacancy. The board is chaired by the Director for Schools, the Diocese of Truro. The school is no longer in a fragile position and with the opening of the Nursery numbers are continuing to rise. There is a legal agreement in place for the Venture MAT to continue to support the school for three years.

Date of next visit:
Spring 2018

Focus for the next visit:

- Leadership and management
- Quality of learning
- Progress since the last visit

CC

Jane Black	Service Director, Education and Early Years
Tim Osborne	Head of School Effectiveness
Barbara Dyer	Senior School Effectiveness Officer (Primary)
Melanie Wells	Headteacher
Jo Osborne	Chair of Governors
Richard Light	HMI
Sean Powers	CEO Venture MAT
File	