
CHALLENGE PARTNERS: Quality Assurance Review Written Report

Name of School:	Mousehole Community Primary School
School Address:	Foxes Lane, Mousehole, Penzance, TR19 6QQ
Hub School:	Mounts Bay

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Unique Reference Number:	111796
Local Authority:	Cornwall
Type of School:	Primary
School Category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Number on roll:	101
Head teacher/Principal:	Chris Roynon

Date of last Ofsted inspection:	3-4 July 2013
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good

Date of Quality Assurance	15-17 June 2015
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Review:	
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QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – SUMMARY OF ESTIMATES

School Improvement Strategies: GOOD

Achievement is: GOOD

Quality of Teaching: GOOD

Area of Excellent Practice:

DEVELOPING PUPIL CONFIDENCE CONFIRMED

Overall Review Evaluation

The Quality Assurance Review found indicators that Mousehole Community Primary School appears to be at the top of the Good grade as judged by Ofsted in the school's previous Ofsted report 3-4 July 2013 and is working towards Outstanding.

Information about the school

Mousehole Community Primary School is a smaller than average size primary school, with one class in Reception, Year 1 and 2, and mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. There are very small cohorts of pupils in each year group, with considerable differences in the composition of each year group. The proportion of boys and girls varies from year to year, as does the proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is just below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school is a member of the Penwith Education Trust; a group of local schools, which are independent of one another, yet work collaboratively for the benefit of their pupils and staff. The school holds the Artsmark Award, and meets the government's floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school enjoys a close working relationship with an on-site pre-school, which is operated by a charity.

School Improvement Strategies

What went well;-

- The school has undergone turbulent change in recent years but is now settled and has a strong leader at the helm. He has sensibly phased in the introduction of the new curriculum and changes to assessment. Even so, the seismic shift in expectation and practice has been daunting. It is a tribute to the headteacher's leadership style that colleagues have willingly signed up and a laudable start has been made on the priorities in the School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- The SIP is a one-year plan written by the headteacher and the school's School Improvement Consultant. Priorities are grouped under three headings: Teaching and Learning, Monitoring and Assessment. Action plans for mathematics and English supplement the main plan. The SIP was shared with staff and Governors in the autumn term. Whilst this year governors did not have initial input into the plan, there is a Governing Body working party to monitor the progress of the priorities. The plan is succinct and in an effective format but nevertheless, staff absence and the extent of some priorities has

meant that some aspects will need to be carried forward to the next academic year.

- Many of the actions set out in the plan are now embedded in practice, were much in evidence in lessons and have begun to have an impact on standards. For example, pupils are no longer grouped by ability, are more independent and confidently take responsibility for the level of challenge they think will move their learning on; pupils respond enthusiastically when they understand the purpose of an activity and know their “authentic audience.” This is improving the quality of outcomes particularly in writing; the creative approach to delivering holistic topics produces imaginative outcomes and is much enjoyed by pupils. The pupils enthusiastically and confidently take up the challenges on offer. Additionally, there is a great sense of team spirit amongst the staff, who have supported each other in building confidence to deliver the new curriculum in an inventive “immersive” style.
- The innovative changes to curriculum delivery have meant that governors have revised how they monitor the impact of the school’s work on pupil progress. With the headteacher they have devised an original – and enviable - model with clear foci that will effectively pinpoint successes and highlight areas for development.

Even better if;-

...assessment data was used to identify key areas for development and these formed the core of the plan

...priorities remained challenging but more achievable or alternatively, the plan was set over a longer period of time (a two year cycle with a mid term review, say)

...governors and other stakeholders had an early opportunity to influence the SIP

...experienced staff had more opportunities to develop their lesson observation skills and take more responsibility for driving school improvement.

Pupil Achievement

- Pupils at Mousehole School enter the school with below average levels. Attainment is still low at the end of Foundation Stage with only 27% reaching a good level of development in 2014, well below national average and down from 47% in 2013. Observations of excellent Early Years Practice and learning

profiles led the Review Team to agree with recent local moderation; that outcomes could and will be higher in 2015 and beyond, or at least in line with national averages. In 2014 the Year 1 Phonics screening exceeded the national average.

- By the end of Key Stage 1, outcomes in all areas are above average with 100% attaining Level 2+ in all areas and critically, 100% Level 2B+ in reading and writing, which is above national average levels. Level 3 attainment was above national average in 2014 but well below in writing.
- Reading is a major strength of the school, with a clear impact from the whole school focus in 2012-13. The 2014 results took the school's value added centile ranking from the 61st in 2013 to the 11th. 62% of pupils made more than expected progress in reading which is outstanding. Pupils progressed to Level 5 from Levels 2A and 2B. More than expected progress is also made in writing with 54% exceeding expected levels. Level 5 attainment is strong in reading and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar with 77% attaining Level 5.
- The achievement of pupil premium 'Ever 6' pupils is improving. Average point scores exceed national averages in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Mathematics, highlighted in the 2013 Ofsted report as an area for improvement, remains the challenge. Relative to the exceptional 'more than expected' progress in Literacy, only 14% (2 children) exceeded expectations in mathematics; only 23% attained Level 5. The school's value-added centile ranking, whilst an improvement on the 98th centile in 2013, remains relatively low at 67th.
- In-school target setting is ambitious with targets set for both meeting and exceeding end of year levels. If these are met, then progress will be outstanding and the relative weaknesses in mathematics will be addressed.
- It must be remembered that owing to the small cohort sizes, and their differing gender balances and other groups of pupils, this can have a impact on interpreting the school's data. One or two pupils can have a significant effect on what attainment and progress can look like. It is therefore important that this is taken into consideration.

Quality of Teaching

As soon as you walk into the entrance at Mousehole Primary you are immediately struck by its ethos and vision; of creating a community that puts children's learning journey at its core. Working from an evolving and well-researched vision for an immersive and question-based curriculum, teachers give thought to creating long term topics that engage pupils and which are related to authentic learning experiences and real outcomes. For example, the publication of the school's own version of The Mousehole Cat in Years 3 and 4 fully encompasses this strategy. The whole school is committed to this approach and to building on the strengths of the parent community, local history and rich local learning opportunities.

What went well;-

- Excellent learning behaviours lead to calm, purposeful classrooms, enabling pupils to investigate explore and share their ideas.
- Strong relationships between adults and pupils as well as among the pupils themselves mean that focus on learning remains high.
- Clearly embedded routines develop peer support and review, for example the use of "lolly lotto" to select who answers questions, talk partners/trios and "What do you know before you go," as a method of checking understanding before pupils start their work.
- Teachers create a warm, calm, supportive learning environment.
- The needs of all pupils are met in the classroom through subtle differentiation, such as types of writing 'scaffold' and discreet adult intervention.
- Independent work is offered at three entry points, for example as "Wham, Bam, Pow" levels of challenge, with steers from the teacher based on their detailed knowledge of the pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent learning support.
- Careful thought is given to authentic purposes and audiences, for example, sizing illustrations for the school's Mousehole Cat book as part of a mathematics lesson exploring area as a topic.
- As a small community school, great use is made of whole school weeks and events, like the "Can we make a meal out of Mousehole?" science week.
- Good use is made of experts' knowledge, for example, Pie Corbett's 'Talk for Writing' as a method for structuring lessons.

- Excellent Early Years practice ensures children move into Year 1 with excellent characteristics for learning as well as good language skills.
- The school makes good use of outdoor learning opportunities, for example, when the Reception class made fantastic use of the school field to create their own mini-beast homes, demonstrating great problem-solving skills as well as excellent relationships and respect for each other.

Even better if;-

...the creative curriculum framework was further developed by sharing best practice in starting points, inspiring delivery, marking and structuring lessons and by including a rigorous underpinning that will raise expectations for vital skills and knowledge. For example, through more frequent recall of times tables in mathematics, and improving the quality of 'joined-up' handwriting.

...teachers followed their instincts more by engaging the pupils creatively at the start of lessons rather than devoting time to extended explanations and instructions that risk losing pace.

... a greater focus was given to handwriting and presentation in books across all age ranges so that output from pupils more accurately reflected the high quality teacher-input.

...as part of the drive to raise attainment, the same energy and creativity was applied to making mathematics a central focus.

Quality of Area of Excellent Practice

Developing pupil confidence is at the heart of the school's vision and is confirmed as an area of excellent practice. Whatever their role, adults take responsibility for "growing" the courage and confidence of pupils in all aspects of their lives.

Pupils express this confidence in many ways. Through performances, where they can share their learning is a typical example. This was evidenced in a Stone Age living museum where they lit fires, cooked over the coals and gave their audience a dramatic commentary on life in those times. They have great physical confidence too, and as well as this being observed in and around the school, pupils compete widely – and successfully - in sporting events. They are encouraged to take

reasonable risks and as a consequence, initially reluctant pupils pushed themselves to compete in the gala and to go tunneling. Their subsequent pride in achievement fed their self-esteem and growing confidence.

Wherever it can, the curriculum is cradled in the wider community. As a consequence, pupils are self-assured and engage confidently with adults, asking questions and initiating conversations. Pupils and staff described the daily, levelled challenges that contribute to a growing prowess in mathematics. Their increased confidence is such that pupils taught parents new mathematical methodology at a recent Parent Consultation evening.

The School Council and School Parliament give pupils the opportunity to contribute to decisions and debate important issues. Governors reported how confident the pupils were when they discussed their learning at the termly focus meeting, often taking the conversation off in unexpected but pertinent directions. Governors also reported that the feedback from the local secondary school was that Mousehole children settle in quickly and display a distinctive self-confidence.

Partnerships

Mousehole Primary is involved in a number of positive partnerships. The first is close to home and is the link with the pre-school that uses a classroom and shares outdoor activity areas with the school. The main benefit to the school is that the majority of children move seamlessly into Reception.

The headteacher is a prominent member of the Penwith Heads Group, comprising a number of headteachers who meet termly and provide links to services that can be offered, for example training on Assessment without Levels. Mousehole has hosted safeguarding training, exemplifying the type of information-sharing and training opportunities they have developed.

The school is working with other schools in the Penwith Education Trust and beyond, providing a range of educational activities for the mutual benefit of its members.

A recent example is the PE Premium scheme, where a proportion of the government's Primary Sport Funding from each school has been used to employ a PE specialist. His role has been to establish links with local sports clubs for pupils to exploit. Support for gifted and talented sportsmen and women has been arranged

in the areas of sport psychology and nutrition. Dance training has been arranged, as has a school surfing competition, sessions in parkour at a local gymnastics club as well as football tournaments for boys and girls. Teaching staff have received training for the moderation on the judgments of teaching in three of the schools and this is now being rolled-out across all schools in the Trust. The school is enrolled in the Children's University, a successful scheme where pupils can log their involvement in extra-curricular activities, leading to a "graduation ceremony" to celebrate their achievements. School meals provision has been re-negotiated and the Trust is also looking at projects to reduce energy bills. Mousehole has also hosted sessions for gifted and talented students from within the Trust schools.

The school is a member of Applied Minds, linked to the Challenge Partners hub school at Mounts Bay. In addition to providing training for staff, this partnership has also introduced contacts with some highly-respected providers. The school, through this initiative, is also involved in setting up a local SCITT programme.

Locally, the school enjoys a positive relationship with the RNLI and Harbourmaster. The school developed a science project entitled Food From The Valley, where a local chef helped pupils create a meal using locally sourced produce. A sense of strong involvement in the local community pervades the school, ranging from taking part in the annual, colourful Mazey Day celebrations to inviting local artists and authors to come in to work with pupils.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.

What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

In a small school, such as Mousehole, where there is no large team of senior leaders, would it be possible to get other experienced teachers trained as Reviewers?