

# Pondhu Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111984
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	357020
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ronald Hall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Leaity
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deborah Tregellas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Penwinnick Road St Austell PL25 5DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01726 74550
<b>Fax number</b>	01726 74550
<b>Email address</b>	head@pondhu.cornwall.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They spent the majority of their time observing learning in the eight classes, visited 18 lessons and observed nine teachers. Inspectors also held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils, and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including assessment and tracking data, samples of the monitoring of teaching and learning, school planning and the school development plan. Inspectors scrutinised documents regarding safeguarding. Questionnaires from 50 parents, 20 staff and 103 pupils were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which the new leadership and management team is driving improvement and has capacity to improve
- the extent to which all pupils make progress and what the school is doing to close the gap between boys and girls and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the extent to which teaching and the curriculum meet pupils' needs and promote their academic and personal development
- how far the school's self-evaluation and judgements are accurate
- the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

## Information about the school

The school is similar in size to most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average; these range from those with behavioural issues to those with specific learning difficulties. There is a new leadership and management team in place. The headteacher took up her appointment very recently at the beginning of the autumn term 2010 and the deputy headteacher was appointed at the beginning of the spring term.

The school holds the Dyslexia Friendly School Award. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in separate Nursery and Reception classes. There is a privately-run Breakfast and Afternoon Club on the premises, which was not a focus for this inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Pondhu Primary is a satisfactory, happy and improving school. Pupils enjoy going to school. One commented, 'I enjoy school because it's fun.' Parents are very happy with the school. However, there are a small group of families whose children are persistently absent and these are adversely affecting the school's overall attendance figures. As the new headteacher has only been in place a short time, the capacity to improve is currently satisfactory. The new school action plan and self-evaluation are very accurate. The headteacher, supported by her new senior leadership team and effective governing body, has recognised weaknesses in the school. A robust plan for improvement in conjunction with the local authority has been created. While the impact of the improvement plans have yet to be fully seen, teaching and learning have improved and staff have very readily accepted the headteacher's vision for the school.

The broad and well-balanced curriculum is well organised and offers the pupils a range of increasingly interesting and relevant learning opportunities. It is supported by a good range of extra-curricular activities and a wide range of sporting events, which contribute to the pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles. Pupils are polite and well mannered and understand extremely well how to keep themselves safe. However, pupils lack a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The school is highly supportive of both staff and pupils which make it a warm and welcoming school.

While attainment overall is average, lesson observations indicate some above-average attainment in most classes. Progress is satisfactory overall but is accelerating, particularly in Key Stage 1 and in Year 6. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a satisfactory start to the children's education. However, the results of assessment and monitoring activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not fully utilised to bring about enough of an increase in the rate of children's progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. Progress in Key Stage 2 slows somewhat and is satisfactory, but with some acceleration in Year 6. Pupils generally leave in Year 6 with average levels of attainment. A downward trend seen over the past few years has now been reversed due to more effective monitoring of teaching and the good work carried out by the leadership team last term.

The headteacher's focus has rightly been on improving the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils so as to raise standards. However, staff are not consistently using assessment and monitoring information to correctly identify their pupils' needs and ability

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levels. Thus, the opportunity to inform planning effectively is missed. However, the headteacher has recognised this issue and is addressing it.

Pondhu Primary School has good links with other local schools and organisations, providing a range of learning opportunities. There are good links with a wide range of external agencies to ensure the needs of all pupils are well met. Community cohesion at both school and local level are excellent.

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

- Develop consistently good progress throughout the whole school by ensuring that all teachers correctly understand and use assessment data to inform planning to match the needs of individual pupils.
- Ensure assessment data are used effectively in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop better planning to meet children's needs.
- Improve attendance by effectively targeting those families whose children are persistent absentees.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

While overall progress is satisfactory, in lessons observed pupils generally made good progress. Pupils enter Year 1 with average standards. Of the core subjects, science is stronger than English and mathematics and work in lessons illustrated the pupils' growing confidence. For example, in a good science lesson pupils were fully engaged with work on electrical circuits. This growing confidence was also demonstrated in some English and mathematics lessons. Good use of collaborative work was seen to both enhance learning and encourage pupils of different abilities to strive to achieve their best. Pupils are enthusiastic and say they fully enjoy learning. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. The school is successfully narrowing the gaps between the attainment of boys and girls, autumn born children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils play a positive role in the life of the school and community as members of an active school council, which operates its own budget and works to raise money for numerous causes. They are increasingly involved in the development of the school and enjoy their responsibilities.

Pupils demonstrate good social skills and are helpful to each other and to adults. Their development of basic skills and team-working skills prepares them soundly for later life and learning. Pupils demonstrate good computer skills. Pupils' social and moral understanding is good and the effect of this can be seen in all they do and the way they behave. However, their spiritual development and their understanding of other cultures and the diversity within this country, although satisfactory, are not so well developed. The school successfully provides healthy lunches and many opportunities for physical exercise. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of staying safe and are confident in raising any concerns. They expressed a very positive view of the school's ability to keep them safe and this is reinforced by the very positive views of the parents.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

In lessons observed teaching was often good but improvements in teaching are not yet fully embedded and have not had sufficient impact to bring about consistently good progress. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills enable them to use different approaches to engage pupils in lessons. A range of resources and equipment are used to help make lessons increasingly fun and interesting. Interactive whiteboards and computers are used well and provide pupils with positive starts to their lessons. Where teaching is good, in over two thirds of lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1 and Year 6, the level of challenge and pace enthuses and motivates the pupils and good use is made of partner and group work to help pupils share ideas. Teachers' use of targets and assessment data is inconsistent and so hinders the ability to very accurately monitor pupils' progress. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking to ensure pupils know their next steps in learning.

The curriculum supports learning effectively and provides a broad and well-balanced foundation for the pupils' learning. There is an excellent use of visits and visitors to enhance learning and resources are carefully selected to support and develop pupils'

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understanding of the wider world and basic skills. There is an excellent range of sporting and other extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' learning opportunities. Pupils commented on the recent changes to the curriculum and how they motivate them to learn.

The school uses its good links with local secondary schools to ensure that transition arrangements are good. Plans for when children start school are good and this feature is supported through a weekly parent and toddler group. The school has a highly caring ethos. All pupils spoken to state they trusted the staff, could ask them for guidance and felt there was always someone there to support them when needed.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The dynamic headteacher has a clear vision for improvement, which has already been successfully shared with all of the staff. Staff questionnaires are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and the new school leader. The following comment sums up their views: 'Although our new headteacher has only been with us for a week, we can already feel confident that she will lead the school well.' The headteacher, alongside her senior leadership team and in conjunction with the local authority, has created a robust action plan for improvement, which shows a clear knowledge of the right areas for development. The school is well supported by the governors, who robustly and rigorously monitor the school and hold all staff to account. The school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory but fast developing.

The school promotes equal opportunities, challenges discrimination and is inclusive. School principles of a caring, learning community are modelled and taught by all staff, which has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and personal development. The pupils' responsible attitudes and behaviour in and around school reinforce the school's good ethos. The school promotes local and some wider community cohesion well, as local links are strong. The school is developing national links and is looking to develop international links to provide pupils with a greater understanding of other cultures. Although the engagement with parents is good, the school does not include parents sufficiently in decision making and pupils' learning.

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Safeguarding arrangements are good and both staff and pupils state that they feel safe and secure in school. There are good safety and security systems in place for online learning and pupils fully understand the need for these measures.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress achieving most of what is expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. Sessions observed during the inspection were delivered well but the improved teaching has yet to fully impact on outcomes for children. In a good lesson related to letter formation and the use of lines, children were excitedly drawing the letters and lines using their fingers on the whiteboard. One child exclaimed, 'If my lion walks like this it makes a straight line.' Another child playing with a toy elephant joined in, 'If my elephant jumps over the other animals it makes a curved line.'

Children acquire a range of skills for their future well-being. This is developed through the consistent use of routines, giving children responsibility for small tasks and allowing them to initiate their own activities, so that they are confident in making choices. They routinely tidy up after using resources and carry out basic hygiene routines. Children demonstrate how to stay safe and healthy through their outstanding behaviour. Relationships between peers, children and adults are very good. Positive adult role models reinforce this ethos further.

Assessment is not used consistently enough by staff to inform future planning and to track children's progress. Staff monitor children's progress and record it in their profiles. Group



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and individual observations are utilised to plan activities but opportunities are sometimes missed to improve the pace of progress. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage gives direction to the staff but has not focused attention strongly enough on achievement. Pastoral transition arrangements, both into and out of the provision, are excellent and these are closely linked to the very strong relationships with parents and carers. All policies and safeguarding procedures are in place and meet requirements.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the care provided by the school and feel staff are very approachable. Parents believe the school provides a good, holistic education where everyone is seen as an individual. They feel that their children are happy in school. One parent commented, 'Overall I am very happy with the education my child is receiving. We especially enjoy the after-school clubs that are on offer.' Another stated, 'This is a small, friendly and relaxed school and my children all love coming every day which is very important.'

A small number of parents identified concerns about the effectiveness of the school's communication with parents. Inspectors found that a range of strategies are in place to communicate with parents, including weekly newsletters, the school's website and class communication letters. Other parents welcomed the appointment of the new headteacher and looked forward to her leadership.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pondhu Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 247 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	60	20	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	54	23	46	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	36	29	58	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	42	27	54	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	52	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	42	26	52	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	36	30	60	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	20	40	25	50	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	46	21	42	5	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	38	23	46	4	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	36	31	62	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	36	23	46	2	4	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	58	20	40	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 September 2010

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Pondhu Primary School, St Austell, PL25 5DS**

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome in your school. Your pleasant, positive attitude and friendliness contributed towards a very enjoyable inspection. We were impressed by your confidence and the pride you take in your school. You have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe. You also know how to stay healthy and enjoy exercise. You contribute to your local school community well and take pleasure in the positive reputation of your school. Many of you highlighted how safe and happy you feel in school because the teachers and staff take great care of you all.

We think you attend a satisfactory and improving school. You were very positive in your questionnaires. Your behaviour around school and during lessons was good.

The good relationships you have built up with the teachers and other staff encourage you to try hard and always do your best in lessons. The links you have with other organisations locally help to broaden your understanding. The headteacher, governors and staff are working hard to make your school more successful.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked school leaders to work on the following things:

- ensure the teachers in the school and in the Nursery and Reception classes make better use of information from assessments to inform their planning to help you to make more rapid progress
- improve rates of attendance by working with families where the children have a lot of time off school to help them to improve their attendance.

I wish you all the best in the future and hope you will all continue to help make your school an even better place for you to learn.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall

Lead Inspector

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