

St Wenn School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111901
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	356998
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Ronald Hall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Squires
Headteacher	Lesley George
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. During the inspection six lessons were visited, and three teachers were observed. Meetings were held with the senior leadership team, middle managers, pupils and members of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including assessment and tracking data, samples of the monitoring records and attendance data. The inspector also scrutinised documents regarding safeguarding. Questionnaires returned from 33 parents and carers, 12 staff and 21 pupils were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of the school's actions to raise attainment and progress, especially of higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2, and to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- The progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the different areas of learning from their assessed starting points, and how this relates to the school's assessment of progress in Key Stage 1.
- The suitability of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and its delivery to the needs of the children.
- What the school is doing to ensure pupils have an understanding of the diverse multicultural society in which they live in both national and international terms.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller than average primary school where the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are organised into two main classes. The first contains the Early Years Foundation Stage children alongside Years 1 and 2 pupils. The second class contains the Key Stage 2 pupils. Small groups are then organised to cater for the wide ranging needs in each class. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although the number with statements of special needs is higher. Their needs vary from moderate learning difficulties to those with behavioural and/or physical disabilities. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and steadily improving school which is well respected within its local community. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for. They say they feel very safe due to the excellent care provided by staff and enjoy school, which is confirmed by their parents and carers. Parents and carers are particularly supportive of the school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, which is clearly demonstrated in their daily lives. Attendance is high and the school works very well in partnership with all its families. Staff, governing body, pupils, parents and carers are proud of their school. The school is a very harmonious community and it is very successful at promoting community cohesion at the local level. However, links forged with differing communities within this country and abroad are underdeveloped and have yet to have an impact on the pupils' understanding of diverse societies.

Pupils' attainment is above average and their progress is good across the school and accelerating. Progress is good and steadily improving in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to its good leadership. This good start continues in Key Stage 1 and accelerates further in Key Stage 2. In all areas of the school, there is a very specific and successful focus on individual needs. Pupils know their targets and articulate them well. Teachers provide good verbal academic support but written feedback in marking is inconsistent and does not provide pupils with sufficient information to improve their work. Pupils' books demonstrate clear improvement in both English and mathematics. Pupils have regular access to laptop computers and other facilities such as cameras and, as a result, their skills have grown and are used effectively across the whole curriculum to both enhance and enrich their work. Pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development create a very positive and caring ethos in the school. All teachers and teaching assistants focus on pupils' developing strengths as independent learners. The curriculum is well balanced and increasingly imaginative and creative. This is further enhanced by the partnerships the school has forged to help in providing a varied enrichment and enhancement opportunities

The school has good tracking and assessment systems to plan for individual learning. Although middle management is difficult in such a small school with few staff, teachers consistently analyse and use data to raise attainment, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Teachers' planning matches the purpose of lessons closely to pupils' needs and particularly so for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a high level of teamwork between teachers and support staff that results in good interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A parent wrote, 'This is an amazing, productive and happy school.' This was typical of the views of others.

The unity of vision and drive under the effective leadership of the headteacher, all staff and the governing body is a key factor behind the school's success. Rigorous self-

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evaluation of strengths and weaknesses has led to very effective strategies to bring about improvement. The school has generated a robust momentum for development and has the systems and personnel in place to ensure this happens. A good example of this is in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the leader has overcome the limitations of the building to ensure good provision, leading to good progress and attainment. As a result of the school's actions, gaps between different groups are closing quickly. The school's successful track record in making improvements demonstrates its good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers consistently and effectively give written feedback in their marking which provides pupils with an understanding of how to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural and diverse society of the United Kingdom and beyond by forging links with schools and/or groups in contrasting areas representing different customs, faiths and lifestyles.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment on entry varies widely, although it is often below age-related expectations. In very small year groups this means that attainment varies from year to year. Pupils make good progress from their starting points in mathematics and English and achieve well. In a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils were eagerly exploring fractions at a variety of levels. The lesson was well paced, imaginative and linked to precise outcomes. This resulted in pupils both enjoying and having a clear understanding of their learning. In an English lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils explored the Great Fire of London, while at the same time developing their language and research skills.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as tasks are set to match their learning needs. All pupils are clear about their targets which are displayed prominently on tables and in books. In a lesson on sounds and letters pupils were supported well in their language development and good learning took place because of the teacher's clear explanations and verbal feedback. Pupils were ambitious to achieve and do their best to achieve at a high level. Across the school tasks build on what pupils already know and can do well, generating a good pace of learning and this leads to good progress. Pupils' evaluation of each other's work enables them to learn much from each other.

Pupils have developed outstanding social and interpersonal skills due to the excellent relationships they have with the adults in the school. Outstanding behaviour has led to pupils having positive attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoying their education. Pupils are being helped very successfully to grow up as caring, healthy, well-balanced young people. They show a good ability to reflect on issues which affect them, although their experience of other cultures is more limited. Pupils have a key role in formulating school rules, are increasingly involved in their learning and have an active school council. Pupils use information and communication technology effectively and their basic English and mathematical skills are improving rapidly. Consequently, they are well prepared for their future lives. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of the diversity of cultures within the school and local community, which ensures good cooperation and harmony between all groups.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

The small size of the school fosters the outstanding care, guidance and support. Excellent relationships are developed and adults really care for the pupils. This is especially so for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities whose confidence and independence are promoted well. Good partnerships with outside agencies, such as the educational psychology service, speech therapists, education welfare officers and other schools provide the pupils with a very wide range of opportunities. These have assisted in maintaining the rise in attainment and progress, as well as providing diversity to the curriculum. A good example of this is the link with Callington College and space centre. Increasingly successful pastoral support goes hand in hand with good academic assessment which leads to challenging targets for both pupils and the school as a whole.

Assessment information is used well to plan work at different levels. Pupils know how to make improvements to their work due to good verbal academic guidance. However, staff written comments are not always constructive and do not provide the same level of opportunity for pupils to know how to improve. Well-planned interventions in mathematics and English have a positive effect on the learning of groups of pupils and the school as a whole. Good teaching and learning ensures that all groups of pupils are challenged and make good progress as a result. Successful changes in developing a creative and imaginative curriculum, which pupils say they enjoy, are having a positive impact on

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improving progress and achievement. Computers are effectively used to enhance learning and provide research opportunities for pupils. The curriculum is supported effectively with a good range and number of extra-curricular opportunities. These are popular and well attended by all groups of pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher embeds ambition and drives improvement well, effectively supported by the staff and the governing body. Good planning and procedures ensure the commitment of all concerned to school improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on robust monitoring and thorough analysis of data. Information regarding pupils' progress is communicated effectively to staff, pupils, parents and carers. Challenging targets are set and used effectively to gauge success. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored by the headteacher, who uses her findings to improve the school. However, due to the small number of staff this aspect is the sole responsibility of the headteacher and sharing opportunities to gain such insight is under-developed.

The governing body provides challenge to the headteacher and hold her to account for the performance of the school based on an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Safeguarding arrangements are outstanding and result in pupils feeling exceptionally safe. The safeguarding of children is embedded in every aspect of the school's work. Staff are extremely well trained in child protection and safeguarding procedures and all statutory documentation is exemplary. The school has robust equal opportunities and discrimination procedures that ensure pupils are fairly treated and that gaps in the performance of different groups are closing rapidly. Good links with the local community and other schools provide a range of opportunities to enhance and develop learning. Pupils have a strong understanding of the immediate area and have effective links to support the local community. The school is developing opportunities for pupils to appreciate the lifestyles and customs of people from other cultural backgrounds, for example, through links with other schools, both in the United Kingdom and abroad. However, currently these remain under-developed with a restricting impact on pupils' understanding. ♦

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Due to careful monitoring, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their varied starting points. As a result, they join Year 1 with skills and understanding which are broadly average with a minority doing better. Teaching is good and the excellent relationships between adults and children, and among children, are positive features. Staff work very well together and involve parents, carers and children in all aspects of learning. Language and communication skills are developed well, due to the importance placed on them.

The provision is bright, informative, well resourced and targeted to meet the needs of all the children. The leader has effectively improved the delivery of the learning goals, so as to make learning fun and relevant. Rigorous daily safety checks ensure the children's health, welfare and safety are paramount. The outdoor provision is adequate but has limitations preventing constant free flow and inhibiting the development of some aspects of children's learning. However, the school is having structural work done to alleviate this issue and so improve the outdoor area in the very near future. Activities are fun, varied and very exciting. 'My polar bear can talk and he comes from the North Pole', exclaimed one child. 'We're making a bear family', stated two children excitedly. 'They are going on holiday.' Excellent relationships with parents and carers underpin the school's good induction and care procedures. Staff know children well and ensure they are all engaged in learning. Teaching assistants interact with the children well and have their welfare and care at the heart of all they do. Staff benefit from continual high quality professional development which has a positive impact on children's progress. Planning is robust and assessment, tracking and recording systems are accurate and used effectively to inform future planning. Children are confident and have good social skills.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The return rate to the questionnaire was very high. The large majority of parents and carers who responded were very supportive of the school. They appreciate the care provided and feel that staff are very approachable. Parents and carers are pleased with their child's experience at school. Comments such as, 'St Wenn is a unique school. Its values and ethos ensure children are given a sound grounding' and 'My children love attending St Wenn School ♦ even at weekends if they could', typify the views of parents and carers. Parents and carers feel the children are seen as individuals and are happy in school. A small number of parents and carers identified concerns regarding behaviour, as shown in this comment: 'I feel the school could do more to deal with unacceptable behaviour.' However, inspection findings found nothing but outstanding behaviour at all times. Others expressed the view that the school did not support them in their child's learning. The school does provide regular formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to discuss pupils' progress and how they can support their child.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Wenn 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 34 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	61	13	39	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	61	11	33	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	58	11	33	3	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	48	14	42	3	9	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)	18	55	15	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	55	12	36	3	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	39	15	45	3	9	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	48	16	48	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	61	10	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	70	10	30	0	0	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



16 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Wenn Primary School, Cornwall PL30 5PS

Thank you for your very warm and welcoming reception when I visited your school. I found that St Wenn is a good and improving school and can see that you agree with me. I was particularly impressed with the way you all support and get on with each other and help make the school a very happy place.

You are being successfully helped to grow up as sensible, healthy, considerate young people who behave well. You progress well in your learning and this is rapidly accelerating due to the good teaching you receive. All adults in the school take exceptionally good care of you and make sure you are treated fairly. Well done for having such high attendance!

Your headteacher, supported by the staff, is improving your school well. Those of you who sometimes find work difficult are given good support to help you make good progress. Your good curriculum is being gradually changed and improved to help you to learn and enjoy school more. There is a good range of activities to do after school which all help you learn.

In order to be even better, teachers need to ensure that written comments in your books help you improve your work more effectively. I have also asked the school to ensure you have a greater understanding of the multicultural and diverse society in our country.

I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall

Lead inspector

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