

Pennoweth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133406
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	360504
Inspection dates	25–26 January 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Yarde-Dent
Headteacher	Bernadette Lax
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2008
School address	Drump Road Redruth Cornwall TR15 1NA
Telephone number	01209 215671
Fax number	01209 215671
Email address	head@pennoweth.cornwall.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 20 lessons, observing 10 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, staff, pupils, representatives of the governing body and local authority representatives. 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 returned from 94 parents and carers, 27 staff and 100 pupils were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress made since the last inspection on the rates of progress and attainment of all pupils and, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Whether there has been sufficient improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection and to what extent this is helping to raise standards.
- The match of the curriculum to the needs and abilities of all pupils and how effectively it develops their personal and academic development.
- The quality and use of assessment, recording and monitoring procedures and data.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school where most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average overall. The needs of these pupils varies from general learning difficulties, to those with behavioural and/or physical disabilities. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school has a number of awards reflecting its commitment to healthy lifestyles and physical education. The school operates a breakfast club in the dining room each day.

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

2

Main findings

This is a satisfactory but rapidly improving school which is well respected within its local community. Pupils are well cared for and helped to do their best. The Breakfast Club provides a good start to the day with a selection of breakfast choices available. Parental comments are very supportive. 'The school has been superb with my child and has developed their confidence really well' was a typical comment. Attendance is average but improving due to the good work of the school in conjunction with its partnerships, in reaching the small number of persistent absentees. Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers are proud of their school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but improving at an increasing rate. Pupils' progress has historically been low and for a number of years attainment has been well below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Current data demonstrates very clear improvements. From particularly low starting points on entry to the school, pupils in the present Year 6 are working at levels close to those expected for their age and those in Year 5 even higher. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress from their low starting points. Gaps between groups of pupils are closing rapidly due to effective intervention strategies and good teaching.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a good start to their future. Language and communication skills are particular strengths. The well-focused and ongoing emphasis on improving teaching and learning, and the more robust assessment, monitoring, tracking and recording systems are paying dividends with improvements throughout the school. Nevertheless, there are still some areas that need improvement. Teachers use assessment well to set challenging targets but do not involve the pupils enough in this process. There are also some weaknesses in writing because pupils are not given enough opportunities to identify and use these skills across a wide variety of subjects. Consequently, recent improvements in providing a more exciting curriculum are not having a full impact yet because pupils are not involved sufficiently well. ♦

Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of their place in, and their contribution to, the school as a community. Pupils mix well together regardless of race and/or religion and thoroughly enjoy both celebrating and exploring the differences and similarities between them. They have good interpersonal and social skills. They enthusiastically take up opportunities to be independent in their learning. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoy physical activities. Teaching is good with some outstanding elements and the school is actively working to eliminate the minor inconsistencies in matching work to the needs of the pupils. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils eagerly explored the concepts involved in shape. Pupils used their knowledge and understanding of other mathematical aspects to help them effectively resolve problem solving activities.

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The unity of vision and drive under the leadership and management of the senior leadership team, middle managers, staff and governors are the main factors behind the school's success. Good self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses has led to effective strategies to bring about improvement. The school has generated a robust momentum for development and now has the systems and personnel in place to ensure this happens. A prime example is the headteacher's bold and effective approach to resolving issues in teaching and learning, the impact of which has been a steady and rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Due to the positive track record of the leadership and management team there is good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment through embedding improvements by ensuring the consistent matching of work to the needs of the pupils by Easter 2012.
- Raise attainment in writing by developing writing across different subjects and involving pupils in setting their own targets.
- Sustain improvements in the curriculum through greater involvement of the pupils in developing areas of study.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

From very low starting points children make good progress in Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory and at times good progress with this good progress consolidated in Key Stage 2. Attainment has been significantly below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 for several years but current school and local authority data show a consistent and rapidly improving picture. Although writing is an issue for the school there are robust strategies in place to ensure improvement. Current attainment and predictions, based on good assessment and monitoring, indicate that any differences in the performance of any groups are closing rapidly. The gap between boys and girls has now closed and pupils in Years 5 and 6 particularly are rapidly improving to reach standards that are now broadly in line with age related expectations. Some pupils have made almost double the expected rate of progress.

Pupils have developed good social and interpersonal skills due to the excellent relationships they have with the adults in the school. Behaviour is generally good, although where teaching is not as strong there is some low level disruption. Pupils are being successfully helped to grow up as caring, healthy, well-balanced young people. Pupils show a good ability to reflect on issues which affect them, as well as a good experience of other cultures. 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 have good personal skills. Their basic English and mathematical skills are improving but attainment still needs to be higher. Consequently, pupils are adequately prepared for their future lives.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Care, guidance and support are good due to excellent relationships and staff who really care for the pupils. There are strong systems to record and evaluate information which are having a positive effect on pupils' learning. There are good partnerships with outside agencies, such as the Educational Psychology Service, speech therapists and education welfare officers. Increasingly successful pastoral support goes hand in hand with good academic assessment, leading to challenging targets for both pupils and the school as a whole. Pupils know how to make improvements to their work due to good academic guidance but are not involved in this assessment process themselves. Good interventions in mathematics and English are having a positive effect both on groups of pupils and the school as a whole. A good example is the work by teachers and teaching assistants with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who make consistently good progress. In almost all lessons seen pupils were challenged and lessons well-paced. In a small number of lessons where teaching is not so strong the match of work to pupils' needs and abilities is not sufficient to make the rapid progress that is needed. Recent changes developing a creative and imaginative curriculum, which pupils stated they enjoy, are having a positive impact on improving progress and achievement. This is not embedded well enough to ensure that pupils can see a full purpose and relevance to what they are learning.

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

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Good leadership and management by the headteacher, senior management team and the improving governance, are behind the constant drive to improve. Good planning and procedures securely ensure the commitment of all concerned to school improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate based on robust evidence and analysis of data. All evaluation is well communicated to staff, pupils, parents and carers. Challenging targets are set and used effectively to gauge success. All staff are involved in school development. Robust monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is successful in bringing about improvement. Although governance is satisfactory due to the lack of experience from a number of new governors, they are challenging, have a very clear and accurate view of the school and increasingly hold it to account. Safeguarding arrangements are good, resulting in pupils feeling safe. The school has robust equal opportunities and discrimination procedures, ensuring that gaps between groups are closing rapidly. Good links with the local community and other schools provide a range of opportunities to enhance and develop learning. Community cohesion within the school and local community is a strength, and the links with other schools both in the United Kingdom and abroad provide a good understanding of the diverse multicultural society in which they live.

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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

A feature of the good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is the excellent relationships both between adults and children and between children and their peers. There is a little inconsistency within teaching but this is due to a variation of expertise in judging when to facilitate and when to guide learning. Staff work very well together and involve both parents and carers and children in all aspects of learning. Language and communication skills are a strength due to the importance placed on them. The provision is bright, informative and well resourced. Daily safety checks ensure the children's health, welfare and safety are paramount. The outdoor provision is good, allowing constant free-flow between the areas. Activities mirror and enhance indoor themes. Excellent relationships with parents and carers underpin the school's good induction and care procedures. Staff know children well and make sure learning is fun. The teaching assistants interact with the children well but they need to more consistently extend learning beyond the activity. As a result of good leadership and management, teaching is well monitored and staff have constant on-going continued professional development resulting in children making good progress. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are confident and have good social skills. A good example of which was a child's response when asked about their learning on the computer. 'We are practicing mouse skills, this is a mouse and we have to practice pointing it in the right places', he gleefully explained.

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

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 large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are supportive of the school. They appreciate the care provided, feel staff are very approachable and that they are pleased with their child's experience at school. Parents and carers feel the children are seen as individuals and are happy in school. One parent commented, 'We have been invited to and attended several parent training/taster sessions to help encourage our child. The staff are always friendly and willing to listen.' Another commented, 'My child loves school and can't wait to see what they are going to be doing each day.' Inspection evidence supports these views. A small number of parents and carers identified concerns regarding information on their child's progress. Others had concerns over behaviour but inspection findings found this to be good throughout the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pennoweth 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 276 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	57	36	38	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	50	53	39	41	4	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	47	44	47	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	43	45	48	6	6	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	54	57	33	35	5	5	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	50	37	39	10	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	37	53	56	4	4	1	1
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)	37	39	38	40	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	43	41	44	8	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	40	39	41	13	14	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	40	42	45	5	5	6	6
The school is led and managed effectively	42	45	42	45	8	9	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	53	34	36	6	6	3	3

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.



27 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pennoweth Primary School, Cornwall, TR15 1NA

Thank you for your courteous, polite and very warm welcome when we visited your school. Although we feel your school is satisfactory overall, we also feel it is improving rapidly. We were particularly impressed with the way you all 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 good teaching. Staff take very good care of you and make sure you are treated fairly.

Your headteacher and other leaders are improving your school well. Those of you who sometimes find work difficult are given good support to help you make good progress. The curriculum is being changed and improved to help you to learn and enjoy school more. There are a good range of activities to do after school. There are also many visits and visitors to the school which all help you learn.

In order to be even better, the school needs to ensure you have a greater input into what and how you learn. We have also asked the school to improve the quality of writing across the school by encouraging you to write more in all subjects and help set your targets. Finally the school has been asked to ensure that all teachers consistently provide you with work that matches your needs and abilities.

We wish you all well for the future and we are sure you will all help in improving your school.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall

Lead inspector

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