

Port Isaac Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	111912
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	378388
Inspection dates	30 April – 1 May 2012
Lead inspector	Paul Garvey

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	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Townsend
Headteacher	Simon Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2007
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Garvey

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons and observed two teachers teaching for up to 45 minutes on each occasion. Afterwards, the inspector met with teachers to discuss his findings. A number of lessons were also visited for shorter periods to gather other information. Additionally, the inspector met with pupils, members of staff and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector listened to pupils read and analysed work in pupils' books. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school development plan, records of pupils' progress, policies and school self-evaluation documents. Eight questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed, as well as others from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Port Isaac Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school. There are two classes; a combined Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class and a combined Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 class. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has risen in recent years, but is below average, as are the proportions who speak English as an additional language and those known to be eligible for free school meals. There are currently no disabled pupils, or pupils with any designated special educational needs. An above-average proportion of pupils joins or leaves part-way through their primary school education. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

In January 2012, the school joined a cooperative trust, which consists of nine other primary schools and the local community college. The headteacher's time is shared between Port Isaac and another local primary school. The school holds Healthy Schools status and runs a breakfast club which is attended by up to eight pupils at any one time.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. All groups of pupils achieve well and their progress has accelerated recently in all years. However, it is not yet consistently rapid enough across all key stages, or over time, for the school to be outstanding. Also, progress is held back for a small minority of pupils because they do not attend sufficiently regularly.
- Teaching is good. Creative and imaginative planning ensures that the needs of all pupils in the mixed-age classes are met well. Progress is slower in lessons when teachers and other adults are less aware of when pupils have achieved what they set out to learn and, thus, pupils do not move on in their work with sufficient pace. Attainment is broadly average, but inconsistent. In Key Stage 1, an effective focus on improving reading standards has not yet been extended to writing and mathematics.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils are quick to say how safe, happy, and well cared for they are at school and their behaviour is often exemplary as a result. They have a well-defined moral compass and support each other well, working happily with others whenever they are asked to. The youngest children quickly learn to reflect the outstanding social skills of older pupils.
- Pupils' good spiritual education includes a good range of opportunities for reflection. Cultural education is promoted well through the broad curriculum. Attendance is average. Although improving, it does not reflect the higher standards evident in other areas of the school's work.
- Leadership and management are good at all levels. The good teaching results from effective monitoring by supportive leaders. The leadership of the skilled headteacher has been important in monitoring the performance of staff and increasing the pace of pupils' progress and this is appreciated greatly by pupils and their parents and carers.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by May 2013 and ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress in all key stages by:
 - focusing effort and resources on improving attainment in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1, so that it is as high as in reading, and pupils join Key Stage 2 with good basic skills
 - monitoring the progress of pupils more closely in lessons, so that all adults can quickly recognise when individuals have met the learning aims and are ready to move on.

- Work in partnership with parents and carers and other agencies to raise attendance levels to above average by May 2013.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils, usually, join the school with skills on entry which are below the levels expected nationally, though, with the small size of year groups, this can vary from year to year. They, typically, leave with attainment which is broadly average, but has been above average for two of the last three years. Thus, progress across the school is good overall and achievement is good. Recently, the rate of progress has accelerated in all years. In the lessons seen, progress was typically good, but outstanding on a number of occasions, due to excellent planning and teaching. For example, in the mixed-age Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 class, clear objectives and explanations in a literacy lesson led to pupils settling very quickly to work in pairs to examine bias in two newspaper reports. The work was planned carefully to meet the needs of all abilities and ages and pupils enjoyed determining whether Humpty Dumpty was pushed or fell.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage work well together with their older classmates. The small number of Nursery children are assimilated into learning carefully, often working with Reception-Year children, but also being given freedom to play in a well-ordered learning environment, both indoors and out. They all make good progress towards the age-related expectations by the time they join Key Stage 1.

Historically, children have made slower progress at Key Stage 1. The school is addressing this well and recently quicker progress is evident in all subjects and particularly in reading. Progress is still slower in writing and in mathematics, because the school has not concentrated effort and resources to the same degree. The well-planned introduction of a new reading scheme has led to good understanding of the potential by all adults. Rapid gains are thus being made, including by pupils who

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speak English as an additional language. Confident reading was heard from a range of young readers, especially those in Reception Year. Pupils' attainment in reading is now at expected levels in Year 2 and above national expectations by Year 6.

Quality of teaching

Teachers' planning is assiduous and adroit, thus meeting the needs of the wide range of ages in each class well. One parent wrote 'All the teachers are first class; we are very lucky.' In consequence, all groups of pupils make at least good progress and for some individuals, progress is particularly rapid. In a typical literacy lesson, pupils from Reception Year to Year 4 were learning about storytelling. All pupils listened intently to the story and then discussed it. The Years 2, 3 and 4 pupils then wrote sentences in groups to extend their learning, while the younger pupils worked on a range of sorting and kinaesthetic activities. After assessing each other's writing, the older pupils used drama to 'freeze-frame' the story and all pupils demonstrated excellent learning through their storytelling in the plenary session at the end. Pupils' moral and social skills were exemplary throughout and they supported each other's learning by helping their classmates to answer questions in depth and correctly.

In some lessons, teaching is outstanding. In a numeracy lesson in a Reception-Year, Year 1 and Year 2 class, clear direction of other adults allowed excellent progress from all ages. All pupils enjoyed learning about number pairs in an inventive set of activities. Excellent questioning with higher-ability Key Stage 1 pupils prompted answers that elicited brisk progress. Good awareness from the teaching assistant allowed her to see when the Reception-Year children had learned to count in twos and were ready to move on to free play. This awareness of the moment when pupils have achieved the learning expected of them is not always so apparent. When teachers and other adults are not fully aware of the progress of all the pupils within a lesson, learning can slow because pupils do not know what to do to extend it to the next level.

Strong teaching of reading, supported by accurate tracking of progress, has led to accelerated progress in all key stages. The work of all adults, teachers, teaching assistants and other helpers is woven into a successful programme, where any child in danger of falling behind with their reading is given close attention, to ensure they quickly catch up.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety have improved from good levels at the last inspection. Pupils say they feel extremely safe in the school and this is a view echoed by all parents and carers who returned inspection questionnaires, or discussed the school's work with the inspector. Pupils behave outstandingly well in almost all circumstances. Behaviour only slips when a slower pace of learning allows pupils to drift and fidget. Around school, pupils are unfailingly polite and friendly to adults and to each other. Pupils' safety is underpinned by excellent safeguarding practices and an exceptional level of care from all adults.

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Pupils say that bullying of all types is currently absent, though older pupils pointed to isolated examples of teasing and physical bullying that have occurred in the past. They say there is always someone to turn to who will help, if there is conflict. Pupils are friendly, calm and welcoming. This is a result of the high expectations of behaviour conveyed by adults. One parent said 'Children are expected, from the Nursery onwards, to show care and respect to all.' This considerate ethos is reciprocated by adults and it was praised highly by parents and carers in discussions. 'This village school is brilliant' and 'My child loves it here' were typical comments.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has significant personal and organisational skills. He oversees another local primary school, in the absence of its own headteacher, for three days per week, but this has had no detrimental effect on Port Isaac. Indeed, the skills the headteacher has gained have helped the school to accelerate the rate of progress of the pupils. Other leaders have willingly taken on responsibilities and the school runs smoothly. Good teaching results from skilled monitoring of teaching quality, which is linked clearly to professional development opportunities. As a result, staff say that their needs are catered for well.

Since the last inspection, behaviour and safety have improved, progress in all subjects is now monitored rigorously and the school development plan is updated regularly and progress against objectives evaluated. Self-evaluation is accurate. As a result, the capacity for improvement is good. All groups of pupils perform similarly well, reflecting strong promotion of equality of opportunity and lack of discrimination. The curriculum is impressively broad. The school uses partnerships with other adults and other schools to extend pupils' experiences. For example, working with the local community college in sports has helped the school to be re-accredited with Healthy Schools status. Attempts to raise attainment in reading at Key Stage 1 have met with success, but the approach has not yet influenced writing to the same extent and resources have not been targeted at mathematics with the same vigour. Attendance had shown little improvement since the last inspection until the present academic year. The school now follows up absence rigorously through first-day calling and texting and by working closely with the local authority attendance officer. Improvements have now been sustained and persistent absence, especially, has shown a convincing decline. However, some parents and carers still take term-time holidays and this is holding back further improvements.

The governing body exerts a strong influence. It has a range of skills which contribute well to the school's development. They extend from expertise in guiding the school astutely through negotiations to join a cooperative trust, to running various clubs and societies to extend the curriculum. It ensures that the robust arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet current requirements. To provide schooling beyond statutory hours, the school runs a breakfast club. The environment for learning, the range of activities on offer, and the care for the two pupils attending during the inspection were seen to be excellent.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



2 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Port Isaac Community Primary School, Port Isaac PL29 3RT

Thank you so much for making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. You told me many of the good things about your school and thank you to those who completed questionnaires. I was very impressed by how much you enjoy taking part in lessons and by your friendliness to each other and to the adults that care for you.

Yours is a good and improving school, which is led well. It gives you an outstanding moral and social education and that is why you get on so well with each other. You behave outstandingly well in school and you told me that you feel very safe. I enjoyed listening to some of you read and I saw that you are making very good progress in your reading. You are taught well and the care provided by all your teachers and other adults is special and excellent. You told me how much you appreciate the help from your teachers.

The headteacher and staff are keen to make the school even better. To help them to do this, I have asked the teachers to check on your progress during lessons more carefully, so they can recognise when you have met your learning aims and can thus help you to move on quicker to the next stage in your learning. I have also asked them to improve the resources in mathematics and writing at Key Stage 1 to match those in reading, so you can all achieve well. Attendance is presently satisfactory and I have asked the school to work closely with your parents, carers and other agencies to improve this to above average in a year's time. You can help in this by all attending school as regularly as you can. I know you enjoy coming to Port Isaac Primary School because you told me, so I would like you all to contribute to improving attendance. I trust that you will all continue to behave exceptionally well and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Garvey
Lead inspector

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