

# St Petroc's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	112036
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	378409
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Paul Sadler

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Kidman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stuart Renshaw
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Athelstan Park Bodmin Cornwall PL31 1DS
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<b>Fax number</b>	01208 75701
<b>Email address</b>	head@st-petrocs.cornwall.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Sadler	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Strange	Additional Inspector
Paul Mulligan	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent over 10 hours observing 21 lessons taught by 14 teachers and more briefly observed nine groups of pupils learning their letters and sounds (phonics). They held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and with groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, school development planning and safeguarding pupils. The responses to questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and by 191 parents and carers were analysed.

## Information about the school

St Petroc's is larger than the average-sized primary school. While it serves the Anglican community of the town and local area, pupils of all faiths and none are welcomed. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A few, who mostly speak Eastern European languages at home, are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is below average. These pupils mostly have moderate learning difficulties. The school meets the current floor standards which are the minimum standards expected by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school shares its site with a pre-school. As this is not managed by the governing body, it was not inspected on this occasion.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding as pupils' achievement in mathematics requires improvement. The school has notable strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in pupils' achievement in reading and writing, and in the breadth of the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well. Children make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In English, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is consistently above average and improving, with almost all making at least the expected progress from the end of Year 2. In mathematics, attainment at the end of Year 6 is average. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are making good progress in the subject, but in Years 5 and 6 there is a legacy of underachievement from when progress was only satisfactory.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Strengths include the teaching of reading, effective use of interesting resources and the impact of teaching assistants on accelerating learning. A relative weakness is that opportunities to develop pupils' independence are not always utilised. Teachers' performance is monitored well by the school's leaders and training is provided to rectify weakness.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are polite to adults and each other. They say there is little bullying, any that occurs is dealt with effectively. Although a few parents disagreed, inspection findings confirm pupils' views. Attendance is above average and improving. In order for this aspect to become outstanding, pupils' ability to learn independently requires improvement.
- Leadership and management are good. Areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been resolved. Through good performance management leaders and managers have identified any further weaknesses and are tackling them. Governance, the curriculum and arrangements to safeguard pupils are strengths, as is the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The leadership of mathematics requires further strengthening, as does planning for the strategic development of the school.

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

- By July 2013, ensure that pupils' achievement in mathematics is at least as good as is currently the case in English by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in solving mathematical problems and to apply these skills in other subjects
  - widening the scope of the leadership of mathematics in order to monitor the teaching of the subject more effectively and hence to identify further training needs.
- Improve teaching by offering pupils more opportunities to learn independently and hence to develop the skills needed to learn autonomously.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage they make excellent progress in many areas of the curriculum. Towards the end of the year most can write a simple sentence and, for example, subtract numbers using the 'counting back' method. In Years 1 to 6 pupils continue to make excellent progress in reading and writing. By the end of Year 2 almost all know their letters and sounds thoroughly and can read a text appropriate to their age with fluency and confidence. Attainment in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 is above average and rising, as shown when a Year 5 pupil read a Bible passage to a whole-school assembly with many adults present. The pupil read this complex passage beautifully, with confidence and expression, making clear the school's good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In mathematics, pupils are less confident, and sometimes struggle to apply their knowledge to real-life problems. This is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6 and is due to less effective teaching in the past. However training of staff is having a positive impact, as when a pupil in Year 3 mentally calculated the volume of liquid needed for five 50 millilitre drinks. The answer, '250 millilitres', was said quickly and with confidence.

The good curriculum enables pupils to achieve well in other subjects. In sport, the school competes successfully against other schools in events as diverse as triathlon and netball. Pupils from Year 1 onwards use modern tablet computers and other complex information and communication technology (ICT) unaided and with aplomb, as when pupils in Year 2 researched methods by which seeds are distributed. These pupils also showed good recording skills in this task.

All groups of pupils make equally good progress. Pupils at an early stage of learning English learn the language quickly. Those who are disabled or who have special educational needs also make good progress because of the good quality additional support they receive. Pupils and their parents and carers almost unanimously agree, correctly, that good progress is being made throughout the school. The good development of pupils' skills, especially those of reading, writing and the use of ICT, prepare them well for secondary school.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching has many strengths. Most notable is the quality of the teaching of letters and sounds. The many staff involved, both teachers and teaching assistants, adopt a

rigorous, consistent approach that avoids confusion for pupils as their skills increase. Teaching assistants are well trained and highly skilled and give high quality support to all pupils, especially those who are disabled or with special educational needs. Resources are used very effectively by all staff. The Early Years Foundation Stage has an excellent range of indoor and outdoor resources which enable children to learn by exploring their environment. There are many examples of exciting teaching across the school. For instance, in an excellent Year 2 science lesson, video material showed children how seeds were adapted, for example to be blown by the wind or to stick to the coats of animals, which contributed well to their spiritual development. Assessment is used well, for example to identify pupils making slower progress and put extra support in place. Pupils assess their own and each other's work, as when a group of pupils in Year 5 were asked to explain the findings of their investigation into mathematical sequences. The teacher made a quick video recording of this which was shown to the class at the end of the lesson for others to comment on. All these features lead to rapid progress in learning.

Teachers are increasingly using opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and develop the skills of independent and autonomous learning. However, this is not consistent and teachers sometimes intervene too readily to show pupils how to solve a problem or miss opportunities for them to apply their knowledge, especially their mathematical knowledge, in other subjects and situations.

Pupils and their parents and carers rightly agree that teaching is good. They particularly appreciate the quality of the feedback they are given and the way in which targets and marking are used to enable pupils to improve their work and make rapid progress. Homework is used effectively, and pupils also give feedback to the teacher, responding to comments and identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, which increases their enthusiasm for learning.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage the high quality of relationships is a notable feature. Children stick happily to a task for extended periods of time and respond quickly and willingly to adult instructions. Generally, these features continue throughout the school although when pupils are working independently there is occasionally idle chatter which slows the pace of learning. In the playground, play is safe and enjoyable. Older pupils have opportunities to take responsibility for younger ones which contributes well to their social and moral development. Evidence from parents and carers, pupils and the school's records shows that this good behaviour is typical.

Pupils say there is little bullying and the school's records confirm this. However, a small minority of parents and carers hold a different view. Inspectors investigated this matter carefully and found no evidence to support the view that any bullying is not handled effectively. Pupils have a good knowledge of different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying or racist name-calling, and know how to avoid or challenge these. This also demonstrates pupils' good understanding of risk and personal safety which are in part developed through the many opportunities that the school offers for them to take part in adventurous activities.

Pupils' attendance is above average and has risen steadily over the past three years, reflecting their growing enjoyment of school and the effectiveness of the school's efforts to improve it.

### **Leadership and management**

Leaders and managers have successfully resolved a number of weaknesses identified either at the last inspection or by themselves since that time. These include making improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage, improving pupils' achievement in reading and writing, and their attendance. These successes show that the school has a good capacity to make further improvements. Weaknesses in mathematics are now being tackled and a programme of staff training is beginning to have a successful impact. However, while teaching is monitored on a regular basis and the outcomes used to identify staff training needs, the focus of this monitoring on the teaching of mathematics lacks sufficient emphasis. Data are used well to monitor and analyse pupils' progress, although the progress of pupils arriving at the school after the start of Year 3 is monitored less rigorously than is the case with other groups.

The governing body is a strength of the school. It is organised and led well, and is effective in carrying out its duty to monitor progress and challenge school leaders to improve. Arrangements to keep children safe meet all requirements. For example, all staff and members of the governing body are trained in child protection, some to a high level. The equally good achievement of all pupils and the lack of bullying demonstrate the school's good commitment to equality of opportunity and intolerance of discrimination. School leaders have ambitious ideas for the future development of the school, for example responding to the demand for additional places, but these are as yet not incorporated in formal plans.

The good curriculum is enjoyed greatly by pupils, particular for what it offers in sport and additional activities. In order to be outstanding, the curriculum requires more opportunities for pupils to learn independently and, in particular, to employ their mathematical skills. Strong links with the Church of England are the basis of the school's Christian ethos which contributes greatly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Cultural aspects are enhanced through strengths in music, singing and art and through links with schools in more culturally and ethnically diverse communities. Parents and carers rightly have a high level of confidence in the school, and almost all would recommend it to others.

## 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](http://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.**



17 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Petroc's Church of England Voluntary Aided School,  
Bodmin PL31 1DS**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and thank you to those who completed our questionnaire. We especially enjoyed talking with you, seeing your work and hearing your views. This letter is to tell you what we have found.

- Yours is a good school. The best things about it are your progress in reading and writing, the Early Years Foundation Stage and the variety of the things you do to learn, for example playing sport. Congratulations on your successes!
- You all make good progress with your work. We were especially impressed by your confidence when reading. Your progress in reading and writing is better than it is in mathematics.
- You and your parents and carers told us teaching is good and we agree. Teachers expect a lot of you and make lessons interesting, and you work hard as a result. The teaching assistants are good at helping you learn.
- You behave well and told us there is very little bullying. You trust the adults in school and if you tell them about any problems you have, they all help you sort them out. Your attendance has improved in recent years.
- Leadership and management of the school are good. All the staff work hard to improve the teaching so you can make even better progress. The governing body and teachers make sure you are kept safe.

We have asked your headteacher and the staff to do two things to make the school even better.

- Improve your achievement in mathematics so that it is as good as in reading and writing.
- Give you more opportunities to solve problems and to study in groups or on your own, so you can learn without needing an adult to help you.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler  
Lead inspector

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