

St Mawes Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	111873
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	395409
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2012
Lead inspector	Stephen Dennett

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	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Bowen
Headteacher	Karen Middlemore
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Stephen Dennett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited five lessons and parts of other lessons, and observed three teachers. He held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. 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 policies, pupils' books, safeguarding records and evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning. The inspector examined 17 questionnaires from parents and carers, 15 from pupils in Key Stage 2 and five from staff.

Information about the school

St Mawes is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language; a few are of mixed British and African heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action plus is below average. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. A significant proportion of pupils join the school at times other than the beginning of Reception. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Since the last inspection in May 2008, there has been a significant change of staff, including the appointment of the present headteacher in March 2010, who had been acting headteacher since January 2009. The school has achieved Dyslexia Friendly status, the Activemark, Artsmark Gold and a Healthy Schools award. The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum government expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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 which has improved since its last inspection. Attainment is above average at both key stages. The actions taken over recent years demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve. The school is not yet outstanding because aspects of mathematics and teachers' marking need improvement.
- Pupils achieve well and clearly enjoy learning. Pupils achieve particularly well in English; attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in writing and high in reading. Although most pupils achieve well in mathematics, their ability to investigate and solve mathematical problems is less well developed. All groups of pupils make at least good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Teaching is good. The teaching of basic skills, including phonics (letters and their sounds), is effective. Assessment is generally used effectively to identify how well pupils are progressing, but teachers' marking in mathematics does not always give pupils sufficient information about what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school is outstanding. They are mature, polite and very supportive of each other. The school is a harmonious and caring environment as a result. All pupils are very insistent that they feel safe in school and that there is no bullying of any kind. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now above average.
- The school is effectively managed and led. Staff and governors have a clear focus on improving the school. The effective monitoring of teaching and learning, and management of staff performance, have led to measurable improvements. The school enjoys outstanding relationships with parents, carers and the wider community. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and promotes their spiritual, moral and social development exceptionally effectively.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics by:
 - increasing opportunities for them to investigate and solve mathematical problems
 - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in all areas of the curriculum.
- Improve the use of assessment in mathematics, by ensuring that marking consistently indicates what pupils can do to improve their work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The school's results in national tests are variable because of small year groups, some of which contain a significant number of pupils who have just joined the school or who have special educational needs. However, attainment has risen recently at both key stages and almost all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities.

Children's skills on entry to Reception are typically above expectations for their age, except in communication, language and literacy where skills are broadly average. Attainment in writing and mathematics, for both boys and girls, is above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals do as well as their peers. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. A previously under-attaining group of pupils, currently in Year 3, have made accelerated progress and are now working at the expected level. More-able pupils make good progress at both key stages. Attainment in reading is above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6.

Progress in all lessons is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning and teachers plan work that they find motivating. Levels of concentration are excellent, leading to accelerated learning. This was particularly true in an outstanding personal, social and health education lesson in Class 1 (Reception and Key Stage 1), where pupils talked in some detail about the qualities of 'good sportsmanship'. They demonstrated good speaking skills when explaining their views about what makes a good sportsman and their excellent behaviour contributed strongly to rapid learning. Many older pupils read fluently and with excellent understanding of the text, while younger pupils make good use of their phonic skills to tackle unfamiliar words. Older pupils present their written work well and there are some excellent examples of beautifully illustrated poems. Nearly all pupils are making good progress in mathematics and most pupils have good numeracy and data handling skills. However, the school is aware that pupils' ability to investigate and

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solve problems is limited and they do not readily apply their mathematical skills in other aspects of the curriculum.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into school life and make good progress in all areas of learning generally exceeding typical expectations by the time they enter Year 1. Children read well and quickly identify rhyming words, for example 'call' and 'ball'. All children are friendly and articulate and demonstrate excellent social skills.

Parents and carers responding to the questionnaire were exceptionally positive and feel that the school meets their children's needs very effectively, enabling them to make good progress. Inspection findings support these positive views.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is never less than good and sometimes better. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively to support all pupils, but especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods and make effective use of interactive whiteboards to engage pupils in learning. In an outstanding literacy lesson in Class 2 (Years 3 to 6), the teacher made very effective use of the information pupils had gathered about litter in St Mawes and used this to help them construct formal letters of complaint to the council. There were excellent links with other aspects of the curriculum, including environmental issues. The lesson made an outstanding contribution to pupils' social skills and understanding of good citizenship. The teaching of reading is particularly effective and results in high attainment and the quality of pupils' writing has improved rapidly over the last year.

The work planned by all teachers makes good use of assessment information to ensure it is appropriately challenging for most pupils. In most lessons, pupils are clear about what they are meant to learn and the small steps by which they can measure their own progress. This is assisted by teachers' generally good marking, with helpful comments on how pupils could improve their work, except in mathematics, where marking is sometimes merely a series of ticks. As a result, although pupils are quite clear how they can improve their writing, they are vague about how they can move on to the next level in mathematics.

Teachers promote pupils' personal development exceptionally well through the effective use of discussion to get them to reflect on their own and others' opinions. Through teachers' high expectations, most pupils have an excellent appreciation of right and wrong, and how to behave appropriately with other children and adults. Pupils have a good understanding of the wider world and cultural traditions represented in the United Kingdom.

All parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and are prepared for the next stage of their education. Inspection findings fully support this view. One parent said, 'Teaching has improved so much this year and I am very pleased with the quality of education my child is getting.'

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' excellent behaviour and very well-developed social skills are outstanding features of the school. The way they typically behave in lessons and around school is almost always exemplary. Pupils are very welcoming and interested in visitors. Their enjoyment is demonstrated by improved attendance and very positive attitudes to learning. Almost all pupils show consideration for others and work and play together harmoniously. All these factors lead to an excellent environment for learning.

School records indicate that there have been no incidents of any kind of bullying or racist behaviour in the last two years. All pupils are insistent that there is no bullying of any kind in the school. Pupils have a clear awareness of the different forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying and physical harassment. Pupils are confident that they feel very safe at school and have a good awareness of possible dangerous situations. The school has ensured that pupils are well aware of safe and appropriate use of the internet and how to avoid cyber-bullying.

All pupils, parents and carers agree that behaviour is almost always good and that any bullying is an extreme rarity. All the parents and carers are happy that their children feel safe at school. One pupil commented, 'We always get on so well with each other there never seems to be any problems.' Inspection findings confirm these views.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, staff and governors have successfully created a happy and caring school, with high aspirations for pupils' achievement and personal development. There is a clear vision and educational direction that are shared by all. The governors know the school's strengths because they are actively involved in monitoring. Although they are extremely supportive and actively challenge the financial aspects of the school, governors have a less secure understanding of the school's academic performance. The current development plan has identified this as an area for development and the school has already taken steps in tackling this issue.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because of focused professional development, which has resulted in teachers raising their expectations of pupils. The areas for improvement from the last inspection have been tackled successfully; both attendance and standards in spelling have improved. Improvements have also been made in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and they have many good opportunities to learn through play in an imaginative and well-designed outdoor area. The school's self-evaluation is clearly focused on the correct priorities and stems from an effective programme of monitoring and analysis. Consequently, the school has the capacity for sustained improvement.

The curriculum is good because it meets the needs of pupils well and plays a major part in engaging them in learning. It is reviewed regularly, most recently to create opportunities for more links across all subject areas. The curriculum also provides an

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excellent platform for promoting pupils' personal development, especially through the focus on developing their social skills. A notable feature is the regular enterprise projects that develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills effectively. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well, leading to their outstanding behaviour and responsible attitudes.

The school is very successful in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Its systems for identifying groups and individuals who need additional support has proved to be successful in providing appropriate strategies to accelerate their learning. Safeguarding procedures are effective and meet statutory requirements.

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that the school keeps them well informed and responds very well to any concerns raised.

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.



18 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mawes Community Primary School, St Mawes, Truro TR2 5BP

I want to start by thanking you for welcoming me on my recent visit. This letter is to tell you what I found out. I was very impressed with your excellent behaviour and polite manners. Thank you for telling me about your work, filling in the questionnaires and telling me what it is like to be a pupil at your school. Yours is a good school that has improved over the last few years. You all make good progress, including those who find learning difficult, and achieve good standards, especially in reading. Teaching is good and your teachers provide you with interesting lessons, which you all said you enjoy. The adults help you to grow up well, to learn how to keep safe and to care for each other.

Your teachers and the school's governing body are all working to make your school even better. I know that you work hard in mathematics and you have good number skills. However, I have asked your teachers to help you use what you have learned in mathematics in your topic work and to learn how to investigate and solve problems. You can help by thinking hard about how mathematics plays an important role in everyday life and by using your number skills effectively. Another thing I noticed was teachers did not always tell you how to improve your work in your mathematics books. I have asked them to give you better guidance on what to do to improve when they mark you work. You can then see how to do better.

The important things to remember are to carry on working hard, always doing your best and continue getting on very well with each other. You have my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Dennett
Lead inspector

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