

South Petherwin Community Primary School

South Petherwin, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7LE

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is above average. Almost all pupils make at least the expected progress in both subjects and a high proportion makes better than expected progress, especially in writing.
- Teaching in almost all lessons is good across the school and some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and plan work that meets their individual needs.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. Pupils behave well around the school and in almost all lessons. A notable strength is the interesting discussions that take place between pupils about their work. There is little bullying and any which occurs is dealt with effectively.
- The school is well led and since the last inspection the quality of teaching, and hence pupils' achievement, has improved markedly. The management of teachers' performance is especially effective. The governing body provides a good level of challenge and support to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While by the end of Year 6 pupils have made good progress with their reading, the teaching of letters and sounds in Years R to 2 lacks consistency and precision, slowing progress at this stage.
- Although attendance is above the national average for primary schools, it is below the average for schools whose circumstances are similar. The school routinely authorises absence for non-medical matters such as holidays.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons taught by four teachers and, with the headteacher, observed children and pupils in Reception (Year R), and in Years 1 and 2, learning their letters and sounds (phonics).
- The inspector met with staff, members of the governing body and a group of pupils. He analysed documents, including those concerning pupils' attainment and progress, their safety, and the school's evaluation of its own performance.
- Ten parents or carers expressed their views of the school on the Parent View website and the inspector took these into account, together with the results of the school's own surveys of the views of parents.

Inspection team

Paul Sadler, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Six per cent of pupils, who have disabilities or special educational needs, are supported through school action and a further five per cent are supported through school action plus or have statements of special educational needs. These proportions are below national averages.
- All pupils are of White British ethnicity.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very low.
- On 1 September 2012 the school converted from community to foundation status and became part of the Launceston Rural Learning Trust, a group of five small schools that plan to share expertise, resources and facilities.
- The governing body provides childcare in the form of breakfast and after school clubs. The school shares its site with a pre-school which is not managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress in learning to read of children and pupils in Years R, 1 and 2 by:
 - improving the consistency of teachers and their assistants in their approach to teaching letters and sounds
 - using assessment more effectively to ensure that every phonics lesson enables each child or pupil to make the best possible progress
 - improving the leadership and monitoring of this aspect of the school's work.
- Raise the attendance of pupils to at least match that found nationally in schools in similar circumstances by:
 - working with parents and carers to minimise absence due to holidays being taken during the school term, and other non-medical absence
 - extending strategies to encourage high attendance among all pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **is good**

- In 2012 at the end of Year 6 all pupils attained at least the nationally expected level in English, and almost all did so in mathematics. This represents a significant improvement on the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress in both English and mathematics. Their progress in writing is outstanding, with the majority making better progress in Years 3 to 6 than is expected of pupils nationally.
- In Years R, 1 and 2, progress in learning to read is slower. This is because the teaching of letters and sounds is insufficiently rigorous.
- Observation of lessons and the school's assessments of pupils' progress in mathematics show that achievement in the subject is improving. For example, pupils in Year 3 who were not yet confident readers independently found the pattern of the five times table and could tell their teacher that $5 \times 15 = 75$.
- Discussion between pupils about their work is a notable strength. Examples range from Reception children, at school for one week, discussing their relative heights and ages, to Year 6 pupils' sophisticated discussion when solving a complex mathematical problem.
- The achievement of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is in line with, and sometimes exceeds, that of their classmates. For example, some pupils with very low attainment in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 have reached the nationally expected levels for all pupils in these aspects by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement across a wide range of subjects is good. Pupils rapidly acquire new skills in aspects such as information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and sport, and in art and design, a subject which they greatly enjoy.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- Almost all teaching is at least good. Teachers expect much of their pupils and generally use assessment well to plan lessons that are well matched to their needs.
- The ways in which teachers use marking and feedback to pupils are especially strong in Years 3 to 6. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were using the teacher's comments on their previous day's first draft of a piece of writing to improve their work.
- Lessons include lots of interesting tasks that motivate pupils, encourage them to learn collaboratively and independently and provide plenty of opportunities for them to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. A task in which pupils in Years 5 and 6 were comparing similarities and differences between two pieces of text was a good example which generated much intelligent debate among pupils. This lesson also made a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development as the teacher asked them to relate the texts to concepts of values, previously studied in religious education.
- Teaching assistants provide good quality additional support, especially for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Teachers' effective monitoring of pupils' progress enables them to spot any slowing of progress and put in place short-term help which is successful in bringing their progress back on track.
- Teaching of letters and sounds to pupils in Years R to 3 lacks the necessary consistency, rigour and pace. When observed, some pupils were working at levels lower than those of which they were capable, although the observations took place very early in the school year and teachers were rightly planning to carry out further assessments shortly.
- In a few otherwise effective lessons, pupils' progress was slowed by matters relating to the resources used. For example, when pupils in Years 1 and 2 were learning basic word processing skills, the computers were not configured in a way which allowed the pupils

ready access to the relevant program.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Older pupils care for younger ones, and pupils take pride in their excellent outdoor areas and play equipment, which is safe and well used.
- Pupils say there is very little bullying and that all feel they could approach a trusted adult should any occur. They agree that behaviour is good, as is confirmed by the school's records and the complete lack of exclusions in recent years.
- The behaviour of the few pupils with behavioural problems is managed well by teachers and their assistants. Instances where pupils' learning slowed because of the behaviour of others are very rare. Pupils know the dangers of issues such as cyber bullying and name calling, and also how to keep themselves safe in their rural environment, such as when cycling or visiting the beach.
- Whilst attendance is above the national average for primary schools, it is below that for schools in similar circumstances. School policies concerning term-time absence that is not health related, such as family holidays, are insufficiently rigorous. Improving attendance has not been seen as a current high priority by school leaders.

The leadership and management are good

- There has been much improvement since the last inspection, most notably in the quality of teaching where most of the improvement points at that time were focused. This in turn has led to improvements in pupils' achievements.
- The management of teachers' performance is rigorous and is a notable strength. The governing body is involved appropriately in monitoring the outcomes of performance review.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have developed a clear vision for the future of the school. They have played a full part in the establishment of the Launceston Rural Learning Trust, which aims to give pupils and staff access to a wider range of expertise, facilities and resources.
- There is a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a realistic assessment of its current effectiveness. Work to improve identified weaknesses has been successful.
- Middle leadership is effective, for example in managing support for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs. Leadership of literacy has been very effective in improving teaching and pupils' achievements in reading and writing in Years 3 to 6, less so in monitoring and improving the teaching of letters and sounds in Years R, 1 and 2.
- The school's curriculum has been developed well to increase pupils' motivation and the range of activities to which pupils have access. Especially good use is made of the outdoor environment, both in the excellent school grounds and in the local area.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good as was seen, for example, when the headteacher led an assembly at which pupils debated which charity the school should support in the coming year.
- The childcare managed by the governing body is of good quality and is enhanced by a wide range of additional activities, for example in sport, of which pupils would like more during the school day.
- The equally good achievement of all pupils by the end of Year 6 and the lack of discrimination, for instance through bullying, demonstrate the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity.
- The school's arrangements to ensure the safeguarding of pupils meet all requirements and

are of good quality.

- The school communicates well with parents and carers through regular newsletters and its website. The views of parents concerning the school are almost wholly positive.
- The local authority has provided effective support in enabling the school to become good. Rightly, school leaders especially value the support they have received concerning the education of pupils with disorders on the autistic spectrum.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has a good understanding of its role in challenging and supporting school leaders, and has carried out these responsibilities very effectively, leading to continuous improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement
 - has kept itself informed of developments and changes concerning the governance and organisation of schools, and has responded well to ensure that school leaders can continue to build on recent improvements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils' are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 111947 |
| Local authority | Cornwall |
| Inspection number | 405363 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 99 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Joanne Parsons |
| Headteacher | Timothy Gray |
| Date of previous school inspection | 17–18 November 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01566 776363 |
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