

# St Levan Primary School

The Bottoms, Penzance, Cornwall, TR19 6HD

**Inspection dates** 17–18 September 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Inspirational and determined leadership by the headteacher has led to rapid improvements in all areas of the school's work.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are highly ambitious for the pupils. They have an accurate view of how much pupils can achieve and how to help them do this.
- As a result of good and sometimes outstanding teaching, most pupils throughout the school are now making more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics than previously.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, standards achieved are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium are also making rapid progress, reaching similar standards to those of other pupils. This is also the case for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The behaviour of pupils is consistently good. They are very caring, show respect and courtesy for each other and staff, and play happily together in a safe and secure environment.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly and learn well because staff know them as individuals and plan activities which will interest them.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- To date, improvements have been led by the headteacher because other staff have not been in a position to take on additional responsibilities. Leadership has not therefore been shared out.
- A few pupils do not work as hard as they could and therefore do not achieve the levels of which they are capable.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in ten lessons or parts of lessons, of which three observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- She listened to pupils from Years 2 and 6 reading and spoke to a number of pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes to gather their views of the school.
- The inspector also spoke to a number of parents, and received three letters from parents which were also taken into consideration. In addition, she looked at the 11 responses to Parent View.
- The opinions of nine staff, expressed in the questionnaire as well as during discussions, were also considered.
- The inspector met with three members of the governing body and had a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority. She read reports produced by the local authority relating to its support for the school.
- She met frequently throughout both days with the headteacher to find out what improvements had been made since the last inspection.
- The inspector looked at displays of pupils' work around the school, and looked at the work in pupils' books during lesson observations to find out how well they learn. She also had a more detailed look at samples of books from classes throughout the school.
- The inspector looked at examples of pupils' work on displays, as well as work in their books. She also discussed pupils' work and progress with their teachers and the headteacher.
- A wide range of school documentation was examined, including evidence on the progress being made by pupils, documents relating to the performance management of teachers, school improvement planning, and the safeguarding of pupils.

## Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. The number on roll fell after the last inspection but is rising again now, and around one third of the pupils currently in the school have joined within the past two years.
- Following a lengthy period of instability in leadership, the headteacher joined the school in September 2013, on a three-days-per-week contract. This has been increased to four days per week from September 2014, which includes a teaching commitment.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provision was extended in February 2014 to include a Nursery, for children from the age of three.
- During 2013–14, pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, who are taught in Class 1, had three changes of teacher.
- A new, experienced teacher joined the school three weeks ago. She is the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and shares responsibility for teaching Class 1 with the headteacher.
- Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in Class 2.
- There are very few pupils in each year group. In 2013, there were no pupils in Year 2. There were too few pupils in last year's National Curriculum Tests for Year 6 to report on the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British or White Cornish heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and the proportion of pupils supported with an education care plan is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is money given to schools to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those in the care of the local authority, has increased over the past year but remains below the national average.
- The school is a member of the Penwith Education Trust, a partnership of local schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils every day.

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

- Build upon the improvements that have been made to pupils' achievement by:
  - ensuring that the increased rate of pupils' progress is maintained by sharing the responsibility for sustaining improvements among all teaching staff in this very small school
  - working with parents and pupils so that the few pupils who do not attain the standards they are capable of develop higher aspirations for their own achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Since joining the school, the headteacher has gained the support of the whole school community in making the necessary changes to ensure that the achievement of pupils improved. She leads by example, and has created an enthusiastic team of staff and governors who strive to do the best they can for the pupils.
- She has introduced rigorous procedures to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, to consistently good, and has tackled poor performance without hesitation.
- The headteacher quickly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses, and together with good support from the local authority, implemented detailed action plans to ensure more rapid progress for pupils in literacy and mathematics.
- The leadership of these improvements within school has been the responsibility of the headteacher, because other teachers have not up until now had the experience or skills necessary to lead them.
- Governors have supported the headteacher well, and they check very regularly that planned actions are happening and are effective. Their regular visits ensure they know the school thoroughly.
- Parents welcome the approachability of the headteacher, and those spoken to say that the school has 'allowed their children to flourish' and that the staff 'know their children as individuals'. They are unreservedly positive about all aspects of the school's work.
- The headteacher has set high expectations for pupils' achievement, which are now more widely shared with staff, parents and pupils. However, there are still some pupils who do not set themselves high expectations. This can be seen in some books when they do not complete as much work as they could in the time given, and in lessons where they need to be reminded to keep going.
- The headteacher regularly checks the work of teachers, and gives clear guidance for improvement. She has ensured appropriate professional development and set them clear targets and responsibility for the progress of their pupils.
- The curriculum is interesting for pupils, who particularly enjoy outdoor learning in the garden. Learning is enriched by specialist teachers, for example in drama and art. Pupils also benefit from the specialist teaching of information and communication technology at the local secondary school.
- The school has made good use of the special sports funding provided by the government to develop staff skills and to send pupils to the secondary school for specialist physical education teaching.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted in assemblies as well as by the wide range of drama, music and art experiences they enjoy. For example, within the past year, pupils have learnt songs and stories from the Caribbean, India, Japan, and art from Egypt and Canada. Reflective questions are raised, such as 'can we touch the wind?', to encourage pupils to think spiritually. By electing classmates for the school council, pupils learn about the importance of democracy in British society. Many other activities actively promote British values, particularly those of respect and tolerance for each other and for those of different traditions.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Following the last inspection, the governing body took prompt action to appoint a permanent headteacher. Since then, it has fully supported her in raising aspirations and setting more ambitious goals for pupils' achievement. Governors have undertaken training to help them carry out their role, including understanding information on pupils' progress, and are now able to closely question staff about their work, and hold them accountable for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors have ensured that the performance management of teachers is related closely to the progress of pupils, and have linked this to teachers' pay progression. The governors agreed the spending of the pupil premium funding, which is used imaginatively to give eligible pupils additional classroom support as well as access to breakfast club, extra-curricular events and the school camp. Governors know that the progress made by eligible pupils is similar to that of other pupils in the school. They diligently carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding the pupils in cooperation with the school staff.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good, and pupils of all ages play safely and sensibly together.
- Within lessons, pupils behave well and learning is never disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils show good attitudes towards work. Most say they enjoy a challenge, but not every pupil sets himself or herself the

challenge of reaching higher standards. As a result, some do not achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.

- Parents wholeheartedly believe their children are safe at school.
- The school's leaders have successfully promoted the importance of punctuality and regular attendance, which are now well above average.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and staff take the time to talk to pupils during playtime, and lunchtime when everyone eats together. This means that the staff have an excellent knowledge of each pupil, and consequently that each pupil feels valued.
- Pupils also feel safe at school, having trusted adults to turn to if needed. Pupils say they 'look out for each other', and that school is 'just like a big family'.
- Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in a range of situations. They say that 'there is no bullying here' but know that if it happened, their teachers would sort it out.
- The school's procedures for keeping the pupils safe are good. Older pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online, and quoted examples, such as never sharing their password or giving out personal information when using the internet.
- They also understand the importance of keeping safe when at the local beaches, and learn road safety in lessons.
- The school's procedures for safeguarding are thorough, and staff and governors are suitably trained.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. This is due in part to staff changes, but also to strategies for improving teaching which have been implemented. This has included, for example, the regular assessment of pupils' progress, and the introduction of more detailed marking of pupils' work. Pupils respond well to marking, and say it has helped them to tackle more challenging work.
- Reports to parents describe their child's approach to learning, their mastery of the key skills in literacy and numeracy, and their ability to sustain concentration. Extra-curricular achievements are noted also. As a result, parents are well informed.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because the headteacher has taught alongside teachers to model good and outstanding teaching, as well as provided additional training for them and the teaching assistants.
- Pupils' work is done carefully and neatly, and they show pride in its presentation.
- The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning through individual and small group support, as well as by taking responsibility for different aspects of school life such as through the school council or healthy living.
- Teachers develop pupils' skills well during lessons by questioning individuals to check their understanding. They encourage pupils to make use of resources to help them, and to think for themselves when solving problems. A good example was seen where pupils had to select from different lengths of fence to fit the perimeter of a field.
- Resources are well prepared and motivating for pupils. For example, amusing pictures encouraged pupils in Class 2 to write complex sentences, which they enjoyed sharing with a partner. Children in Class 1 thoroughly enjoyed sharing cookies or grapes for a picnic, not realising they were learning division.
- Pupils love learning outside in the garden. Class 1 pupils, for example, eagerly discussed whether objects they found there were alive or had never been alive. This is just one example of many which promote the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. During their time in school they make good progress, reaching standards above the national average by the end of Year 6. This ensures they are well prepared for the next stage of education.
- Although there were three changes of teacher in Key Stage 1 last year, pupils have made good progress in reading and mathematics, and steady progress in writing.
- Already this term, progress in writing has been tackled and there is clear evidence of rapid improvement with pupils responding well to strategies such as 'talk for writing'.
- Across the school, pupils who are supported with pupil premium funding are making good progress,

similar to that of other pupils, and there is little difference in their attainment. There are too few eligible pupils to be able to make secure judgements about their attainment compared to pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 2.

- Sometimes, the attainment of pupils who join the school in different year groups is not as high as other pupils. The teachers quickly identify how to ensure they catch up, and most make rapid gains in their learning, applying their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to other subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive additional help and guidance to help them with their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as with their social and emotional needs, which enables them to make similar rates of progress to other pupils. This is one way in which the school demonstrates its commitment to equal opportunities.
- Pupils are also nurtured by talented teaching assistants, who support the learning of individual pupils and small groups, thereby making a strong contribution to pupils' achievement.
- The more able pupils achieve well, reaching high levels of attainment in English and mathematics. They participate in gifted and talented sessions with pupils from other schools in the Penwith Education Trust which provides additional opportunities for them to stretch their thinking.
- Pupils are taught to read well, reaching high standards. In the phonics screening check, an increasing number of pupils are reaching the standard expected. Older pupils read fluently and with obvious enjoyment. Those listened to spoke eloquently about authors whose work they enjoyed.

**The early years provision**

**is good**

- Very small numbers of children join the Nursery or Reception class each year, but generally they arrive with skills and abilities typical for their age. They make good progress because staff know them well, and carefully match learning activities to meet their individual needs. By the end of each year, all children have met their early learning goals, and some have exceeded them.
- The headteacher sought the advice of the local authority's early years advisor to enhance the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and also created a secure outdoor learning area. Children can independently choose from an exciting range of activities which means that their curiosity is fostered, and they develop social skills by playing together.
- The children quickly learn the routines within the class, behave well, and enjoy joining in with their Years 1 and 2 classmates in early morning songs and circle time.
- The headteacher and governors have appointed an experienced Early Years Foundation Stage teacher who has already begun to evaluate the provision, but she has not yet had time to plan any changes.
- The teaching assistant for the Early Years Foundation Stage is very skilled, and works closely with the Class 1 teachers to ensure that the youngest pupils receive the support they need. Together, they make accurate observations of the children at work and play, building upon their interests to promote good learning.
- Parents are welcome in the Nursery and Reception, and are encouraged to share information about their children's learning at home.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies are implemented consistently, and governors ensure that all of the welfare requirements are met.

**What inspection judgements mean**

School		
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

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Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>from the date of this inspection.</p> <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>
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## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111803
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	442496

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	27
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sharon Brolly
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susannah Storey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20–21 November 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01736 810486
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