

# Inspection of St Ives Junior School

The Burrows, St Ives, Cornwall TR26 1DN

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Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2023

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a school that focuses on the development of the whole child. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. Parents agree. Staff greet pupils warmly each day. Pupils who join from the neighbouring infant school settle quickly.

Pupils are kind and respectful to each other. Staff effectively support the small number of pupils who sometimes find managing their emotions difficult. Bullying is rare. However, the school swiftly deals with any incidents that do occur.

However, the quality of education requires improvement. The school recognises this. It has rightly made significant changes to the curriculum, including placing the local area at the heart of these changes. However, for much of this work it is too early to have had an impact on how well pupils learn over time.

The school's work on pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils demonstrate the 'super powers' characteristics such as resilience and reflectiveness. Pupils build their independence through a series of residentials. This culminates in a trip to London to help pupils understand diversity and life in modern Britain. Pupils extend their interests through a range of clubs such as art, dance, netball and skateboarding. They learn new skills, such as baking, through the 'SIJS Award'.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The headteacher leads with integrity, drive and a clear vision. Along with her leadership team, she wasted no time in carrying out a thorough review of the school's work. This identified that the school's curriculum did not fit its local context. Teachers did not know how best to teach it. As a result, pupils' learning was weak. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Action plans show the right issues are being prioritised. The school is now moving in the right direction.

The school has now radically overhauled the curriculum. It did so through a shared process with staff. The curriculum is now well sequenced and ambitious. It precisely identifies the knowledge that pupils should know and when. In subjects, such as religious education (RE), pupils complete purposeful tasks which build on what they already know.

However, the high ambition in the curriculum plans is not fully reflected in the curriculum that pupils experience. On some occasions, teachers do not adapt the learning well enough to take into account what pupils already know. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In addition, teachers sometimes provide pupils with work that does not match the required learning in the curriculum plans. When this happens, pupils do not learn well.

The school does not have clear systems for checking what pupils know in the wider curriculum subjects. The school is unclear how well pupils learn in these subjects or where their gaps in knowledge are. As a result, pupils' gaps in learning persist.

The school places a high importance on reading. It quickly checks pupils' grasp of the phonics code on entry to the school. This helps teachers shape their teaching of reading. In reading lessons, pupils regularly rehearse reading out loud. This helps them to read fluently. Teachers model this well. However, the school's support for pupils who have fallen behind is not effective. Some staff give too much help to pupils or point to pictures instead of encouraging pupils to sound out words. This hinders them in becoming confident readers.

Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They enjoy the range of books available to them in 'The Hive'. Pupils recommend books to their peers through the reading ambassadors' role. They read a wide range of books by a range of authors.

Pupils develop leadership skills through roles such as house captains and pupil councillors, who also help suggest fundraising ideas. The 'SIJS Esedhvos' event helps pupils celebrate their Cornish identity through art, singing and poetry. This helps to bring the school community together.

Governors know the school's curriculum is still in its early stages. They know how the school uses funding for disadvantaged pupils. Governors have brokered external support to help them have an accurate view of the school's performance.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some staff do not provide effective support for pupils who have fallen behind in reading. This slows their progress in becoming confident readers. The school should ensure that staff have the subject knowledge to support pupils who have fallen behind.
- Teachers sometimes do not implement the curriculum with the same high ambition as curriculum plans. They do not adapt the learning well enough for pupils, including those with SEND, or provide tasks which match the knowledge identified in the curriculum. As a result, pupils do not learn some of the curriculum well and have gaps in their knowledge. The school should ensure that staff know how to implement the curriculum in line with its expectations.
- The school does not know how well pupils are learning in the wider curriculum subjects and where their gaps in knowledge are. As a result, teaching sometimes does not address these gaps. The school should ensure that systems for checking what pupils have learned are clear and used to address gaps in learning.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111800
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288122
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Eric Nicholas
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ali Watts
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stivesjunior.org.uk">www.stivesjunior.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 September 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in January 2022.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils, a representative from the local authority, an external school improvement partner and representatives from the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils in RE and physical education.
- The lead inspector listened to a group of pupils read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil survey. An inspector also spoke to parents at the start of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cameron Lancaster

Ofsted Inspector

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