



Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111823
LEA Cornwall
Inspection number 278786
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 16 November 2005
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Burgess RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	St Martin
School category	Community		Helston
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cornwall TR12 6BT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01326 231447
Number on roll	37	Fax number	01326 231447
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Elaine Page
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Ms Helen Sandle-Baker

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 16 November 2005 - 16 November 2005	Inspection number 278786
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

St Martin-in-Meneage is a small primary school serving a fairly isolated rural area on the Lizard Peninsular. Almost all of the 41 pupils in the two classes are White British. Very unusually, there are more than twice as many boys as girls. No pupils are entitled to free school meals. A slightly above average number of pupils are on the special needs register but none has a statement of special need. Pupils seldom change schools other than as eleven year olds. When children start school, their attainment is broadly average in most areas of learning but not quite as good in language and literacy skills. However, with small numbers involved, any one year can be above or below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Martin-in-Meneage is a good school with outstanding features and no real weaknesses. This matches the school's own view of its overall quality although in some areas the high standards it sets itself mean it underestimates how good it is. Parents, pupils and members of the local community are closely involved in the school's work and proud of its achievements. Areas for improvement include slightly lower standards in writing than in reading and mathematics and the need for more multicultural opportunities. Both have been identified as priorities by the school which is constantly looking to innovate and improve. Good teaching ensures that learners make good and sometimes very good progress and the standards they achieve are high in several areas of their work. Pupils' personal development is excellent and the quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. Pupils are offered an outstandingly rich range of stimulating and relevant activities to promote their learning and their personal development. Music is a strength of the school. By enabling this, good leadership and management, notably by the head, ensures that value for money is good.

What the school should do to improve further

To build on its many strengths the school should: • build on its willingness to innovate to bring standards in pupils' writing up to those seen in reading and mathematics • look for ways of incorporating the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own into the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is currently good and standards are well above average in most year groups. This is not just in literacy, numeracy and science. For instance, standards in music are much higher than usual. Having had a good start in the pre-school group attached to the school, children in the Reception group settle very quickly. They make very good progress in all the areas of learning alongside their older classmates. With attainment on entry usually average, and standards when they leave usually above and sometimes well above average, pupils' achievement over the years has been good. However, this year's national test results are even better than usual with both seven and eleven year olds doing especially well, which represents very good progress. In some years the presence of pupils with special needs in the small year groups means that, although these children make good progress, standards are understandably lower. In more typical years, pupils achieve slightly higher standards in mathematics and reading than in writing. This is borne out by the evidence of pupils' work this year and ties in with weaker language and literacy skills when children start school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school is rightly proud that pupils' personal development is excellent. Parents are very pleased that their children are so happy and motivated. Attendance is never a problem and pupils feel that the adults take really good care of them. Children are confident and feel good about themselves thanks to the way each has the opportunity to be active and succeed in a range of activities. They benefit greatly from being a part of a small, tightly knit community where they are seen as important individuals. Children in their first term in school work and play happily alongside older schoolmates who act as very good role models. The school works hard to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own welfare, work, and behaviour, through its own 'Three Rs'. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and understand what is expected of them. Behaviour is very good. The school is working towards 'Healthy School' status and parents and pupils are responding very positively. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness and most aspects of cultural understanding. Religious education includes a suitable amount of teaching about other faiths but the school could do more to prepare its pupils for life in a much more culturally diverse society than the Lizard Peninsular.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The cumulative impact of consistently good teaching is shown by pupils' achievements. The use of high quality specialist teachers in non core subjects and recent even better results mean that much teaching is very effective. Pupils benefit greatly from the continuity which comes from being in a small school. Their confidence, enthusiasm, and very good behaviour make a big contribution to how well they learn. Much of this stems from the motivation provided by the imaginative range of activities planned for them and the excellent use of every possible resource. Teachers have developed very good strategies for ensuring that all pupils are challenged in the mixed age classes. Well used, very good systems for keeping an eye on pupils' progress are a big help in this regard, as is the contribution of very competent teaching assistants. Parents also play an important part in children's learning by supporting their children at home and by helping in school, as in the twice weekly group reading in Class 2.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding range of learning opportunities for pupils much enriched by a remarkable range of extras, very commendable in such a small school. This was borne out during the inspection. I was particularly impressed by the fantastic range of instrumental and choral music which echoed through the old school hall in the morning. Older pupils enjoyed a table tennis club at lunchtime. In the afternoon,

Class 1 left excitedly in their 'wellies' to explore the woods with a crumpet feast they had made the day before. Class 2 pupils, meanwhile, explored the derivation of English words in a Latin lesson. Pupils' work and teachers' plans show that this level of activity is not unusual. Very good provision for literacy and numeracy extends to higher achievers and to children who are having difficulty with their learning. The latter are often given extra help in the classroom and have tasks tailored to their needs. Good arrangements are made to make sure each child covers everything he or she should. Excellent links made between subjects make learning more relevant and enjoyable. Nelson and Trafalgar provide the current theme with tree planting, writing, art, information and communication technology (ICT) and drama being used imaginatively to help pupils understand their importance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding aspect of the school's work. A parent writes that this is a school which 'recognises and celebrates the strengths of each individual child, giving them time to mature in a secure, yet challenging, environment'. This says it all. Parents are very happy that the school goes out of its way to make sure their children are happy, safe and secure. Pupils are very pleased that this is achieved without 'playing safe' with the range of activities in which they are encouraged to take part. Each child is treated as an individual and all staff routinely keep a close eye on their learning and personal needs. Pupils know there is always someone to go to if they need help and any problems are dealt with promptly and sensitively. Working closely with parents and outside agencies, staff pay very close attention to vulnerable children and those who need extra help. Issues around child protection and health and safety are taken very seriously. Starting school is made much easier by having the pre-school group on site and closely involved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school is good. When the school was last inspected, the report commented on the very positive impact the, then new, head was having on the school. The school's record, since then, shows that she has continued to provide the school with very good leadership. Many significant improvements have been made to the school environment and the education provided and more initiated such as the 'ambitious' school garden project and the recent introduction of Latin. Through the headteacher, the school has made very good use of a stream of national and local opportunities to develop its work. For instance, performance management has been used as an important tool in raising standards and expectations among staff. A particular strength of the school is its willingness to innovate and be flexible in achieving its aims. For example, older pupils are currently studying aspects of four languages at the same time. Good use is made of regular checks and consultations to make sure any areas for improvement are recognised and sorted out promptly. With

governors, staff, parents and pupils all involved in the process, this promotes a genuine shared understanding and sense of purpose. The governance of the school is good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St Martin-in-Meneage Community Primary School St Martin Helston Cornwall TR12 6BT

16 November 2005

Dear Pupils,

I would like to say how much I enjoyed my visit to your school. You all made me feel very welcome. I was very impressed by the enthusiastic way you told me about and showed me what you do in school.

This is what I liked most about your school:

you take a real pride in your school and thoroughly enjoy the amazing range of activities your teachers and helpers provide for you

your very good behaviour, ability to get on without needing too much help, and interest in what you do means you learn a lot

all the adults help and look after you very well – and you look after each other very well too
you are especially good at making music

your headteacher is very good at making it possible for you, and all the adults in the school, to succeed and be confident enough to have a go at doing really challenging things.

To make things even better, this is what I have asked your school to do now:

make your writing as good as your work in other subjects

give you more opportunities to learn about the traditions and ways of life of people from different parts of the world.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Burgess Lead Inspector