



St Neot Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111964
LEA Cornwall
Inspection number 278823
Inspection dates 1 December 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Peter Clifton RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Loveny Road
School category	Community		St Neot
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 6NL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01579 320580
Number on roll	73	Fax number	01579 321253
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Mary Martyn
Date of previous inspection	1 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr David Collins

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 1 December 2005 - 1 December 2005	Inspection number 278823
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its pupils from the rural area of St Neot. The 66 pupils are taught in three classes: one class with reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils; the second class with pupils from Years 3 and 4; and the third with those from Years 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is just above average but has varied considerably over the past three years. In recent years, there has been significant movement of pupils in and out of school other than at the usual times of joining and leaving, but this is now about average. The pupils are almost all from a White British background. The school has very recently moved into new purpose built premises, which has involved considerable planning and organisation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Neot Community Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school evaluated itself as good. Despite this difference in judgements, the school is aware of its overall strengths and the areas for improvement identified by inspectors. The school is soundly placed to make further improvement. It has used funding well to make significant improvements in accommodation and resources and provides satisfactory value for money. Parents are very pleased with what the school provides.

The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage. Standards on entry vary greatly because of the very small number of pupils in each year. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school overall, although it is often stronger in Years 3 to 6. Standards reached are slightly above average although there is some underachievement in writing in 2005 which is holding down the results in English. Pupils' understanding about how to improve their work is underdeveloped.

Pupils are well cared for and feel safe. They enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good, both in lessons and more generally around the school. They cooperate well with each other and have good attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum provided are satisfactory. Overall, progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Weaknesses identified in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) have been remedied and standards are rising.

The headteacher has successfully led the school through a potentially disruptive period of change. The school has rightly identified the need to develop the work of staff as curriculum co-ordinators. Although monitoring is in place the school's evaluation of its weaknesses are not always identified sufficiently sharply to support improvement effectively. The school improvement plan has too many targets and these are not being measured specifically to judge progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and further develop pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work.
- Sharpen the focus of the school improvement plan so that it is clearly linked to raising standards and progress made.
- Develop the effectiveness of coordinators so that they can manage development in their areas of responsibility and target extra support.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The results of national tests in Year 2 from 2000 to 2003 were broadly average and above average overall in 2004. In 2005, the results were below average and showed a dip in both reading and writing. However, as the starting points for these children at the beginning of the Reception class were lower than those in previous years, their progress was satisfactory overall, with some pupils making good progress. The school

has rightly started to keep information about attainment on entry to the school to measure the value which it adds to pupils' performance.

In Years 3 to 6, pupils made consistently good progress in 2003 and 2004. In 2005, the progress was weaker; it was good in reading, mathematics and science but just satisfactory in writing where there was underachievement. The school set itself challenging targets for English and mathematics and reached these at Level 4, the expected level, or better. Targets for the higher Level 5 were not met. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to that of other pupils. Overall, progress and achievement in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory.

In the previous report standards in ICT were unsatisfactory. Since that time the provision has improved and standards are now average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good throughout the school and they are keen to do well. At lunchtimes the pupils eat together sociably and play outside cooperatively. Pupils understand about possible risks associated with strangers and report that there is no bullying in the school. Any disagreements are dealt with quickly, and the pupils are confident about approaching staff to deal with any difficulties.

Attendance is above average and pupils arrive punctually to lessons. There are very few unauthorised absences. Pupils enjoy learning, and older pupils are enthusiastic about practical aspects of lessons and using computers. Pupils know about eating healthily and take up the good opportunities provided for sport and exercise. The school day starts with all pupils involved in energetic exercise in the hall.

The pupils' involvement in the community is good. This includes local sporting activities such as 'Hit the Surf' in nearby Newquay. They are regularly involved in supporting local and national charities. Pupils develop good working relationships and understand the importance of working as a team to do well in sport and other activities. They willingly take on and enjoy responsibility.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, with strengths in Years 3 to 6. There are some good examples of planning, but sometimes it is not always sufficiently detailed to support learning for all pupils. In the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class, worksheets are overused and this inhibits the pupils' independent work.

Throughout the school the teachers develop very good relationships with pupils. They expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Teachers often use a good range of

teaching approaches, including good use of laptop computers to support writing. Following recent very cold weather, pupils in Years 5 and 6 came up with imaginative titles for their work, such as 'Snow Devil Traps Thousands'.

Teachers know their pupils well. However, this knowledge is not always shared effectively and pupils have a patchy understanding of how to improve. The use of writing frameworks is helping pupils understand what to include to improve their written work. Marking is regular but inconsistent in quality. Sometimes comments are too brief and insufficiently analytical. There are some good examples in Years' 4 to 6 literacy and homework books.

Teaching assistants provide good support and encouragement particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They are knowledgeable about individual pupils and have a patient approach. The reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class gets good support in literacy, for example, in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is suitably adapted to meet the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. There are some good examples of displays in the school of topic work about Greeks which incorporate written work, art and design and research on the internet. The school is a bright and stimulating place in which the pupils can learn. There are excellent outdoor facilities including good play provision for the Foundation Stage.

The school has improved the provision in ICT since the previous inspection and this is now satisfactory. There are sufficient computers which are used well. However, there are weaknesses in how writing is developed, which the school is beginning to address.

Pupils particularly enjoy the good range of after school activities. They are involved in a range of creative activities, for example with artists and musicians in residence. The large collage at the front of the school involving aspects of local history provides a warm welcome to the school. There are many trips out of school providing a good range of learning opportunities. Pupils talk about the residential visit to Somerset enthusiastically.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' welfare is a high priority; pupils are well looked after and feel safe in school. The school has a strong sense of community which is reflected in the pupils' confidence and the good relationships. The school council is diligent, active and members take their responsibilities seriously. They are proud of the changes that have resulted from their work such as improvements in playground activities.

Effective child protection procedures are in place and up to date. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles. It has responded well to requests by parents to improve

the quality of food and a balanced diet at lunchtimes. Healthy snacks are available at playtime.

Pupils are not always given enough information and guidance about how to make improvements to the levels of their work and targets are not referred to sufficiently regularly for pupils to have a clear view about their own progress. This is inhibiting them in setting their own targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully managed a difficult period of transition in the school during which new accommodation has been built and moved into. This move has taken up much time of both the headteacher and the governing body and has, to some extent, limited development in others areas. Governors are very supportive of the school but are reluctant to identify weaknesses. There is a strong team approach between the headteacher, governors and other staff. The school is soundly placed to move forward and provides satisfactory value for money.

The work of the curriculum coordinators in evaluating subjects is underdeveloped. This is identified by the school as an area for improvement. The school has entered into an agreement with three other local small schools to provide support through joint working, to improve the effectiveness of subject management. The school has an effective range of systems in place to monitor its work. However, overall, evaluation does not always identify weaknesses sharply enough and as a result improvement is not sufficiently well targeted. The school improvement plan has too many targets and it does not identify how progress can be measured sufficiently well.

The school has worked effectively to ensure that there is no perceived discrimination and pupils are confident that they are doing well. Tracking of pupils' progress across the school is securely in place across Years 3 to 6 but underdeveloped in reception and Years 1 and 2. The school's own view of the progress made by the pupils is not sufficiently accurate in these earlier years.

There have been some significant improvements since the previous inspection. However, developments in assessment practice have only been partially addressed and there are still weaknesses in subject management. Overall progress has been satisfactory, although the school rates this as good.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	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?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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 Neot Community Primary School Loveny Road St Neot Cornwall PL14 6NL

02 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and telling us so much about it. We think your school is a happy and friendly place and we really liked your new classrooms. There are some lovely displays of your work around the school and it is such a bright and cheerful place.

What we most liked about your school.

- Your good attendance and behaviour.
- The way you play together and look after each other and enjoy being together.
- Your good attitudes to learning and how hard you work.
- The improvements made in ICT and how you are now using computers to help you with your work.

To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher to work on:

- making sure that you get all the help you need to improve your writing
- identifying, and planning for, what needs to be improved in the school more carefully
- making sure that the teachers in charge of subjects manage improvement carefully and give you extra help if needed.

I hope that you find these comments helpful.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton Lead inspector