



# Lostwithiel School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 111916  
**Local Authority** Cornwall  
**Inspection number** 289100  
**Inspection date** 15 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Margaret Dickinson HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Bodmin Hill
<b>School category</b>	Community		Lostwithiel
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		PL22 0AJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01208 872339
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	130	<b>Fax number</b>	01208 872339
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Edward-Collins
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Carolyn Angela Huxley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 January 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Lostwithiel School is situated in the small rural town of Lostwithiel. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds and most are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average. Children enter the Reception class with broadly average standards. The school has recently been awarded national Healthy School status and has had a Quality Assurance Award for its Early Years work for several years. The headteacher has been in post since January 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The overall effectiveness of Lostwithiel School is satisfactory. There are some good features. The great majority of parents are supportive of the school and confirm that their children are well cared for and enjoy attending. Pupils have positive attitudes and feel that the school is a happy place to be. They behave well, have good relationships and benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum. The school looks for every opportunity to organise trips, bring in visitors, and link with other local schools and colleges to enrich the pupils' experiences. Pupils particularly like the themed weeks and after school activities. A strength of the school is the good emphasis on keeping healthy. Pupils talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the need to stay active and eat healthily, and they put this into practice at breaks and lunchtimes.

Provision is outstanding in Reception and children get off to a flying start. Standards are above average by the end of Reception and generally remain above average until Year 2. Over recent years, the local authority's monitoring has shown that pupils have not always made secure progress between Years 3 and 6. Standards have been around average by Year 6 and they should have been higher. The school has already taken appropriate steps to address this and is in a position to make sure that standards rise.

Teaching is satisfactory and this leads to satisfactory achievement. There are some pockets of outstanding teaching in Reception, Year 1 and Year 5. However, too much is satisfactory. In these cases, the pace of learning is too slow and teachers' expectations not high enough, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.

The relatively new headteacher and her senior managers work well as a team and are committed to raising achievement. The headteacher is very aware of aspects that could be improved. Since her appointment, she has focused on the right things to move the school forward, whilst remaining sensitive to the fact that several members of staff were new this year. A focus on writing, for example, has led to improved standards. The new system for tracking each pupil's progress is also starting to have a positive impact on achievement, through raising teachers' awareness of pupils' existing standards and making better use of National Curriculum levels. However, the tracking sheets are not yet used to full effect to monitor how well pupils make progress and to identify those who might be underachieving. Teaching has been monitored but some of the school's judgements are over-generous and there has been insufficient attention to how well different groups of pupils are learning in lessons. A good feature is the improvement in the marking and assessing of pupils' work. The information on pupils' progress is shared with parents and some pupils are now gaining a better understanding of how well they are doing, but this is more effective in some classes than others.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the quality of teaching, so that more is good.

- Use the new systems for tracking pupils' standards more effectively, to monitor and promote pupils' progress, and plan work at the right level for all pupils, especially higher attainers.
- Increase the rigour of monitoring at all levels, ensuring a clear focus on how well pupils learn and make progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children achieve very well in Reception. Their progress is monitored carefully and they benefit from high quality teaching and an interesting, lively curriculum. The large majority reach the expected standards for their age and many exceed them. By Year 2, standards have been consistently above average for several years but, in 2006, Year 2 results declined in reading, writing and mathematics, and these pupils did not reach their potential. However, they are now making satisfactory progress, and are catching up particularly well in reading. Standards at Year 6 have been around average for several years but data show pupils have not always built successfully upon their previous standards. Achievement is now improving. The school's focus on writing is helping to raise standards. For example, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached the higher Level 5 in writing increased in 2006.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils feel safe in school and know who to go to if they have problems. There is occasional bullying but pupils and parents confirm this is dealt with effectively. Pupils are courteous and friendly. One child said, 'The best thing about Lostwithiel is that you are made to feel very welcome here.' Members of the School Council are pleased they can put forward ideas and make some decisions, such as suggesting equipment for 'Huff and Puff'. Several said they enjoyed giving a presentation in the council chambers about their Healthy Schools Award. Pupils raise money for charities and good causes and enjoy taking part in local events. Their good personal development and sound academic progress prepare them satisfactorily for their secondary education and future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The most effective teaching is characterised by varied, challenging tasks that interest and motivate the pupils. The teaching draws on a wide range of strategies to promote and extend pupils' understanding. Pupils enjoy these lively lessons. In Reception, teaching is extremely well planned. Lessons are pacy and interesting and all the adults constantly interact with children, promoting

their learning very effectively. The work of teaching assistants is a strong feature across the school. They make a good contribution to pupils' overall learning. A weaker feature is that teaching does not always cater for the full range of abilities within the class. Higher attaining pupils sometimes lose out because teachers do not take into account the standards they have already reached. In mathematics, for example, higher attaining pupils sometimes do work that is too easy for them, or they finish early and are uncertain what to do next. Satisfactory lessons often move at a slow pace and pupils lose interest and concentration. They say they find some lessons a bit boring.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils benefit from a good curriculum which makes a strong contribution to their personal and social development and their enjoyment of school. In the Foundation Stage, children benefit from a very well planned and broad curriculum, which enables them to achieve well across all areas of learning. The school is good at planning links between subjects and it takes good steps to broaden pupils' awareness of other traditions and cultures beyond their own. Through good links with the local secondary school, pupils have the opportunity to learn French. They appreciate the chance they have to learn a musical instrument. The school's plans include varied tasks for pupils of differing abilities, but they do not always provide enough challenge for the more able children.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

In this small and friendly school, every child is well known to all the staff. Pupils are well cared for, and the good relationships are a positive factor in pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Arrangements for making sure pupils keep safe are robust and efficient and follow current guidance. Targets are set for some pupils to encourage them to behave well and this system is working well. However, setting academic targets for pupils is still at an early stage. They are too general in some classes and are set on a termly basis, which is not frequent enough for pupils who achieve them more quickly. They are not always phrased in a way that pupils can understand, and some pupils are not aware of their targets at all, so cannot use these to help them improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new leadership team has come together well. There is a shared sense of direction and purpose and a clear focus on pupils doing well. The headteacher and co-ordinators acknowledge that pupils should be reaching higher standards by Year 6, given their attainment on entry. The school is now in a position to monitor every pupil's progress each half-term and revise the pupils' targets if necessary. Information from teachers' assessments is being used appropriately to target specific groups of pupils to provide additional support. However,

whilst there are some signs that this is starting to raise standards, much is still at an early stage. Monitoring of teaching is happening regularly but currently focuses more on the teaching than pupils' learning. It is not sharp enough to bring about sustained improvement. Little attention has been given to looking at pupils' books or talking to them about their learning when evaluating the school's effectiveness. Governors are supportive. They have allocated responsibilities for overseeing an aspect of the school improvement plan and visit the school regularly to monitor its effectiveness. However, they have not got a sufficiently clear view of data, and how well pupils achieve, to inform their judgements about the school's effectiveness.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We visited your school recently and I wanted to write and thank you all for giving us such a warm welcome and for talking to us about your work and your school. Your school is satisfactory with some good features and I thought you would like to know more about some of the good things we found and one or two things that could be even better.

You enjoy coming to school, behave well and try hard in lessons. You all work successfully together and take care of one another. We were very impressed by the Reception class. The children there are doing really well. We saw some really good teaching in Reception, Year 1 and Year 5. The headteacher and teachers organise a lot of interesting things for you all to do, such as the visitors who come into school, the trips, special weeks and events. We were very pleased to see you want to keep yourselves healthy by staying active and eating the right things.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do a few things to make your school even better:

- To make sure that all lessons help you learn well, and that everyone has work to do which is at the right level for them.
- To keep a careful eye on how well each of you is doing to make sure you are all making the progress you should.

You can help by continuing to work hard and getting the most out of school so that you all do well in the future.

Thank you once again for being so friendly and helpful.