

# St Cleer Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111961
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	289119
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jonathan Palk

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	259
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	R H Foulkes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Stoate
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2001
<b>School address</b>	St Cleer Liskeard PL14 5EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01579 342196
<b>Fax number</b>	01579 340711

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Cleer is an average sized, village primary school in rural Cornwall. In an area of some social and economic disadvantage, the school has an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils with statements for specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. High numbers of pupils join the school other than at the normal time of admission. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where its motto 'to love, to learn, to live' is clear to see. The dedication of the staff and their warm relationships with pupils and parents make it a joyful place to learn. One parent summed up the sentiment of many when they said, 'The teachers and all the staff work extremely hard to make the school a place where children can learn through enjoyment and discovery'.

Pupils' achievement is good and they reach standards that are above average by the time they leave school. A good start is made in the Reception Year and this goes a long way to overcoming the difficulties in communication and language and low levels of maturity, which many have when they start school. Progress is good through the school because of the consistently good teaching. The teaching is strongly focused on providing interesting and challenging activities that are well matched to pupils' needs.

The personal development of pupils is one of the outstanding features of the school. The excellent provision helps all pupils to develop self-confidence, have pride in their work and raise their expectations. An excellent curriculum 'celebrates life'. Through the many opportunities in sport, art and drama the pupils learn to understand the importance of keeping healthy and staying safe. There are excellent opportunities for the children to develop awareness of other people beyond their immediate community and regular contact with local organisations helps improve their enjoyment of school and increase their understanding of the world of work. Activities are interesting and staff keep close checks on the progress pupils are making. They share this information with pupils to ensure the work is hard enough so that each pupil can achieve all they should.

There is good quality care, guidance and support. Pastoral care is very strong; there are very effective procedures in place to ensure that the pupils feel safe and have their views taken into account. A well established and effective school council plays an important role in this aspect. The provision for morning 'wake up' and playtime activities is very good and helps pupils to keep fit, play harmoniously and learn to co-operate. The partnership with parents in helping them support their children outside school is an underdeveloped area and one the school has recognised in its future improvement plan.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The inspiring leadership of the headteacher is a key factor in the school's success. She is dedicated to ensuring the highest quality curriculum for all pupils and is highly successful in drawing on the support of those outside the school to achieve this. The leadership and management team, including the governors, is creative in making plans and is keen to try new ideas to help make the school an exciting place to learn. They fully understand the importance of evaluating these plans and measuring the impact of their initiatives on pupils' learning.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance the partnership with parents in supporting their children's learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children start with levels of skills that are below expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Despite good achievement through the Foundation Stage, a significant

minority begin Year 1 with lower than average standards in this area of learning. Progress in personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world is outstanding because of the very strong emphasis placed on these important aspects of learning.

From Year 1 to Year 6 the pupils make good progress. Standards in writing have risen substantially since a range of measures, including daily writing activities and the use of strategies to help those who are underachieving in reading, have been introduced. The teaching of joined handwriting and the use of drama and role-play started in the Reception classes is helping to improve standards in boys' writing further. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are confident storytellers and there are some very able writers in all classes. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in writing and mathematics is now above average through Years 3 to 6. This is a consequence of providing greater challenge in mathematics lessons and varied and exciting opportunities for writing.

Standards in science have continued to improve year on year because the curriculum encourages enquiry and research skills. High quality artwork is visible in every class and the performing arts have a high status with a strong emphasis on moral themes.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attitudes and behaviour. They say bullying is rare and that adults deal with inappropriate behaviour quickly and fairly. Excellent gains in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable pupils to appreciate the achievement of others and show care and consideration for one another. Through the many stimulating opportunities to study local and world culture the pupils develop a mature understanding of their place at the heart of their village and as part of the world community.

Pupils contribute exceptionally well to the school and local communities. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example, as playground leaders and peer mediators. The school council makes an outstanding contribution to school life. It ensures pupils' views are very well represented and gives them a valuable introduction to the workings of democracy.

Raising money for charities, together with links maintained with schools in Europe and Africa, helps pupils develop a strong awareness of wider social and economic issues. A strong focus on basic skills, together with many opportunities to develop teamwork and enterprise skills, lays a firm foundation for pupils' future working lives. Work related to gaining 'Healthy School' status has given pupils an excellent understanding of the need for safety, exercise and healthy eating.

Attendance has improved and is now average. However, there is still room for improvement as some parents take their children on holiday in term-time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching is the key factor behind pupils' improved levels of performance. Across the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and good subject knowledge. Careful planning ensures tasks are nearly always well matched to pupils' different abilities and

results in pupils' enthusiastic participation in lessons. In the Reception Year, effective teaching provides a good balance between teacher-led activities and independently chosen tasks across all areas of learning. Throughout the school, clear explanations at the start of lessons ensure pupils know what lessons are about and what they will be learning. However, sometimes too much time is spent in giving overlong introductions to lessons. This, together with instances of slowing of pace in some lessons, reduces the impact on learning.

Recently acquired interactive whiteboards are used well to give an effective visual stimulus to learning. In many instances, teachers' perceptive questioning, together with frequent paired discussions, helps pupils clarify their thinking and consider carefully their responses. Throughout the school, teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers' thorough marking, together with pupils' clear knowledge of their individual learning targets, gives them a good understanding of how to improve. As one pupil stated, 'It's good to know your targets, they help you to do even better.'

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The exceptionally wide and creative curriculum starts in the Reception Year with the use of high quality resources to encourage exploration and stimulate thinking. Information and communication technology is developed well through all subjects and this helps pupils to be more independent. The attention to a high quality provision through numerous visits and visitors contributes significantly to pupils' achievement and personal development. Pupils are in regular contact with schools in Europe and Africa that enrich their geography and history studies. They are working with local environmental organisations on projects that raise their awareness of environmental sustainability and add tremendous value to their science and ICT skills. Through opportunities to work with artists, artisans and actors the pupils gain a real respect for what they can achieve beyond everyday lessons. An excellent and varied range of activities after school and visits to venues away from the community such as the Scilly Isles help build resilience and determination

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Impressive pastoral care successfully motivates children in their personal and academic growth. Staff nurture vulnerable children well. Bullying is rare because behaviour is well managed and pupils know where they can turn to for help. There are good arrangements for supporting pupils who arrive at school other than at the usual time of the year. However, the partnership with parents of children still at pre-school in preparing them for school is underdeveloped.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and these pupils make good progress. Good quality external agency support and advice is obtained but there are not enough specialist resources and training for fully meeting the needs of the small minority of children with increasingly complex needs. National safeguarding children requirements are met and risk assessment is thorough. Innovative academic guidance on progress and targets, using regular teacher interviews from Reception class onwards, is shared with each child so they know how to improve. This is raising standards.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The headteacher's vision for the school combined with a highly effective team of staff and governors have improved provision year on year. The school is outward looking and makes the most of its strong partnerships with other schools and the local and international community. Some very creative work has been done to involve national organisations such as the British Council, the Heritage Fund and the Eden project, in the life of the school. This has contributed well to the curriculum and the expectation pupils have of themselves as future citizens.

Tracking pupils' progress and evaluating the school's performance on all fronts are impressive. The pupils', teachers' and governors' involvement in this is very effective. Systems are analytical and pinpoint precisely where improvement is required. Hence since the last inspection the school has raised standards in writing significantly and at the same time continued to enrich the curriculum and provide even greater challenge in science and information and communication technology. The school shows an outstanding capacity to continue to improve. If there is one flaw in the overall quality of management it is the governing body's preparation for a potential fall in the numbers of children starting school, as the local birth rate falls.





## Annex A

## 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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

**Annex A****Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

16 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Cleer Primary School, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 5EA

I am writing to tell you about the things we discovered when we visited your school. The first and most important thing to tell you is that we really enjoyed our visit to your lovely school. We were very impressed by the way you behaved when we were there. We felt very well looked after by the way you opened doors for us and came to tell us about the exciting things you do at school. We could see how much you enjoy school by the happy way you play together and how well you concentrate in lessons. It is very clear that all the adults are working well together to make sure you get the best education. They know you well and take good care of you. It is good to see that the work you are given is well matched to your abilities and you are challenged to reach good standards. Many of you say that work has got harder but as one of you said, 'Hard work is better because it helps us learn lots.'

You are fortunate to have such an excellent headteacher and dedicated governors. They have done such a lot to provide good teaching, a lovely building to work in and a wonderful range of activities and experiences for you. They are extremely good at checking on all aspects of the school to make sure that the improvements they make are having a good effect. We are pleased that they involve you in this process. Consequently we know the school will continue to flourish and serve as a great example to others. We know that parents like your school because they wrote to us telling us. Like you they like to see that you are getting the chance to meet many people from different parts of the world and with interesting jobs. We have asked the headteacher and governors to get more involved with helping parents prepare younger children for school and work more closely with parents of the children who have very specific needs.

Thank you for helping us and enjoy the summer holiday.

Jonathan Palk Lead inspector