



# Pensilva Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111963  
**Local Authority** Cornwall  
**Inspection number** 289121  
**Inspection date** 17 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Anthony Shield

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

|   |                    |                         |                   |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary            | <b>School address</b>   | School Road       |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Foundation         |                         | Pensilva          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4-11               |                         | Liskeard PL14 5PG |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01579 362546      |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 163                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01579 363424      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Caroline Smith    |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | James Britzman    |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 17 October 2006    |                         |                   |

|                          |   |                                    |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Age group</b><br>4-11 | <b>Inspection date</b><br>17 October 2006 | <b>Inspection number</b><br>289121 |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Pensilva Primary School is smaller than most primary schools, and serves a rural community. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and on entry most pupils' language and social skills are average or a little below. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. The school has recently undergone a change of headship and for two terms was led by an acting headteacher.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Pensilva Primary is a satisfactory school, with some significant strengths. It very is well regarded by parents. "I feel privileged that my children have been part of the Pensilva family" is how one satisfied parent put it. The school generates a strong sense of family and of care for one another. Relationships amongst the school community are very good, and pupils greet visitors with a cheerful smile and confident greeting. The personal development of pupils is good and a strength of the school. The high standard of pastoral care and personal development has been successfully maintained through an uncertain transitional period for the school. However, with the new headteacher leading with a clear sense of purpose and vision, the school has been re-energised and is poised for further improvement.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year. Teaching for this age group encourages good social skills and a love for learning. As a result, most children reach expected levels by the time they start in Year 1, with some doing better than this. Achievement during Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, improvements in writing over the last two years have not been matched by similar improvements in reading and mathematics, and attainment in both these areas is lower. Reading in particular has shown a marked decline in performance.

Pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily throughout Years 3 to 6, and by the time they leave, standards in English and mathematics are broadly average; those in science are above average. Standards have been higher but fell in 2006, partly as a result of the uncertainty caused by the change of headship. While standards in English and science have been maintained, attainment in mathematics has been falling.

The school places the care and welfare of pupils at its heart. Pupils feel safe and cared for. Behaviour is good, and acts of kindness between pupils are commonplace. They enjoy opportunities to take responsibility, and all pupils act as delegates to the school council at some time. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The curriculum takes good account of pupils' needs, including their personal development. Good attention to both literacy and numeracy is balanced by some imaginative approaches to other subjects. The 'pirates' topic during the inspection provided a good vehicle for work across several subjects, and encouraged an enthusiastic response from the pupils. Teaching is satisfactory. While pupils' progress is assessed regularly, the analysis of data is not sharp enough to ensure challenging targets are set and underachieving pupils identified and supported.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has given the school fresh impetus and he is being well supported by his staff. Monitoring of provision, including by governors, has not been regular in the past, and although the headteacher has put systems in place, these have not yet had time to impact. As a result, self-evaluation, while satisfactory, does not yet fully engage all staff and governors.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics through the school.
- Improve the use of assessment to track pupils' progress, to help staff intervene when necessary and set challenging targets.
- Make more rigorous use of monitoring to improve provision and ensure all staff and governors are involved in school self-review.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Overall, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. On entry, children's attainment is average. Children make a good start in Reception and respond enthusiastically to clear and well-managed teaching in this class. Standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements in writing are the result of a whole-school focus on developing writing skills through speaking and listening. However, improvements in writing have not been matched by similar improvements in reading and mathematics and pupils here are doing less well than expected. Reading results have declined in each of the last two years.

Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science, with around one third of pupils reaching higher levels in national tests in each subject in 2006. Following a particularly good year in 2005, results in 2006 declined, reflecting a difficult period for the school. Performance in mathematics in particular has been declining for two consecutive years. Although the school assesses pupils regularly, not enough use is made of the data to ensure successful and early intervention where pupils seem likely to fail to meet their targets. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, because of the good, well focused support by teaching assistants.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are friendly and thoughtful. They enjoy school and take part in all activities with energy and enthusiasm. Pupils' positive attitudes, fostered by the school's generous and encouraging ethos, are critical factors in the progress they make. Behaviour is good, and bullying, while rare, is not tolerated. Pupils feel safe and know there is an adult to whom they can talk. The school has been awarded both the Healthy School Award and the Activemark gold award and, as a result, pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. Pupils enjoy responsibility, and take pride in being a peer mediator, helping to sort out other children's difficulties. They know their views will be respected, and the school council is a good forum for discussion. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop skills in real-life situations and, alongside good opportunities for group work and sharing ideas, gives pupils good work-life skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is characterised by well-managed classrooms in which pupils are encouraged to work on their own or in small groups. Teachers explain things clearly and set tasks which interest and challenge the pupils. The Pirate Day during the inspection provoked lots of excitement and interest. "This is fun!" one Year 3 pupil piped up as the class gave instructions along map coordinates of Treasure Island. Classrooms are attractive environments and good use is made of displays to both stimulate learning and boost self-esteem. The "Literacy Tool Kit" in the Year 5/6 class effectively guides pupils in their writing of film reviews. Writing is particularly well taught and some effective encouragement of pupils to use imaginative language to describe pirates was also seen. Pupils know that teachers and teaching assistants will help them, and some particularly effective support from teaching assistants was observed. Their involvement in planning and evaluation through the Briefing Sheet is proving especially helpful. Feedback to pupils through marking and orally is not so consistently good. The use of assessment data to inform planning and set clear learning objectives for the next step is not always effective, and has had a negative impact on reading and mathematics in particular.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is well balanced and well planned to give pupils interesting and varied tasks. It provides particularly well for pupils' personal development. While sufficient time is given to both literacy and numeracy, other subjects are not neglected, and with imaginative planning, some effective cross-curricular links are made. The Pirate Day included tasks related to most subjects on the curriculum, including literacy, numeracy, art, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology. Other good features include the partnership with a local secondary school to teach both French and Chinese. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their involvement in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in music and sport. The swimming pool is especially enjoyed. The curriculum is generally well planned to cater for the range of abilities, including pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers plan carefully to ensure work in the mixed-aged classes is appropriate for all pupils.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

The school's pastoral care is good, and pupils' welfare is a high priority. Parents are keen to stress the dedication with which all staff help and encourage their children – "nothing is too much trouble". Teachers know each child very well and take every care to ensure they are well looked after. Pupils themselves say that teachers look after them well. The careful and sensitive arrangements made for transition from pre-school

on entry to the Reception class are typical. Child protection procedures are fully in place and risk assessments are carried out conscientiously. Academic guidance and support is less effective. Although progress is checked on regularly, assessment data is not analysed with sufficient precision to identify potential underachievers and put in place effective intervention strategies.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Following an uncertain transitional period, the school is now well placed to move forward again with confidence. The new headteacher has sought to involve the whole staff in school improvement planning, and staff have leapt at the opportunity to get more involved. There is considerable commitment amongst the whole staff to maintain and secure further improvements. The headteacher has articulated a clear vision and he has the support of staff, parents and governors. Procedures for monitoring have been neither regular nor rigorous enough. As a result, although satisfactory overall and improving, self-evaluation does not involve the whole-school community. This accounts for the sometimes over-generous evaluation the school made of its own performance. Procedures for checking on improvements are now in place but have had little time to demonstrate any impact. Governors have also undergone change and, under the assured leadership of the chair of governors, are beginning to carry out their role with greater authority. For these reasons, the school's capacity to improve 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### 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  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 2   |
| 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                              | 2 |

### 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  | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

### 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 | 2   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 4   |
| 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**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to you, and was impressed by the confident way you greeted me and spoke about your school. You have much to be proud of in your school.

What I liked most about your school

- I like the way you work enthusiastically and join in all the activities at school. It was fun to see you all dressed up as pirates!
- You are well behaved and polite, and get on well with the teachers.
- You have worked hard to improve your writing and I particularly enjoyed some of the pirate poems you were writing.
- Your teachers take good care of you.
- You get a good start to life in school in the Reception class.
- All the teachers are working hard to make your school even better.

What I have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that you do as well in mathematics as you do in writing, and for those of you in Years 1 and 2, make sure you become more confident at reading.
- Make sure the teachers check your progress carefully and let you know how well you are doing and how you might improve.
- Ensure that all the school's managers are working successfully to make your school even better, by checking on things more regularly.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Good luck in the future!