

St Winnow CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112016
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289147
Inspection date	1 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Patti Bowen
Headteacher	Emma Simpson
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001
School address	Downend Lostwithiel PL22 0RA
Telephone number	01208 872665
Fax number	01208 872665

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	1 May 2007
Inspection number	289147

© Crown copyright 2007

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 one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small rural school situated on the outskirts of Lostwithiel. Nearly all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above the national average. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. Children starting in the Foundation Stage are taught in a separate class in the mornings, but join with Years 1 and 2 for the afternoon sessions. The attainment of children when they start school varies from year to year; this academic year the childrens' attainment was broadly in line with that expected. The school has had significant difficulties with staffing in recent times. These are now largely resolved. Years 5 and 6 are currently being taught by a temporary teacher. The new headteacher took up her substantive post at the start of the spring term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. In recent times, it has gone through a difficult phase because staff turbulence has had a negative impact on the rate of improvement and pupils' performance. However, the appointment of a new headteacher and stabilisation of the staffing has put the school back on track and in a good position to move forward again. Governors have worked hard to resolve the staffing issues and get the school back on an even keel. The new headteacher has worked well with staff to put good initiatives in place to drive the school forward more speedily. This good leadership and management ensure that pupils' standards and achievement, which had shown some slippage, have recovered and are now satisfactory and improving. Children make sound progress in the Foundation Stage by the end of which most reach the expected levels. Satisfactory progress continues across the school as a result of sound teaching. However, teaching is clearly improving with some good lessons seen during the inspection. Typically for a school of this size, standards reached by pupils vary from year to year. Currently Year 2 pupils are on track to reach just below average levels by the end of the year, showing steady gains from their starting points. Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve broadly average results in national tests and pupils are now making better progress than previously was the case. The school has rightly pinpointed mathematics as being the weakest area of pupils' performance, especially with calculation work and problem solving. Suitable action plans are now in place to address this area. The school has good systems in place to track pupils' progress and to involve them in setting targets to improve their work. However, target setting is not yet as precise as it could be. In connection with this, the marking of pupils' work does not give individuals enough guidance as to how they can improve further. Well organised provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities ensures that these pupils do well.

Staff have done well, through the period of recent changes, to preserve the warm friendly atmosphere that prevails throughout the school. Care, support and guidance are good and pupils grow confident, feel safe and really enjoy their time at school. They show good personal development. Their behaviour is excellent and they support each other well in all activities.

A significant minority of parents understandably show concern for how things have been going at the school. The school rightly recognises the need to strengthen all channels of communication to allay these concerns, ensure parents are fully informed and to help them have a clear view of the improvements that are now well under way. The new headteacher has made an excellent start in leading a rigorous and accurate evaluation of the school's performance. A combination of strong commitment, new found inspiration and clear action planning means that the school is well set to drive forward at a good pace in the future.

A small proportion of schools where overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that targets set for individual pupils and the marking of their work gives them precise guidance on how to improve their performance.
- Improve standards and progress in mathematics by ensuring that pupils gain better skills with calculation and problem solving work.
- Improve the communication with parents so that they all feel fully informed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school's progress tracking data show that children are making overall satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. The school has focused hard on improving progress for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and the results in national tests reflect this improvement. Some good achievement is evident in Years 3 and 4 as a result of strong teaching. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been most affected by staff changes, including during the present year. However current good teaching has helped pupils catch up so that they are now achieving satisfactorily and are on course to reach broadly average standards by the end of the year. Pupils do better in English and science than in mathematics. There are weaknesses in pupils' skills in calculating and problem-solving that are beginning to be tackled but it is too early to see the impact of this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have a very positive attitude towards school. Those spoken to showed much enthusiasm for school life. They have a high regard for the staff in the school and feel that all adults give them lots of help if they have any difficulties. Throughout the school, pupils relate to each other and staff in a natural, friendly and supportive manner. The school's 'Healthy School' accreditation is reflected in the pupils' good understanding about how to keep themselves healthy and fit. Their good awareness is especially enhanced by the strong emphasis placed on participation in a wide range of sports. Pupils acquire a good sense of the importance of contributing to the community through activities such as singing at a town senior citizens' residential home at Christmas. Their understanding in this area is enhanced further by the good work of the school council in helping bring about school improvements. Although pupils gain a sound range of academic skills to help ensure their future well-being, there remains much scope to enhance this, for example, through involving them more in small enterprise schemes.

Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. However, chances to extend pupils' understanding about the diversity of cultures in modern British society are not exploited as fully as they could be.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Recent results in national tests and the school's clear tracking of performance over this year confirm that pupils have received sound teaching. However, work seen in lessons shows that this is a strengthening situation. Pupils work purposefully and with much enthusiasm. Tasks are laid out and explained clearly so that pupils know exactly what to do and what the lesson intentions are. The current assessment information shows that good teaching for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is helping them make consistently good progress. A similar picture is beginning to emerge in all other classes. In particular, the Years 5 and 6 class has benefited from good teaching, which has helped pupils fill gaps in their knowledge that had become apparent. Foundation Stage children are benefiting from the morning sessions when they work in their own classroom before joining Years 1 and 2 in the afternoons. The good ratio of adult to child support during these sessions is helping to boost their progress. The school has rightly identified the need to improve the way in which pupils learn to do calculations and problem solving in

mathematics to boost standards in this area. To improve things in these areas the school has put good quality plans in place to ensure that sharper targets for pupils are constructed and that pupils are more fully involved in assessing their own work. The school has also correctly identified that the key to making teaching consistently good lies in sharpening the targets set for pupils in all subjects as well as in mathematics, so as to make lesson activities as precisely matched to their needs as possible.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum embraces a wide range of interesting projects and activities. The pupils enjoy a good range of extra-curricular activities, and discussions with them show that they especially enjoy the sports activities and the work they do with specialist sports coaches. They also feel that they get a lot of out of visits to places such as the Goonhilly Downs Earth Station. The expansive school grounds are well used to extend pupils' experiences, with a wildlife conservation area and an area for gardening plots. Well organised provision for the morning session in the Foundation Stage class helps children develop a confident approach to learning in a wide range of practical situations. However, the staff rightly recognise the need to tighten up planning systems so that work children do in the morning sessions links securely to work that they do when they join the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the afternoon. The school does a good job in supporting pupils' personal development through its curriculum planning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school adopts a vigilant approach towards ensuring pupils' safety and all procedures, particularly those concerning child protection, are properly followed. Discussions with pupils throughout the school show that they benefit from close relationships, which help all individuals, including those with particular needs, to feel fully included and valued. Strong support by teachers and teaching assistants ensures that all pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities progress well. Their progress is further enhanced by the full use the school makes of all outside agencies to support pupils where necessary. Pupils receive very strong pastoral guidance and encouragement. The school has put in place good quality systems to track pupils' progress throughout the school. These have been used well to help Years 5 and 6 pupils make up the lost ground in their work. However, the school fully understands the need to tighten up areas such as marking pupils' work in a way that helps them see clearly how to improve. There is also a need to sharpen targets set for them as the pathway to ratcheting up achievement further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are helping the school to move forward rapidly. In her short time in post, the headteacher has done sterling work in enabling the staff to work very effectively as a strong team. This results in all staff having full ownership in the self-evaluation and school development planning processes. Staff share a purposeful and clear vision as to the main priorities for development and where the school is heading in the future. Importantly, staff demonstrate a strong commitment to accelerating the rate of improvement. Good quality action plans are rapidly improving important areas such as the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Governors carry out their roles well. They monitor the work of the school closely,

have a good overview and provide strong support for the headteacher and staff. Since the last inspection, good improvements have been made to the building and provision for information and communication technology (ICT). The stabilisation of staffing and current good leadership and teamwork give much potential for the school to move forward rapidly.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

2 May 2007 Dear Children

Inspection of St Winnow C of E Primary School, Lostwithiel PL22 0RA

- I am writing to let you know how much I enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making me so welcome and helping me during the school's inspection. I enjoyed talking to many of you and particularly appreciated the very helpful discussion with some of you in Year 6 in the sunshine outside on the picnic bench. What a bunch of chatterboxes! The school is doing a sound job. In particular, the staff are especially good at making sure you enjoy your time in school. Here are some other things I noticed:
- You achieve average levels by the end of Year 6 although work in mathematics is not as strong as in English and science.
- Your behaviour is excellent. You work with lots of enthusiasm in lessons and get on really well with staff and with each other.
- I was very impressed by how much those of you I spoke to know about the need to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe.
- You have a good curriculum and opportunities to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school does a good job of taking care of you.
- Your school is well led and managed so that it is now starting to improve quickly after the recent difficulties it has had with changes in staffing.
- Your new headteacher is doing a really good job of helping all the staff to work together and make things as good as possible for you.

The things your school now needs to do to help it become even better are:

- Help you improve your work in mathematics – especially with calculations and problem solving.
- Set clearer targets to help you know how to improve your work and make sure that marking tells you how well you are doing.
- Improve the communication between school and home so that your mums, dads or carers know all about activities and changes that are taking place.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when I came to see you.

Best wishes for the future.

Laurie Lewin Lead inspector