

Port Isaac Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111912
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310724
Inspection date	8 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Kevin Jane HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Bell
Headteacher	Simon Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2004
School address	Mayfield Road Port Isaac PL29 3RT
Telephone number	01208 880494
Fax number	01208 880679

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, for one day. The inspector evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and investigated the following: • the progress that pupils make as they move through the school and the standards they attain • aspects of leadership and management, including the role of governors • the quality of teaching, especially the use made of assessment • aspects of the personal development and well-being of the pupils • the quality of the curriculum. Evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of performance, lesson observations and interviews with staff, governors and the headteacher. In addition, a group of children discussed their views of the school with the inspector and all parent questionnaires returned were examined. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Port Isaac Community Primary School is a much-smaller-than-average school serving this rural fishing port on the North Cornish coast. The percentages of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language are well below national averages. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average. The headteacher has a significant teaching commitment and children are taught in two mixed-age-group classes. The school site also hosts pre-school provision, which was inspected separately, and pre- and after-school care for children aged 2–14, including full holiday care.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'We feel Port Isaac School is a very successful village school with close links to the community. Our children have reached a high academic standard and have learned good social skills while at the school. We feel very privileged to be able to send our children to this school. We have seen it get better and better.' In many ways, these comments from parents capture all that is good about the school. It is providing the 39 pupils on its roll with a good standard of education, and some aspects, such as their personal development and well-being, are outstanding.

There is an appropriate emphasis on maintaining and improving standards and pupils make good progress overall while at the school. Standards on entry to the school for the youngest children are variable, but overall are just below those expected nationally. They make good progress in their first year and this is further developed in Key Stage 1 where, over time, the children are attaining broadly in line with the national average in their literacy and numeracy work. By the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils attain the required levels in English and mathematics, and in 2007 half of them attained higher levels. Overall, this represents above-average standards and good progress. The school has a robust system for monitoring and tracking the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics, but not yet in science, based on the assessments by teachers and external tests. Frequent analysis allows the school to adjust the organisation or work of pupil groups. The successful move to two teaching groups in the Key Stage 2 class for these subjects is one example where resources have been deployed to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

Another factor accounting for the success of the school is the quality of the teaching. Typically it is good, with some strong features. A sense of teamwork between adults pervades each class and teaching group. The activities planned for the pupils are thoughtfully chosen and serve to motivate them, sustain their concentration and challenge them as learners. Teachers use good subject knowledge to manage multi-age groups, use their expertise well to instruct and challenge the pupils, and ensure that their lessons have good pace to them so that no time is wasted. In turn, pupils respond positively to tasks and settle to their work quickly and enthusiastically. The small number of pupils in each teaching group means that they receive good individual attention. For example, all pupils know their targets and good quality, consistent marking means that their progress is constantly monitored and they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Relationships between adults and the pupils are very good indeed, as is their behaviour in classes and around the school.

The school has taken care to configure the curriculum so that it meets the demands of the two-class structure, is sufficiently broad and balanced and avoids repetition. There is a suitable focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The use made of the local environment, visits to places of historic and geographical interest, residential experiences and professional artists and musicians is extensive and enriches the curriculum. It also makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development and cultural awareness. Nevertheless, the school is constantly looking at ways in which it can improve the taught curriculum and has declared this a priority for further development in the new school improvement plan. Pupils also have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The take-up by pupils is high and adults may also attend, thus developing the community feel of the school. The administration of these activities and the attention paid to health and safety are exemplary.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. All adults are committed to ensuring that pupils are safe and the school takes all reasonable steps to ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet legal requirements. The pupils feel safe, know who to go to when they feel troubled and are confident that problems, when they arise, will be resolved swiftly. The school benefits from the strong support and appreciation of parents, who value the supportive ethos provided by the school in both pastoral and academic terms.

The pupils themselves really enjoy school and are particularly proud of it. They speak with great enthusiasm about many aspects of school life and the members of the newly formed school council are looking forward to taking their responsibilities seriously and contributing to making the school even better. Because of the opportunities outlined above related to the curriculum, and because of the good quality teaching, the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school has taken care to ensure that pupils and their parents know about and are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. The school has appropriately been recognised for this work with national accreditation as a healthy school for the third time. The school has also been successful in promoting the importance of attendance and this is now satisfactory, and much improved since the last inspection. The pupils' contribution to the local and wider community is very good and their participation in local cultural events, links to initiatives with the Eden Project and charity fundraising help to extend their personal development. The whole-school focus on basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT means that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their school life and future economic well-being.

The headteacher provides the school with good leadership. Together, all staff and governors work successfully as a team and good collaboration with external partners such as the cluster of nearby schools is ensuring that parents are right to regard Port Isaac Primary as a school at the centre of its community. Despite the size of the school and the limited number of adults, management responsibilities are distributed particularly well so that maximum use is made of skills and expertise. All staff understand their respective roles and responsibilities and are fully committed to driving improvements. The school improvement plan is currently undergoing a major review with priorities based on a systematic approach to self-evaluation. Its impact in bringing about the identified areas for improvement, such as in developing an even better curriculum for the pupils, is not yet fully proven because it is still being developed. However, recent performance and the commitment to continuous improvement by all associated with the school mean that the capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The youngest children get off to a good start in the school. Their attainment on entry can vary widely, but on average is just below that expected nationally. The school provides a well-planned curriculum, placing an appropriate emphasis on personal development and communication and language development. The children make good progress and are working within the levels expected by the time they start in Year 1. Although they are working in one class with two other year groups, the school ensures that they are taught separately for parts of the day and are well supported by staff in this arrangement, with activities linked to a theme that draws on all the areas of learning appropriate to this age group. Their progress is monitored carefully through good assessment and observations and care is taken to ensure that they are developing socially as well as academically. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils' progress in science is monitored with the same rigour as that in English and mathematics, in order to raise standards further.
- Ensure that priorities for development in the new school improvement plan are implemented robustly, and evaluate their impact.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

9 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Port Isaac Community Primary School, Port Isaac, Cornwall PL29 3RT

- I very much enjoyed meeting you and coming to see your lessons when I visited your school recently. Thank you for making me so welcome, telling me about your school and letting me see your work. I believe that Port Isaac is a good school, with some aspects that are outstanding. This is what I liked most:
- Your behaviour is very good indeed. You told me that you really enjoy your time in school because it is a friendly and safe place to be.
- Your teachers and other adults teach you well and help you to do your best. They take care to make sure you are safe and encourage you to be healthy.
- You have lots of interesting clubs and activities to attend and you told me you like to go to places of interest and have visitors to your school.
- Your headteacher works well with other adults and the governors to make sure that the school is managed well and that it tries to be even better so that you can have the best possible education.
- You have very good attitudes to your work in school, you concentrate in lessons and work and play well together. This helps you to make good progress, especially in English and mathematics.
- The youngest children make a good start in school and by the time you leave at age 11, your standards are good.
- This is what I have asked the grown-ups in charge of the school to do to make it even better:
- Make sure that your progress in science is as good as it is in English and mathematics, and make sure that they carry out the plans that they have for making your school even better.

I am sure that you will all do your best to help the teachers in your school to make it even better because you have such positive and enthusiastic attitudes towards your school and I know you are very proud of it.

Kevin Jane HMI

9 November 2007

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- Your headteacher works well with other adults and the governors to make sure that the school is managed well and that it tries to be even better so that you can have the best possible education.
- You have very good attitudes to your work in school, you concentrate in lessons and work and play well together. This helps you to make good progress, especially in English and mathematics.
- The youngest children make a good start in school and by the time you leave at age 11, your standards are good.

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