

St Levan Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111803
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337742
Inspection dates	18–19 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Goodchild

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 of pupils on the school roll	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Brolly
Headteacher	Susan Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2010
School address	The Bottoms Penzance TR19 6HD
Telephone number	01736 810486
Fax number	01736 810486
Email address	head@st-levan.cornwall.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. During the inspection seven lessons and two teachers were observed. Pupils' books were inspected and the school's assessment data on their current progress were analysed. Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the chair of governors and the headteacher about aspects of the school's work. The inspector talked to parents at the Walk to School breakfast. The school improvement plan, the School Improvement Partner's reports, minutes of the governing body meetings and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding were scrutinised. Twenty three parents and carers completed inspection questionnaires which were analysed. The inspector also looked at questionnaires completed by staff and pupils in Years 3 to 6.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- how effectively teaching is matched to the learning needs of mixed-age classes and pupils' different abilities
- whether the monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress had improved since the previous inspection
- the effectiveness of strategies to raise attainment and progress by the end of Year 2 in reading and writing.

Information about the school

St Levan is a very small primary school serving a mixed rural area near Lands End. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. Attainment on entry to the Reception class varies year-on-year and cohorts are very small. All pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The school has recently gained the International School Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Levan Primary School is an improving school. It provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and has some good and outstanding elements. Its strength is in the outstanding care and support given to its pupils. Pupils say that the school is 'a big, happy family where we look after each other and feel safe and secure'. They clearly enjoy school; attendance is high and pupils' behaviour is good in both lessons and around the school. Pupils make a full contribution to the school community, are proactive in organising fundraising activities to support global disasters, and have an on-going commitment to Shelter Box.

There has been an upward trend in pupils' attainment and progress over the last three years, particularly in mathematics. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory overall, has improved since the previous inspection and pupils make at least satisfactory, and at times good, progress in lessons. The progress of individual pupils is now tracked termly against their starting points but their targets do not always challenge them sufficiently. There are also inconsistencies in the use of ongoing assessment to plan lessons at the appropriate level for pupils' ages and abilities and marking does not always help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

St Levan is a lead school for the development of the Change Curriculum that provides creative learning opportunities for pupils. This has already had an impact by improving the quality of pupils' reading and writing by the end of Year 2. A planned visit to the Lizard Lighthouse, for example, encouraged pupils to write, draw, read and talk about it. Pupils really enjoy their learning and talk with enthusiasm about how they are able to be creative whilst at the same time learning new skills. Although the curriculum is mapped to ensure coverage of National Curriculum subjects, in these mixed-age classes currently there is no systematic monitoring to ensure that pupils gain the relevant skills appropriate for their age and experience.

Excellent pastoral care and guidance contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and well-being, particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who make satisfactory progress in their learning. Safeguarding procedures are good. Good partnerships with parents and a range of agencies make a strong contribution to pupils' well-being.

By the end of Early Years Foundation Stage, most children have become independent and are able to work on tasks with little adult supervision. They make good progress in all areas of learning.

Since the new headteacher was appointed she has taken successful action to address issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection and this was borne out by

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inspection evidence and pupils' improving attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics. However, through effective self-evaluation, she has recognised that there is still work to be done. In the light of its recent track record, the school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that ongoing assessment is used consistently to plan lessons at the appropriate level for pupils' age and ability
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils are clear about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work
 - setting challenging targets to raise pupils' achievement
 - monitoring the curriculum to ensure there is systematic development in pupils' skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils are keen to achieve and their attention only wanders when teaching does not engage them or provide the challenge they need. They say that they enjoy coming to school and particularly like the changed curriculum because it brings excitement into their learning. This is a small school and relationships amongst pupils of all ages are good, with older pupils taking care of younger ones. They feel completely safe and are clear about how to achieve healthy lifestyles, really enjoying the daily Fun Fit sessions and additional sports activities, such as tri-golf and dance, at the end of the day. They are very proud of their links with the local community, taking part in local festivals and acting as National Trust guardians for two small meadows where they grow vegetables and herbs for sale. The majority of pupils who completed the questionnaire said they would like to know more about how well they were doing at school and how to improve their work.

Pupils particularly like the opportunities to mix with pupils from other schools through sharing joint activities throughout their time at school. During the week of the inspection, for example, Year 1 pupils shared a multi-skills workshop organised by the Pirates Rugby Club. Pupils make good use of the range of opportunities that they have to show initiative and leadership. They produce a newsletter about the activities they have taken part in that is distributed throughout the local community. Older pupils act as Junior Road Safety Officers, teaching younger pupils how to keep safe, and regularly organise table top sales and other activities to raise funds for charities. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through their International School Award, links have been developed with schools across the globe, as in Mumbai and France, and the pupils take part in joint projects, receive visits from teachers and regularly communicate with pupils through the internet.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory as a whole but inconsistent in quality. Where teaching is better, expectations are high, the pace of learning is rapid and activities are planned to ensure that all children are able to access learning activities. Effective use is made of ongoing assessment to inform planning so that lessons build on prior learning and challenge all pupils. However, where lessons are not of this quality, information on pupils' prior learning is not taken into account so that tasks set are either not accessible to younger or lower attaining pupils or lack sufficient challenge for older, higher attaining ones. Too much time is also wasted with the consequent impact on the progress pupils make. Teaching assistants are generally well briefed and contribute to the quality of pupils' learning, particularly those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The recently introduced creative curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and has been successful in improving their engagement in the learning process. A range of visits enrich learning opportunities and are used as a stimulus for work in the classroom. There are good partnerships with other schools and providers that yield additional opportunities for pupils. Gifted and talented pupils, for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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example, attend series of workshops in a range of subjects.

Arrangements to ensure the care and welfare of pupils are outstanding. The school serves a small community and knows its pupils well. Parents and carers are very happy with the support their children receive and confident that they are kept safe and their welfare needs met. The provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Good links with external agencies and health professionals ensure effective support is provided to meet the needs of pupils and their families. Pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school through a comprehensive induction programme and regular visits.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governing body are ambitious for the school and share a common aim of continuing improvement. There is a good working partnership with governors, who visit the school regularly and are continuing to develop their role in development planning and monitoring the work of the school. However, lack of rigour in the monitoring of teaching has led to the inconsistency in quality seen during the inspection. Safeguarding procedures are good. Leaders appropriately tackle discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for all pupils, as no group participates less frequently than others in visits or other enrichment activities. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers. Their views are canvassed annually and taken into account as part of the school's self-evaluation process. Termly meetings give them the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with teachers. Provision for community cohesion is good. Because of its remote geographical location, the school has recognised the need to develop links with a school that represents the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3

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The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and experiences broadly typical for their age. However, cohorts are small and variable. Good transition arrangements help children to settle into the welcoming and secure learning environment quickly and they enjoy coming to school. There is an appropriate focus on developing social skills and children learn and play well together. Assessment through observations is regular and progress recorded in all areas of learning. Most children make good progress and are currently reaching above expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. For those children who need additional support provision is good. The quality of teaching children receive is good. The accommodation is small and this restricts the range of activities that can be provided for children to encourage them to choose their learning activities. At times the balance between child-initiated and adult-directed learning is uneven. However, the school makes best use of what facilities are available. For example, it uses the school garden as an outdoor learning area and during the inspection children had been able to make clay lighthouses in preparation for a forthcoming visit. A range of visits extend children's experiences and these are used as a focus to develop their speaking and listening and early writing skills. By the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children have gained in confidence, their behaviour is good and they are independent learners.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

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Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They feel their child is safe and enjoys school. They are very happy with their child's experience at school. Comments made particular reference to the additional support provided by the school both for them and their child. A few expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and the progress their child is making, particularly in reading and writing. The inspectors judged that the systems to manage unacceptable behaviour are good. The progress and attainment of pupils in reading and writing are improving and inspection evidence showed it is now broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2. The creative curriculum provides interesting and life-related opportunities for pupils to further develop these skills.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Levan Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 23 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 27 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	74	4	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	78	4	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	61	9	39	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	65	4	17	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	65	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	61	7	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	74	5	22	1	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	74	4	17	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	61	5	22	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	57	7	30	2	9	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	57	7	30	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	57	9	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	78	5	22	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Levan Community Primary School, St Buryan TR19 6HD

I would like to thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently and for talking to me about your school and work.

I found that your school is improving and provides you with a satisfactory education. You receive a high standard of care. By the end of Year 6, you have made satisfactory progress in your learning and attain standards broadly in line with those expected for your age. You told me that you feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school. You particularly like the new curriculum that provides you with more interesting learning activities, going out on school trips, and sharing activities and developing friendships with children from other schools. You work hard in your lessons and your behaviour is good both in lessons and the playground.

I have identified some areas that need improvement to make your school an even better place. These are the things that I have asked your school to do:

- make sure that lessons are planned to ensure that you all make progress in your learning relevant to your age and ability
- improve the quality of marking so that you are clear about how well you are doing and how you can improve your work, with challenging targets for you to work towards
- monitor the subjects you study to make sure you gain the appropriate skills over your time in school.

You are already playing your part by behaving well and working hard in lessons and I wish you all the best in your future studies.

Yours sincerely

Judith Goodchild

Lead inspector

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