

St Teath Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111937
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337781
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2009
Reporting inspector	John Laver

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	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Joy
Headteacher	Lee Bacchus
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2006
School address	North Road St Teath Bodmin PL30 3JX
Telephone number	01208 850516
Fax number	01208 851347
Email address	head@st-teath.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 two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and an assembly and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books and a variety of documentation and analysed 21 parental and 26 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' achievement and progress, especially in writing
- the extent to which teachers use assessment to improve learning, raise standards and show pupils how they can improve their work
- the extent to which the curriculum is being used to raise standards and improve progress
- the effectiveness with which the school is monitoring provision and progress

Information about the school

All the pupils in this very small village school are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with particular special educational needs is close to average. A higher proportion of pupils than average joins or leaves the school other than at the usual times. The school makes provision for a very small number of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in a class which combines Reception children with pupils in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher has just added the headship of another local school, as part of a new federation, to his existing responsibilities.

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

This is a satisfactory school. It successfully nurtures several aspects of pupils' personal development. The great majority of pupils have a very positive attitude towards learning. They behave well towards adults and each other, and feel very safe and well supported by all staff. Staff work closely as a committed and caring team. Pupils' moral and social development is one of the school's strengths, and parents strongly attest to the school's success in these areas. Attendance is only average, but this is due to the frequent absence of a very small number of pupils. The school works hard through a range of procedures and rewards to improve attendance.

The very few pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning. Pupils higher up the school make satisfactory progress in their academic work, and leave the school at eleven with close to average standards. These standards are higher in mathematics and reading than in writing, where some pupils show less enthusiasm than in other subjects. Standards and progress in writing are improving as the result of teachers making use of more resources and adopting strategies, such as drama, to enthuse pupils more. However, although there have been improvements in teaching since the previous inspection, some pupils still do not achieve as well as they should in writing. There are still inconsistencies in teaching. There are lessons which build on pupils' evident enthusiasm for learning, through well-planned and appropriately challenging activities. This was particularly evident in a French lesson in which all pupils were fully engaged by the quick-fire, energetic approach of the teacher and a challenging use of the target language at a very early stage of the school year. However, lessons are sometimes less briskly paced and insufficiently challenging for a minority of the more able pupils. Several pupils are unsure about their targets, or how exactly they can move forward to the next stage of learning. Teachers' marking does not always ensure that pupils know exactly how they can improve their work.

Pupils relish taking responsibility through opportunities such as the school council. They enjoy activities which have a high profile in the local community, for example making collections for charity. Pupils greatly appreciate the several clubs provided and enjoy studying themes, such as 'Ourselves', which are being used to develop and link the range of skills more effectively throughout the curriculum.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. There are several strengths in the current leadership which has evaluated the school's provision accurately and planned appropriately for improvement. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Although the school has begun to tackle key areas, such as monitoring and assessment, the resulting improvement is not fully embedded. This mainly reflects the fact that the current headteacher until very recently had a heavy teaching load and no

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leadership team. Rigorous and regular monitoring to iron out some of the inconsistencies in teaching and learning were not systematic. A more manageable and realistic leadership structure has very recently been put in place. Some of the school's other initiatives, especially in improving literacy, have had a positive impact on pupils' learning in recent months, although the impact on standards is not sustained.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' learning by:- making better use of assessment, including marking, in the classroom, and involving pupils more actively in identifying the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the consistency and raise the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:- implementing a more regular and robust programme of monitoring by senior staff and spreading best practice more consistently throughout the school.
- Improve standards and progress in writing by: giving pupils more opportunities to apply writing skills in subjects other than English and building on the school's strategies already in place to promote more enthusiasm for writing.

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

Lessons observed by inspectors showed that the great majority of pupils have a very positive attitude towards learning, particularly when the teaching creates what pupils call a sense of 'fun'. Pupils are motivated when they are involved actively in practical activities, seen for example when they made music to resemble animal sounds. A notable feature of lessons is the positive working relationships between pupils and their confidence in talking about their work. However, progress from pupils' starting points is satisfactory. While progress is improving in all key skills, it remains inconsistent, as a result of variations in the pace and challenge of teaching.

The results of national tests are of little significance in this school, given the very small groups of pupils. For example, only one Year 6 pupil took the tests in 2009, while an above average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school between Years 1 and 6. The school has developed good tracking systems which show that pupils' progress is improving, including in writing, where performance in recent years has been weaker than in reading and mathematics. The gap between the standards and progress of boys and girls, which had been a significant feature for some years, has narrowed considerably as the result of initiatives and extra support which have improved boys' performance. Pupils with special educational needs, which are all to do with weaknesses in numeracy or literacy, make good progress. These pupils benefit particularly from intensive support from teaching assistants who work enthusiastically and closely with the teaching staff.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and spiritual development is a strength of the school. It is evident particularly in the good behaviour and the school's happy, secure ethos. This

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was particularly evident in the inspection during an assembly attended by all pupils and several parents, in which everyone enthusiastically celebrated pupils’ successes in achieving personal and academic goals. Pupils not only enjoy learning but also enjoy opportunities to take on responsibility. They talk enthusiastically about the work that the school council has done for the library, and their involvement in village events. They show a good understanding of why it is important to lead a healthy lifestyle through sensible choices of food at lunchtime and exercising frequently. Pupils feel very strongly that they are very safe in school at all times.

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	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory. It has some strengths and has improved since the previous inspection. Planning is thorough. Teachers skilfully question pupils in a way which draws out their understanding. They use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, imaginatively to engage pupils’ attention and generally manage classes containing several different age groups well. However, although there is no unsatisfactory teaching, it is sometimes less effective when the pace slackens and some pupils are not

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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productive enough when working independently. Occasionally, the tasks are insufficiently challenging for a few more able pupils and they are given insufficient encouragement or opportunity to move on to higher level tasks.

Assessment has improved since the previous inspection. The assessment of younger pupils in particular is now more accurate and there are much better tracking systems in place which allow the school to target support effectively, especially for less able pupils and those with special educational needs. This support, combined with the thorough attention to pupils’ other pastoral needs, is a significant factor in pupils’ strong personal development. The use of assessment in the classroom to promote the learning of average and more able pupils is less well developed. Teachers’ marking of work is conscientious but not used sufficiently well to influence progress to the next level. Although pupils have targets which are regularly reviewed, not all pupils understand them and they are often not clear about what precisely they have to do to develop their skills further.

Pupils appreciate the recent changes in the curriculum which allow them to explore different aspects of a particular topic and engage in a range of practical activities. Teachers make insufficient use of opportunities to promote key skills, such as writing, in these topics. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs for such a small school. There are very good links with other schools to further these opportunities, for example in providing swimming and the opportunity for residential trips.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, although supported by a committed staff and improved governing body, has had to operate without a leadership team in the relatively short time he has been at the school. A leadership team was put in place just before the inspection as a result of very recent federation arrangements. The headteacher has correctly identified the strengths and weaknesses of provision. He has adopted strategies to improve performance in key subjects such as writing and has developed a curriculum which is more meaningful to pupils. He has the full support of staff, governors and parents. They are very positive about what the headteacher has done and the results are increasingly evident in improved progress. There is a keen awareness of pupils’ welfare, and the school has very robust safeguarding procedures in place to protect the safety and

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well-being of all pupils. Opportunities for monitoring have been limited because of the headteacher’s teaching commitment and other constraints. This has contributed to the unevenness in the quality of teaching and the school rightly recognises this as an area for development. Subject leaders currently have very few opportunities to contribute to the monitoring programme and spread good classroom practice. Both staff and governors successfully promote equality for all pupils and prevent any discrimination, as confirmed by pupils.

The ethos of support and cooperation within the school, and between it and the local community, contributes well to community cohesion. This is less developed in other respects, since many pupils still have a limited understanding of what makes Britain a diverse society and of developments elsewhere in the world. Nevertheless, this is a very inclusive school, and the headteacher, through developing exchanges and links with a school in Birmingham and a developing school link with Uganda, shows a strong commitment to broadening pupils’ perspectives. The school makes good use of close contacts with other schools in the area to take advantage of specialist teaching in subjects such as physical education and to extend opportunities for staff development and extra activities for pupils.

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
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Numbers of children are small, and their skills and knowledge and understanding of the world have been very variable on entry to Reception. The very few children currently in Reception have skills and

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knowledge well above expectations for their age group in all aspects. Children make good progress in all areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development. Behaviour is very good, and children learn the expected routines remarkably quickly. The school is benefiting from developing links with the local pre-school. Children learn and play together very well, and mix well with Year 1 and 2 pupils when appropriate. Much of the success of the Early Years Foundation Stage is due to the good leadership of its manager and the work of skilled support staff. Parents are very appreciative of the positive start which their children have in school; when the children move into Year 1 they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Welfare arrangements are good and children feel very secure in the welcoming environment. Children are assessed accurately and this feeds well into planning which mostly provides a reasonable balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities. However, although the school has improved outdoor provision, sometimes opportunities are missed to allow children to utilise this space better for their own activities. Although most planning is appropriate, there is sometimes an emphasis on activities they choose for themselves rather than a focus on desired learning outcomes.

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

In the response to questionnaires, parents were overwhelmingly positive about the impact on their children’s well-being. They are very enthusiastic about the impact of the headteacher in the last two years, and are very complimentary about the commitment of all staff and the high quality of care for their children. Parents of children with particular special educational needs greatly appreciate the support received. Parents recognise the considerable effort which goes into providing out-of-school activities in such a small school, and appreciate the strong ties with the local community. Parents value the good behaviour and the fact that any untoward incidents which do occur are dealt with swiftly. Typical responses were, ‘This is a very caring school’ and ‘Both my children love coming to school and if I was their age, I’d want to come too.’ Parents’ comments focus less on the school’s impact on their children’s learning than on other aspects of their well-being, but the views of parents and carers reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. Teath 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 51 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	80	4	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	65	5	25	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	50	8	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	60	7	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	60	5	25	1	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	65	7	35	0	0	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)	10	50	6	30	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	65	5	25	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	50	7	35	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	60	6	30	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	70	5	25	1	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	75	4	1	1	5	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



16 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Teath Community Primary School, North Road, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 3JX

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school this week. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you in lessons and around the school. We were interested in finding out about what you learn and what you enjoy about school.

St Teath provides you with a satisfactory education and several things have improved in the last few years. Your headteacher has done a lot for the school, as both you and your parents tell us, and he is well supported by all the staff. We know that most of you enjoy learning, feel very safe in school, behave well and get on well with each other. You enjoy the many activities, such as the after-school clubs. We agree with you that the school council works well to improve the school further, and you help each other and people outside the school. Although a very small number of you do not attend school as regularly as you should, it is clear that most of you love coming to school. Some of you do not do as well in some subjects, especially writing, as you should, but we know that the school is concerned about this and is helping you to improve your work.

To help the school become better, we have asked your headteacher and staff to:

- improve teaching by helping teachers to learn from each other and help you make more progress
- improve your writing by giving you more opportunities to write in a range of subjects and showing you how writing can be more fun
- improve the way teachers mark work and use your targets so you are clearer about how you can improve your work and move up to the next level.

You can help in this process by continuing to work hard for your teachers and go on showing the enthusiasm which was very obvious when we saw you in school.

Thank you again for giving us a happy two days in your school.

Yours faithfully

John Laver

Lead inspector

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