

St Cleer Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111961
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337793
Inspection dates	13–14 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Alexander Baxter

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Foulkes
Headteacher	Catherine Stoate
Date of previous school inspection	14 July 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons and observed nine teachers. They also attended two assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities, and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents and carers. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, questionnaires completed by 80 parents and carers, 106 pupils and 22 staff were analysed.

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

- the consistency of teaching and learning, including the use of assessment, to make sure that pupils' differing needs are met effectively to enable them to make good progress the impact of the school's efforts to raise standards in English and to generally increase the number of pupils attaining higher-than-average standards across the school.

Information about the school

The large majority of pupils at this village school are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and includes a high proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The main group of needs are related to language and communication difficulty, behaviour and emotional needs, and autistic spectrum disorders. The number of pupils attending the school is substantially lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage aged four in a single Reception class. Amongst other awards, the school has gained Activemark Gold and Healthy School status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Cleer is a good school. It has many significant strengths, which include the exemplary way pupils are cared for and supported, and an excellent range of memorable learning activities. These largely stem from the shared vision and determination of a united leadership team. By sustaining strong links with outside agencies and with local and wider communities, the school has enriched the learning opportunities provided for the pupils. As a result, and further nurtured by a very inclusive ethos and good teaching, pupils have very good attendance, feel extremely safe, contribute fully and enjoy school life, and make excellent gains in their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Under the guidance of an experienced, capable headteacher, the senior management team and governors carry out effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. By identifying and targeting the right areas for improvement, the school has improved provision in Reception and has put in place well-placed intervention and support to further develop pupils' writing skills. For example, significant variations in children's skills on entry and data of pupils' progress in English in 2009 raised questions about pupils' writing, and this has been targeted to good effect over the past year. In particular, actions to develop pupils' communication, language and literacy skills have been strengthened at an early stage. These have included building on good teaching and learning by developing more consistency in the use of assessment to track pupils' progress, to inform planning and to involve them in self-evaluation alongside teachers' marking. Other improvements have included developing excellent partnerships with outside agencies and the community to meet pupils' diverse needs, and to extend the range and enrich the creativity of the learning activities provided for the pupils. These show that the school is well placed to maintain and continue its development and improvement into the future.

As a result of these developments, good teaching, which includes a significant proportion of outstanding teaching, means that pupils make good progress through the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science, and represent good achievement in relation to pupils' mostly lower-than-expected starting points. At this stage, while the use of assessment and marking to involve pupils and to inform planning has been established well in English, changes in mathematics to match learning more closely to pupils' abilities and to improve planning, for example, are more recent initiatives and have not yet been adopted with sufficient consistency across the school. As a result, although improving well, the school is good rather than outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Move the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are consistently well-challenged in lessons, especially in raising their basic spelling and numeracy skills
 - making the very best use of continuing assessments during lessons to inform planning and future learning
 - improving teachers' written marking, especially in mathematics, so that it is of a consistently high standard and clearly shows pupils what they have to do to improve

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Visits to lessons, in classrooms and outdoors, and observations of individual and small group intervention support, show that pupils achieve well in relation to their needs and starting points. Without exception, all pupils respond appreciatively to the warmth of the adult support they receive, develop self-confidence and enjoy their learning. Excellent learning and progress was seen in Year 6, as pupils responded perceptively to the teacher's high expectations and considered 'independent variables' which might influence their science investigations. Also, in response to the teacher's very clear and well-matched challenge, pupils in Year 2 'raised their game' to double numbers and to explore multiples of numbers. The school and teachers' targeted focus on developing pupils' communication, language and literacy skills has re-established good progress in writing and has significantly lifted these skills this year. It is seen in pupils' writing, which is well presented and shows good use of adjectives and connectives to construct meaningful and expressive sentences. Pupils are now writing supportively across the range of subjects, for example, about the migration of people through the ages and about the Aztecs. School assessments at the end of Year 6 show broadly average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science with increasing numbers of pupils reaching higher levels of attainment. While some pupils across the school still have difficulty in spelling accurately and lack sufficient proficiency in basic numeracy, many others excel in speaking and listening, sports and the expressive arts by the time they leave the school.

Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and their responses to the inspection questionnaire are extremely positive. Pupils undertake responsibility very willingly, on the Pupil School Council, as illustrated by their 'Active Democracy Award' and in a wide range of daily tasks around the school. The pupils' participation in clubs and their support of charitable and community events such as the St Cleer Carnival are exemplary. Behaviour is good. Most pupils sustain concentration and behave very well in lessons, but at times their interest slips, especially when the pace of teaching slows and some need and receive timely reminders from adults. Pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles is generally good, as evident in the school's Activemark Gold and Healthy School status. Most pupils are also very aware of the need to eat healthily, but the variable quality of packed lunches shows that others are not so determined. Attendance has improved significantly in recent years and is currently well above

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average this year. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, evident for example in their clear appreciation of each other's views reflects the school's caring, inclusive ethos and ensures that they are well prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	1
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	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and has many significant strengths, not least teachers' very positive relationships with pupils and their sharp use of questioning to encourage and build upon pupils' ideas. There is some inconsistency, however, in the way teachers use assessment to inform their planning and, especially in the mixed-age classes, to challenge pupils at an optimum level. In the best of lessons, often now in English, teachers share clear learning objectives with the pupils, involve them supportively in setting and evaluating their targets and give good guidance on how to improve when marking their work. This has lifted pupils' speaking and listening and writing skills significantly over the past year. As yet, though, not all teachers use these strategies to maximum effect in other subjects, particularly mathematics. Some teaching is outstanding because teachers have very good subject knowledge, use detailed planning and have a passion for the subject.

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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This flair and imagination rubs off on pupils, especially in subjects such as art and science, where the practical nature of learning also stimulates pupils to respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Pupils enjoy an excellent curriculum enriched by topics, visits and practical events. These include, for example, residential visits to centres at Barton Hall and Beaford, and archaeological and environmental visits such as the recent trip to Watergate Bay. Various links with European schools through the 'Comenius Project' also reflect the breadth of activities, which have earned the International Schools Award and contribute immensely to the pupils' outstanding spiritual and cultural development. Many pupils take part in the excellent range of extra-curricular opportunities, which numbers up to 20 different clubs and further enhances their expressive art and individual and team sporting skills. These activities, which include Cornish dancing and Tag rugby, also support the pupils' excellent social development.

The school works extremely well with a broad range of partners, such as social workers and behaviour and parent support advisers. The excellent care, guidance and support provided by all adults is a notable feature of this very inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well; those with complex needs often receive exemplary support. In recent years, through rigorous monitoring and, via its good partnership with parents and carers, through supportive dissuading of parents and carers from taking family holidays in term time, the school has also worked successfully to establish excellent levels of attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other leaders share an excellent commitment to continued improvement. Governors provide good support and have recently adopted a very precise way of monitoring the school based on Ofsted guidance, which is strengthening their ability to positively hold the school to account. Staff morale is very high, as seen in responses to the inspection questionnaire and in the warm and respectful relationships throughout the school. Staff are diligent in sustaining an inclusive school community where equality of opportunity and freedom from discrimination are secured. Their accurate tracking of pupils' progress, for example, ensures that pupils achieve equally well.

Self-evaluation is effective and leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of

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strengths and areas for further development. This is reflected in the enhanced provision in Reception, and the improved development of the pupils' English skills in all classes, which have been achieved this school year. As yet, though, efforts to embed consistently good or better use of assessment have not been as impressive.

The school implements robust procedures for safeguarding the pupils' welfare and is particularly diligent in obtaining, when necessary, the advice of outside specialists, for example speech and behavioural support therapists, to meet pupils' needs. Such excellent partnerships, which also include organisations within the local community, greatly enrich the range of learning activities provided for the pupils. The school promotes community cohesion extremely successfully. National and international dimensions of community are developed successfully through close links with a wide number of schools in diverse communities, for example in East London, across Europe and in Tanzania. The school holds a highly respected place within its local community where it plays a dual role; as a meeting place in bringing together various organisations, and as a catalyst instigating several local events, for example in support of the church and other religious groups.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Reception class is well led and managed and children make good progress in the well-equipped and organised surroundings, both indoors and outside. Children make a good start, aided by very good links with parents and carers and with

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the neighbouring pre-school. All children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are fully included and receive close support for their individual needs. In response to good teaching and excellent safeguarding of their welfare, children feel very safe and develop self-confidence. Many children make particularly good gains in their speaking and listening and early writing skills, and this reflects the strengthened promotion of their understanding of letter sounds and the meaning of words. Children behave and play well together and greatly enjoy undertaking their own activities. These include, for example, conducting a 'treasure hunt' in their 'cave', playing on their 'pirate ship' and 'beach hut', and examining their rock pool discoveries using magnifying glasses, reflecting quite deeply, for example, how 'bladders' help some seaweeds to float. Such opportunities, well supported by adults and supportively linked to their topics and visit to the seaside, enable children to also make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Within a good curriculum, there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. At times, assessments of the children's responses and developing skills are not used to best effect in making sure that planned teaching and activities build to an optimum degree on their previous learning.

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

The very large majority of parents and carers who returned their questionnaires are very happy with the school's support of their children. A typical comment was, 'I am very happy with the school. It provides my child with good learning and support.' Of the many additional written comments, most made appreciative reference to the excellent range of clubs and quality of care provided by the staff. In particular, all the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire expressed full agreement that teaching is good and almost all questionnaires showed full agreement that children are kept safe, have their needs met, and enjoy school and are well prepared for the future. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and whether the school takes sufficient note of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection shows that pupils behave well and that the school manages behaviour very effectively. The inspectors also judge that the school is very ready to listen, and where able to respond, to suggestions and concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Cleer 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 inspection team received 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 219 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	73	20	25	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	70	22	28	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	59	30	38	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	55	32	38	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	65	28	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	60	29	36	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	58	31	39	3	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)	46	58	32	40	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	55	34	43	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	49	35	46	4	3	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	49	35	44	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	55	34	43	0	0	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	69	24	30	0	0	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



14 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Cleer Primary School, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 5EA

Thank you for making us so very welcome when we visited your school. Special thanks go to the school council who so willingly took time to talk with one of my colleagues. We were extremely impressed by many things, but especially by your very positive contributions to your school and the community, and the excellent care provided for you by the staff of the school. We have no hesitation in agreeing with your headteacher that St Cleer is a good school that continues to improve.

These are some of the other good things we found.

- You rightly feel very safe at school – this came over very clearly in your questionnaires and those of your parents, and in our discussions with you.
- The school helps you to develop really well as young people and your excellent attendance reflects your full enjoyment of school.
- The school works very closely in partnership with outside specialist agencies, local schools and lots of other organisations to meet your needs and to provide you with an excellent range of learning activities.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are very proud to work at St Cleer and they are working hard to make the school outstanding. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and know what to do next to continue the school's improvement.

To help the school to improve, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do the following things.

- Make the teaching and learning even better by ensuring that teachers use assessments of your work to challenge you at the right level in lessons, especially to lift your basic spelling and numeracy skills, and when they mark your work, particularly in mathematics, show you how to improve.

You can help to make the school even better by really concentrating on learning your spellings and multiplication tables.

Very good wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter Lead Inspector

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