

# St Meriadoc Church of England Nursery and Infant School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112007
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	337811
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alex Baxter

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	176
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jo Wakeham MBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Irene Pooley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Rectory Road Camborne Cornwall TR14 7DW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01209 713982
<b>Fax number</b>	01209 713982
<b>Email address</b>	head@st-meriadoc-inf.cornwall.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	337811

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

T: 08456 404045  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and eight teachers were observed. The inspectors also attended two assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. 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, 96 parental questionnaires and 17 staff questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the development of pupils' skills from below expected starting points to determine whether teaching, given some staff change, is suitably challenging and effective
- the effect of the school's specific aims to support boys' writing and to improve outdoor learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the ability of leaders and managers to drive improvement, especially given the shared role of headteacher.

## Information about the school

This is a small nursery and infant school. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small percentage at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Such needs mainly feature speech, language and communication difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in Nursery and Reception classes, initially on a part-time basis. Among others, the school holds the Healthy Schools award and Investors in People status. Privately run 'breakfast' and 'after school' clubs operate from the school site. The role of headteacher is shared between the substantive headteacher, who leads for three days every week, and the deputy headteacher, as an acting headteacher, for two days each week.

**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

This is a good school. It is a welcoming, vibrant community where staff provide excellent pastoral care and develop very successful links with specialist outside agencies, parents and the local community. These exemplary features strongly promote the pupils' excellent behaviour, contributions to learning and adoption of healthy lifestyles. As one governor said, 'This very caring school has a 'new edge' and is improving rapidly.' Key factors behind this increased momentum include the considerable expertise that underpins the collaborative work of both headteachers and the strong continuity of support provided by an excellent governing body. As befits their Investors in People status, senior leaders work very closely with staff to present a very clear future direction for the school.

The drive for improvement has been underpinned by good self-evaluation. Priorities for action, for example to improve the outdoor learning facilities, especially for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and to raise the achievement of boys, particularly their writing skills, are already lifting pupils' skills. However, whilst outcomes are strong in Years 1 and 2, recent improvements in provision for the relatively high number of children in Nursery and Reception classes have not been in place long enough to bring outcomes in this part of the school to a similarly high level. The school inducts new staff effectively to secure good teaching. Issues identified at the previous inspection, namely assessment practices and pupils' speaking and listening skills, have been developed well and also show the school's good capacity for further improvement.

When children start school their skills and knowledge vary, but are generally below those levels expected for their age. They make a good start in Nursery and Reception classes but sometimes learning is not developed as successfully from children's choice of activity as it is during adult-led learning sessions. In response to good and occasionally outstanding teaching and learning, pupils make good progress through the school. By the time they leave, Year 2 pupils' attainment is above average in mathematics and science and in most aspects of English. All groups of pupils now achieve well, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with higher ability. Following improvement over the past year, attainment is broadly average in writing. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to write their own stories, imaginatively, about the things they like best.

Attendance is satisfactory but has been much affected by illness in recent terms and is not always promoted to best effect. Even so, pupils greatly enjoy school because, within the good curriculum, there is a strong focus on learning through practical, collaborative activity. The pupils play a full part in regular events such as 'Trevithick Day' and 'St Piran's Day', which fully involve and support the church and wider community and mean

**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

that very warm relationships abound. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Over the next two terms, to further support pupils in the progress they make, teachers should:
  - in Nursery and Reception classes, increase the level of adult support for children's freely-chosen learning activities to match the good adult-led learning in these classes
  - in Years 1 and 2 classes, provide more opportunities for pupils to write their own stories.
- Strengthen strategies and make full use of the excellent relationships with parents to lift pupils' attendance by the end of this school year.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Observations of lessons, both indoors and outside, and of learning in small groups around the school, showed that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of high ability, make good progress and greatly enjoy their learning. Pupils' attainment is above average in speaking and listening and in reading, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Attainment in writing has been improved and is now broadly average. Overall these standards represent good achievement. Visits to classrooms show good progress through the school with strengthened use of role play to develop pupils' speaking and vocabulary skills and practical use of counting apparatus to enrich pupils' calculation skills. In addition, in Year 1, for example, innovative use of 'story actions' and a very effective use of group teaching to develop pupils' understanding of words are lifting pupils' writing skills, especially those of boys. Good progress continues in Year 2 classes, especially, for example, when teachers used interactive whiteboards to develop and stimulate pupils' ideas. Pupils' communication skills, enjoyment and very willing contributions to 'real life' learning are further developed during whole-school topics, for example in the popular street party that concluded their 'Family and Neighbours' project.

Pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep safe and readily say they feel very safe at school because of the way caring adults look after them. They also behave extremely well and, by taking plenty of exercise, fully live up to the school's Healthy School award. Pupils are keen to take responsibility, for example by helping others at the 'Buddy Stop' at playtimes and as members of the school council. Pupils make excellent contributions to their own and each other's learning and take part very enthusiastically in charitable work, including supporting a family in Colombia. Within the school 'family', pupils show genuine respect for others regardless of their backgrounds and, for their age, also show a good understanding of the diversity of the national community. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is working with parents to improve this. Pupils' above average communication and numeracy skills and very positive

**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

attitudes towards learning prepare them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Pupils enjoy very warm relationships, respect their teachers and confidently approach an adult with any worries, knowing that their concerns will be quickly resolved. The way pupils are drawn into actively evaluating how well they are doing is another effective feature, which helps to make the next steps in learning clear. Teachers give good guidance and generally use questioning well to challenge pupils and to check pupils' understanding before moving on to more difficult work. Lessons typically proceed at a demanding pace and learning is most effective when pupils are readily able to learn through practical activity. This was seen in mathematics lessons in Year 2 where the prowess of pupils in using counting aids also demonstrated above average numeracy skills for their age. The pupils really enjoy learning practically and say the teachers' marking also helps them to improve. Pupils' learning is less effective when the work presented by teachers lacks sufficient challenge or does not match with their interests. Teaching assistants make valuable contributions to learning, including for pupils with

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

**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

special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their very good partnership with teachers also forms the basis of the high level of pastoral care that parents and pupils readily identify as characteristic of this school. This includes excellent liaison with outside agencies to support pupils' specific learning needs and to safeguard their welfare. The school checks attendance effectively, but is not always sufficiently proactive in seeking ways to encourage pupils to attend even more regularly.

The good curriculum is significantly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are often linked to topics such as 'Special World'. Activities involve participating in community and church events and visits to places such as 'The Eden Project'. Visitors, including artists, also widen pupils' learning and greatly enhance their enjoyment of school. These experiences enrich pupils' personal development, for example through the many opportunities to reflect on feelings, including during thought-provoking assemblies. Numeracy, literacy and scientific enquiry skills are developed well but at times pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their own ideas, for example through imaginative writing, and this limits their skills.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The shared headteacher role is proving effective in sustaining the school's caring ethos and high level of equal opportunity and freedom from discrimination for all pupils. Shared leadership is also providing the expertise and opportunity for exemplar teaching, which is lifting pupils' achievements, particularly in Year 1. These successful outcomes also reflect the determination of very capable governors in embracing innovation to achieve the best they can for the pupils. Senior staff and governors also ensure that priorities, identified by effective self-evaluation, are tackled well to bring improvement and that the pupils' welfare is fully safeguarded. Leaders and managers promote excellent links with parents, the community and outside agencies to support pupils with complex individual needs and to support vulnerable families. Staff with subject responsibility ensure that agreed actions are implemented with equal consistency across the school. This is evident, for example, in the concerted and improving development of pupils' writing and the coordinated use of counting aids to enrich pupils' calculation skills. The school promotes community cohesion extremely well. The school and local communities are developed superbly through events such as the 'Lantern Parade,' which involved and enriched the lives of about 6,000 residents. The school also promotes

**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

international and national aspects of community cohesion very effectively. These are accomplished through whole-school topics such as 'Homes' and 'Special Festivals'. Such events are supported extremely well by parents and often spread into the community, for example as a 'fashion parade' or 'street party'. The school also has links with a culturally diverse school in Barnet, London.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children enjoy their learning and, in response to good teaching, make good progress across all areas of learning. Good leadership ensures that welfare arrangements are very secure and that healthy living, in particular, is promoted successfully. Children learn to behave well, readily share apparatus and are polite to each other and to adults. Parents are very pleased with the way they are kept informed about their child's progress and with the guidance they are given to help their child to learn at home. Learning is good because the activities planned, both indoors and increasingly outdoors in the much improved areas, excite and appeal to the children. For example, children were thoroughly engrossed in feeling and mixing different coloured jelly, learning to make sequenced jigsaws, writing letters to 'Charlie Bear', and weaving brightly-coloured materials in the outdoor woodland play area. Teachers assess children's progress effectively and plan an appropriate balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. Occasionally, children's learning slows when adults do not give enough questioning support to the children's freely chosen activities.



**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

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Parents' responses to the Ofsted questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive and showed very high levels of agreement to several statements. Additional written comments, typically showing full support of the school, included, 'Every child is valued in this school and they are all celebrated for their own achievements', and 'The school has taken care and helped nurture our children, as a parent it is important to know when you leave your child they are safe.' A very small minority of parents disagreed that the school dealt effectively with unacceptable behaviour. There was no consensus across the very few other disagreements. Even so, inspectors were mindful of these parental concerns and examined them during the inspection. They concluded that the staff manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well and this is evident in the pupils' excellent behaviour.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Meriadoc Church of England Nursery and Infant 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 176 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	66	31	32	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	70	73	24	25	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	53	43	45	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	57	33	34	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	63	66	31	32	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	57	39	41	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	60	35	36	1	1	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)	49	51	37	39	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	55	41	43	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	50	43	45	3	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	49	42	44	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	65	68	29	30	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	73	25	26	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



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.

11 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Meriadoc Church of England Nursery and Infant School, Camborne TR14 7DW

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We are pleased to agree with you and most of your parents that St Meriadoc is a good school.

These are the other things we liked:

- You make good progress and really enjoy school. This is because the teachers challenge you well and help you to learn happily across an interesting range of activities.
- All the adults in the school look after you very well and show you how to be kind to each other. As a result, you feel very safe and secure.
- You behave extremely well and make excellent contributions to school activities and to the local and wider communities.
- The staff work very effectively with your parents and with other people from outside the school to get you support when you need it.
- The headteachers, staff and governors run the school well and are working hard to improve it.

We have asked your headteachers and staff to do these things to help you do even better in your learning:

- give more support to children's learning choices in Nursery and Reception classes and help those of you in Years 1 and 2 to improve your writing by giving you more opportunity to write your own stories
  - take further steps to encourage some of you to come to school more regularly.
- Keep giving of your best and good wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**