

St Breward Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111936
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310734
Inspection date	13 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Clark
Headteacher	Sharon King
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003
School address	St Breward Bodmin PL30 4LX
Telephone number	01208 850547
Fax number	01208 850547

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Breward is a very small school situated on the edge of Bodmin Moor. It is part of a cluster of similar local small schools. Until September 2006 the school consisted of three mixed-age classes but due to a falling number of pupils attending the school there are presently only two classes. Nearly all pupils are from White British or Cornish heritage. The proportion of pupils in the school with learning difficulties is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St. Breward is a good school with a welcoming, inclusive ethos. It provides a good education for pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are good. This is a school which demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement. The headteacher and staff have displayed the drive and determination to ensure the school has increased its effectiveness since the last inspection by continually evaluating its performance and implementing strategies aimed at raising achievement.

Children enter the Reception class with skills well below those expected for their age, especially regarding language development. They make good progress because of good teaching which focuses on meeting their needs. Effective teaching in Year 1 to Year 6 ensures this good progress continues throughout the rest of the school. However, standards in English lag behind the standards pupils attain in other subjects in all year groups. The school has identified pupils' writing and basic literacy skills, and especially their ability to construct sentences, as areas in need of improvement if standards are to rise.

Results in the national tests in Year 6 tend to vary over time because of the nature of different year groups and the small number of pupils involved in taking the tests each year. The school has worked successfully to improve pupils' achievement in all year groups and this has resulted in rising standards. As a result, standards in Year 6 are presently comparable to the national average overall and this represents good achievement for this group of pupils although their standards in writing are lower than in mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are keen and eager to learn and describe the school as a happy and friendly place where they feel part of one big family. As one pupil put it, 'School is fun to be in and full of my friends.' Pupils try hard to do well and their enjoyment of school is outstanding. They have good attitudes and make sensible and healthy choices. They take the responsibilities they are given. They have a good community spirit and say they feel safe and secure. Whilst their spiritual development is satisfactory, their moral and social development is good and is reflected in their good behaviour and the way they respect others. Pupils have a well developed appreciation of their own culture, but their understanding of the cultural diversity of modern British society is lacking.

The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure pupils requiring extra help are well supported. The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and is enhanced by a range of activities that further develop pupils' skills and enjoyment of learning. However, although the governing body fulfils its statutory duties efficiently, not all governors are equally involved in the school and governors do not share their responsibilities evenly. Procedures for care, guidance and support are good and contribute well to pupils' sense of well-being. The school has developed good systems to check how well individual pupils are doing. The pupils have individual learning targets but many are unclear about what these are or how they will help them improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter school with skills which are well below those expected for their age, especially in language development. They achieve well in the Reception year because of effective teaching and a well planned curriculum. Good leadership ensures that the needs of the youngest children,

in the mixed Reception to Year 3 class, are met well and that the classroom provides children with a stimulating learning environment. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that lessons effectively blend independent learning with adult directed tasks and this helps children to make good progress. Even so, most usually enter Year 1 with skills that are below those expected for their age, especially in written and spoken English, and this often affects their language development in later years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by improving basic literacy skills and pupils' ability to construct sentences.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that governors share their responsibilities equally.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds than their own.
- Ensure all pupils have a clear idea of their individual learning targets and what they have to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

This is a very small school where teachers know their pupils well and quickly identify those who are performing at a lower rate than they should be. These pupils then receive the targeted support they need in order to make the same good progress as other pupils. Children make good progress in their Reception year but, because they enter the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age, many do not reach the expected standards on entry to Year 1, especially with regard to language development. Pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout the rest of the school and pupils in Year 6 are on course to meet the appropriately challenging targets set for them in the 2008 national tests.

Standards in Year 6 are presently average in nearly all areas, with the exception of writing. Recent initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills throughout the school, for example the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to develop sentence construction skills, have met with only partial success and standards in writing still lag behind the standards pupils attain in other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school, although this is not reflected in their average rates of attendance. They are friendly and polite and display a great deal of care for each other's welfare. As one older pupil put it, 'We try to take care of the younger children.' Pupils know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem and say they feel safe and that adults deal quickly with instances of unkind behaviour.

They talk excitedly about their favourite subjects, especially mathematics, and say that they enjoy taking part in the wide range of after school clubs offered by such a small school. They talk enthusiastically about the school's good links with the community and about their fundraising for different charities. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and making healthy choices, especially about what they eat. The school ensures

pupils make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and information and ICT skills in preparation for the next stage of their education.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory overall. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and this is reflected in their good behaviour. Visits to places of interest, for example Cornwall's extensive coastline, help bring learning alive and provide pupils with experiences of life outside their isolated locality. However, pupils do not have a realistic understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Children in the Reception year get off to a good start because of good teaching which provides them with activities which effectively blend teacher directed tasks with independent learning. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the rest of the school and caters well for the needs of pupils in the school's two mixed age group classes. Teachers use a variety of approaches to make learning interesting and to make sure pupils work hard. Lessons are well structured and enjoyable, although there are occasions when the pace of learning slackens and pupils' interest wanes. Good quality teaching assistants support class teachers effectively to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities are provided with appropriate activities and with the help they need to succeed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are provided with a curriculum which meets their needs and interests well. It is enriched through a good range of extra-curricular activities and through beneficial links with the local village community and other small schools. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the range of interesting visits and visitors to school which increase their enjoyment of learning and help them develop their knowledge of the wider world. They look forward to taking part in sporting activities, particularly swimming, but understand the lack of a suitably large school hall limits their opportunities to take part in indoor physical education lessons.

Provision for ICT, criticised by the previous inspection, is good and ICT is used well to help pupils make progress in other subject areas, especially literacy. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and ensures that pupils become aware of the importance of fitness, well-being and leading a healthy lifestyle. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and helps this group of pupils to make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There is a pleasant family atmosphere about the school and this contributes well to pupils' outstanding enjoyment of learning and sense of well-being. Parents value the care their children receive and pupils comment that they feel safe and well looked after. Good induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines and those with learning difficulties receive an effective level of support. Pupils' health and well-being are securely safeguarded and child protection procedures meet current government requirements. The

quality of teachers' marking is good and provides pupils with effective guidance. The school has developed good procedures to track pupils' progress and set targets for improvement, but these have yet to be implemented to best effect as many pupils do not have a clear idea of their individual learning targets and what they have to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has ensured the school has been thorough in regularly analysing its performance and in implementing improvements where needed. This has enabled the school to identify and sustain existing good practice and to address inconsistencies, for example by improving the quality of ICT provision. She has been well supported by her staff and the governing body, which offers the school an appropriate level of support and challenge. However, there is a need for all governors to become fully involved in school affairs as presently not all members of the governing body share responsibilities equally.

The school works closely with parents and regularly seeks their views. Links with external agencies are good and support pupils' learning well, particularly those with learning difficulties. Resources are good and used well to enhance learning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Breward Primary School, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LX

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. Everyone was really friendly and I soon realised why you enjoy school so much. I enjoyed talking to some of you about what you like about your school and seeing you rehearse for your Christmas production.

Here are some of the things I particularly like about your school.

- St Breward Primary is a good school which cares for its pupils well and makes sure that everyone is treated equally.
- The standards you reach in Year 6 match those in most schools. They show that you are taught well and that you make good progress during your time at the school.
- Your personal development is good and your enjoyment of school is outstanding.
- Your behaviour is good and you have a good understanding of how to live healthily and safely.
- Your headteacher, teachers and the governing body lead and manage the school well. I believe your headteacher and teachers can do something to make your school better and I have asked them to:
 - help you to improve your writing skills, especially your ability to construct sentences
 - make sure that more individual governors become involved in the day to day life of the school
 - help you to gain a better understanding about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds
 - make sure you all know your learning targets and what you have to do to improve your work.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead inspector



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Lead inspector