

St Breward Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111936
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	363786
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
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	31
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Clark
Headteacher	Lee Batthus
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited 10 lessons and observed four teachers. The inspector observed the school's work, and attended assemblies, evaluated break times, before- and after-school activities, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The inspector looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. In addition, questionnaires completed by 16 parents and carers, 18 pupils and 11 staff were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The consistency of teaching and learning to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve equally well, especially the youngest children in the mixed-age Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 class.
- The degree to which the school meets the individual needs of pupils, especially by providing a suitable breadth of social and academic stimulation when they are members of particularly small year groups. ♦
- The work of leaders and managers in sustaining continuous improvements in pupils' achievements and attendance by embedding shared and effective practice.

Information about the school

This is a very small rural village primary school with two mixed-age classes and a part-time Nursery class. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there is a below average percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery class and within a Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 class. The school is part of a management partnership with a nearby primary school, each retaining its own governing body. This is known as a 'soft federation', with an executive headteacher sharing his duties equally between the two schools.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

- St Breward is an outstanding school that continues to improve. The ethos of the school is one of friendship, which fosters mutual encouragement in both pupils and staff. As a result, they are caring of each other, have high expectations and exude confidence.
- The driving force behind the school's success is undoubtedly the inspirational executive headteacher. His unflagging enthusiasm and open communication have laid the vision of what can be achieved by cooperating with other schools and have empowered all those associated with the school to work together for its further improvement.
- Strengthened procedures to track pupils' progress underpin excellent self-evaluation and ensure the right priorities are identified and tackled. In addition, the cooperation between the two 'softly federated' schools is improving the educational experiences and opportunities for pupils.
- As a result, attainment has risen and is now above average, especially in reading, and reflects the pupils' good achievement. Although improving, pupils' expressive writing is not aided by their underdeveloped handwriting skills.
- Teaching is good, and occasionally, as in the Nursery, it is outstanding. Good teaching in the mixed Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 class is effectively implemented to ensure that the youngest children learn well across the required Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Because, as the pupils say, 'Learning is often fun', they work hard and greatly enjoy school. ♦ Consequently their excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes towards learning also reflect continuing improvement.
- Much of the recent improvement stems from a curriculum that is enhanced by the rapidly increasing use of information and communication technology (ICT) and by a wealth of extra-curricular activities and school trips, which include shared residential, drama and sporting experiences. Such improved provision and outcomes show that pupils' differing needs and interests are met and illustrate the school's outstanding capacity to bring about further improvement.
- The governing body and senior staff provide good support and play an important role in safeguarding pupils' welfare and in sustaining excellent partnerships with parents and other groups to support pupils' learning. Even so, pupils' attendance, while improved and now broadly average, is still reduced at times by too many holidays taken during term-time.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To further support the progress pupils make in literacy, teachers should improve pupils' handwriting by teaching a consistent style of handwriting and emphasising the importance of well-presented work.
- Raise attendance through more rigorous monitoring and by increasing parental awareness of the positive impact that regular attendance has on their children's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children's skills on entry vary from year to year across the small cohorts, but speech and language skills are often below expected levels. Observations of pupils' responses in lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and analysis of assessments show that achievement is good for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with more ability. Pupils' good learning and positive responses in lessons are typified by pupils' keenness to do well and by the way they are genuinely pleased and interested by what their schoolmates achieve and have to say. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 4, 5 and 6 where the pupils showed a harmonious and yet competitive spirit as they engaged in 'real-life maths', calculating the price of rail tickets to Penzance. Pupils' willingness to offer ideas in response to teachers' prompting enriches their understanding and good progress. The pupils' above average levels of attainment in reading, mathematics and speaking and listening by the end of Year 6 increasingly reflect accelerated progress in Years 5 and 6 as pupils take a more mature ownership of their learning. ♦ Work in pupils' books, especially their topic studies, for example, when writing about The Second World War, also shows their developing ability to reflect and write descriptively and imaginatively about issues. Although attainment in writing continues to improve and is broadly average, the quality of expressive writing is clouded on occasion by weakness in handwriting. ♦♦

Pupils' behaviour and relationships are excellent and greatly enrich their learning and enjoyment throughout the school as seen, for example in the Nursery, where children very new to school life are quick to experience joyful role play when learning about Jack climbing the beanstalk into the giant's castle. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes a healthy safe lifestyle. This is clearly evident in their confident demeanour at school and their eager and skilled participation in sports, notably for such a small school, in the success of their netball team, in which boys and girls are fully represented. Pupils make excellent contributions to the life of the school and volunteer willingly in representing the school in community events. The school council helps to organise fund-raising events and, for example, showed much initiative and self-assurance in negotiating a donation for playground equipment from the local council. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. ♦ Although there is no persistent absence, at times, too many holidays are taken during school time. Even so, pupils are developing into sensible and responsible young people who are prepared well for the next stage in their education and life beyond school.

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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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

For most of the time, teachers adapt their teaching methods well to match pupils' interests and understanding. This was particularly evident in the Nursery, where the consistent emphasis on building new learning on children's freely chosen activity successfully engaged them and underpinned excellent progress. In all classes, the teachers' and their assistants' close knowledge of individual pupils, aided by focused use of assessment and careful questioning, lifts pupils' confidence and extends pupils' thinking. This was evident, for example, in the Reception, Years 1, 2 and 3 class when digital video recordings of reception children explaining how they made modelling dough enriched the older pupils' ability to sequence their writing. ♦♦♦ Enjoyment and interesting learning was also seen in the Years 4, 5 and 6 class, especially for example, consolidating multiplication facts through bingo. However, on occasion the pace of learning slows because too much adult-led teaching limits pupils' ability to initiate their own learning activity or to discuss ideas in a smaller group where ability more closely matches their own. The school is already tackling this with some success through additional one-to-one and group support out of classes.

Through a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, the curriculum supports pupils' academic achievement effectively, but is even more successful in providing memorable experiences to promote pupils' personal qualities. These include extending the pupils' adoption of healthy living and social skills through shared residential visits and sports

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events, such as the swimming gala, with pupils in their partner school. The relatively recent, but fast developing and already enriching use of ICT to enhance pupils' interest and learning across the range of subjects is another impressive feature. This was clear during the inspection, for example, when all lessons observed included both the teachers' use of interactive whiteboards to clarify pupils' understanding and the pupils' individual and collaborative use of laptop computers to aid investigative research. Specific examples showed children in Nursery and Reception using computers to extend their understanding of words, pupils in Years, 1, 2 and 3 exploring Leonardo da Vinci's machines and pupils in Year 6 developing their computing skills to test their knowledge of the location of countries across the world. Staff present excellent role models and provide consistent, extremely well-organised care, which contributes strongly to the pupils' excellent behaviour and moral development and to their safety at school and well-being. All pupils are very aware of this, including those with emotional and learning needs, and are confident in seeking help from adults, for themselves and for each other, if needed.

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 very well-respected executive headteacher leads a strong drive and ambition for continued improvement. He sustains excellent monitoring and self-evaluation, especially of the quality of teaching and learning, which, with the full support of staff, means that targets are used very effectively to address pupils' needs and to accelerate their progress. Currently, for example, the particular needs of children in the Nursery and Reception, and of pupils with special educational needs across the school, are being addressed with an increased amount of teaching either for individuals or in small groups. Outcomes, such as an increasing number of pupils accelerating their progress in reading and mathematics and the pupils' outstanding personal qualities, show that the school provides excellent value for money and is very well placed to continue this into the future.

The governing body, having made the significant decision to establish a new federation, affirmed a clear intention to strengthen the way it supports the school and to quicken the pace of improvement since the last inspection. ♦ Improved sharing of information and improved expertise now underpin the good work of the governing body in supporting the staff of the school and in establishing excellent links with parents. Pupils are treated equally, and are kept free from discrimination because the school monitors the performance of different groups of pupils, as seen, for example, in improved achievement by boys. Pupils are kept safe because all staff sustain high quality pastoral support and ensure good adherence with safeguarding and other statutory procedures, such as staff

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recruitment and child protection checks. The benefits of the federation are clearly apparent and continue to emerge. In particular, the work of the executive headteacher has strengthened partnerships with other schools, outside agencies and the community. The sharing of good practice and staff expertise, for example in ICT, across the two federated schools, has significantly extended the learning opportunities provided for the pupils. Shared activities with the partner school, very close links with other schools and community groups and developing links with schools in China and Birmingham, also promote community cohesion effectively. ♦♦♦♦♦

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for children in the Nursery and in their Reception Year is extremely well led and ensures that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. Close links with parents also contribute very supportively to children's learning. Teachers and their talented assistants are well aware of the challenges presented by teaching reception children in a mixed-age class and are diligent in ensuring that children are able to experience and make good progress across all areas of Early Years Foundation Stage learning. Currently in the discrete Nursery class, a larger and more capable group of children than usual are taught exceptionally well and are making excellent progress. This is because children enjoy fun activities, including for example, sharing large wheeled toys in their outside area, that are very closely matched to their age, needs and abilities. There is a clear emphasis on promoting children's independent learning skills, increasingly by using computers. Children in the Nursery can freely choose either indoor or outdoor activities, but in Reception, such a choice is only possible when they visit the nursery room during some afternoons. On occasion, reception children experience too much adult-led learning, especially when listening within a whole class group and this constrains their progress. The school is

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already addressing this by developing practical learning activities in the hall, such as when children were making shapes with magnetic triangles and squares. Further plans identify creating a secure outdoor learning area, more readily and freely accessible for reception children.

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	1

Views of parents and carers

There was a broadly average response rate to the questionnaire by parents and carers, with unanimous expressions of agreement in all except the question about behaviour. A few parents and carers spoke with the inspector and also expressed very supportive views, which matched the inspection judgements. A few statements and additional written comments mostly reflected concerns about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection considered the parents' and carers' concerns and finds that, as the very large majority indicated, the school is very successful in promoting 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 Breward Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspector received 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 31 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	69	5	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	69	5	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	11	69	5	31	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	56	7	44	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	75	4	25	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	50	7	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	50	8	50	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)	8	50	7	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	44	7	44	2	13	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	88	2	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	75	4	25	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 all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



31 March 2011



Dear Pupils



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



Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome during my recent inspection of your school. You were all extremely polite and friendly. Very special thanks to the members of the school council who talked to me so wholeheartedly about your school. They said that you learn in lots of 'fun' ways and you laugh a lot. I agree with you and with many of your parents, who feel that yours is an outstanding school.



These are the other main things I found.

- You work very hard and make good progress. An increasing number of you are making excellent progress especially in reading.
- You behave extremely well and feel very safe because everyone at the school looks after you in an exemplary way.
- It is great that adults and pupils all get on so well together. You enjoy your learning because teaching is good and you do a lot of interesting things.
- You contribute really well in all activities and are very good at living healthily.
- Your headteacher is an outstanding leader who is working very effectively with the staff and governors and with your parents and other people to make sure that the school continues to improve.



All this adds up to a very successful school, but as your headteacher quite rightly says, 'We can do even better', and so I have asked the headteacher and the teachers to help you to improve your handwriting and to work with your parents to improve your attendance.



You can help by keeping your wonderful enthusiasm for school.

I wish you well for the future.



Yours sincerely



Alex Baxter
Lead inspector

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