

# St Petroc's School

Independent school standard inspection report

---

DfE registration number	908/6001
Unique Reference Number (URN)	112068
URN for registered childcare	EY407716
Inspection number	361334
Inspection dates	09–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI

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 assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, 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 information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2010



## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

The inspection of registered provision was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.<sup>3, 4</sup>

## Information about the school

St Petroc's School is an independent preparatory day school and nursery for boys and girls from birth to 11 years. The school first opened in 1912 and moved to the present site in Bude, in Cornwall, in 1926. The school is a charitable trust run by a board of trustees. The school currently has 70 pupils attending full time. There is a small proportion of pupils with special educational needs, although none has a statement. The school was previously inspected in June 2006.

A day nursery for under-threes on site, known as Seahorses Nursery, is registered for 38 early years children of which 15 may be under two years old at any one time. In addition the school provides an Early Years Foundation Stage education for 24 children to attend part time in the Kindergarten class and 11 children full time in the Reception class. Thirty-four children are in receipt of government nursery funding. The school has received capital funding for new early years classrooms and these are due for completion in the New Year. The Seahorses Nursery setting has not previously been inspected.

The school aims to 'encourage children to think for themselves as well as being self-disciplined by developing positive attitudes and extending their knowledge'.

## Evaluation of the school

St Petroc's School provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The curriculum is good and the teaching and assessment are consistently good. However, the school's procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are inadequate. The school meets the majority of regulations but there are a number of regulatory failures in the arrangements for the health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

<sup>3</sup> Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

<sup>4</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga\\_20060021\\_en\\_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2006/ukpga_20060021_en_4#pt3-ch2-pb4-l1g49)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good. The school has an overarching curriculum policy which states that the curriculum is 'best summed up as National Curriculum plus'. Children under five-years-old follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. There are separate, comprehensive policies for each National Curriculum subject although these are not written to a common format and vary in the level of detail.

Outcomes for Year 6 pupils in terms of national test results in English, mathematics and science over recent years are at least good, which gives a clear indication that the core curriculum is appropriate and relevant to pupils' needs. The school's strong emphasis on basic skills ensures that pupils develop into confident, articulate and well-rounded individuals. The curriculum provides good opportunities for drama, speaking and listening, and as a result pupils' oral skills demonstrate a wide vocabulary and mature use of language. Pupils make at least good progress in a wide range of areas because the curriculum offers a good range of additional subjects, including French from Reception, swimming and design and technology. Pupils produce good quality, battery-powered wooden cars using cams and pulleys. Most pupils learn a musical instrument. All attend a wide range of extra-curricular sporting and recreational activities which include orienteering, surfing, air rifle shooting and dancing.

Teaching and assessment are consistently good throughout the school. Relationships are good and staff get to know pupils well. They know the varying levels of pupils' abilities and are able to provide appropriate levels of challenge. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs are supported by the class teacher and through some additional weekly support by a specialist teacher. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support younger pupils. This support is effective where pupils are asked to explain their work and helped to identify the correct response. In several lessons teachers' planning provides a clear sequence of learning with introductory activities linking well with the main task and the concluding activity recapping what has been learnt. In these lessons the pace is kept high and children make good or better progress.

Teachers use a range of teaching strategies. Ongoing assessments are used effectively to monitor pupils' learning and to respond to any misconceptions. Teachers deal with these well by reinforcing their explanations clearly and in their use of questioning to draw out pupils' understanding. In a good English lesson, Year 6 pupils were set challenging questions such as 'Can I put an adverb following the word "said" to make this sentence better?' All staff regularly encourage pupils to work in small groups and provide good opportunities for pupils to express their ideas. Where available, teachers use information technology well to provide opportunities for pupils to apply and share their knowledge and skills. Year 2 pupils increased their

understanding of place value by using an interactive whiteboard to separate and display hundreds, tens and units in a three-digit number.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although the cultural aspect is less well developed. The sense of belonging, a high regard for the pupils as individuals and a commitment to building good relationships are at the heart of the school ethos and help to prepare them for their adult life and future economic well-being. Pupils enjoy school, have very positive attitudes towards their learning and especially enjoy the wide range of sporting and extra-curricular activities available to them. They have great respect for their teachers and are generally tolerant and considerate of each other and make close friends so that the school is a harmonious environment. They are punctual and attendance is good. For the most part their behaviour is good and, in some lessons and assemblies, outstanding. Pupils think that behaviour around the school is generally good and that any problems are quickly dealt with by their teachers. This also applies to bullying; pupils report that incidents of bullying are rare and more likely to be about friends falling out.

Pupils apply themselves well both when working as individuals or cooperatively in small groups. Pupils are very keen to volunteer and participate in activities within the classroom and to perform in front of their peers. They take great pride in the presentation of their work, their handwriting is legible and their books are well cared for. Assemblies involve pupils and celebrate their achievements. They include periods of quiet reflection, as in the hymn that was sung to prepare for Remembrance Day. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to charities such as Love in a Box which sends toys and essentials to children in Romania. There are links to the local church where the pupils perform at Christmas and celebrate St Petroc's Day. They also sing carols at local homes for the elderly and talk to the residents about their experiences. The school has a community cohesion policy to further develop pupils' cultural understanding both nationally and globally.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school's procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are inadequate. Staff take care to build good and caring relationships with children. They respond quickly to any rare instances of poor behaviour and bullying. The school keeps suitable attendance and admission registers. However, there are a number of regulatory failings which affect pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school has completed checks on a number of portable appliances but these did not include appliances in resource room, kitchen and art rooms. The school conducted a fire safety audit in October and identified a number of hazards, but not all these issues have been rectified. The school has held regular fire drills and completes checks to the alarm system; however, fire extinguishers have not been checked annually and staff training on fire safety awareness is out of date. The school's procedures for

health and safety of pupils on educational visits and off-site activities do not comply with regulations; full risk assessments are not completed consistently and do not indicate measures taken to control risks. The school has acted swiftly during the inspection to complete a health and safety audit of outdoor areas. The school has also responded to identification during the inspection of the presence of hazardous chemicals and substances to ensure that these are kept in securely locked areas. The school's new leadership has updated and satisfactorily modified a large number of policies, including the child protection policy, and these are made available to parents.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school completes appropriate recruitment procedures on permanent members of staff in the school and Early Years Foundation Stage staff before they commence employment. These include checks on their qualifications, personal references and their suitability to work with children. The school has completed checks on the governing body to ensure their suitability. The school's single central record contains all details of permanent members of school and Early Years Foundation Stage staff and governors. However, the school has not completed appropriate checks on adults covering for absent members of staff before they start work at the main school. These have not been included within their contractual agreements and written notification has not been obtained prior to their starting work that all appropriate checks have been completed.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The school's accommodation includes a range of classrooms and specialist teaching areas. Year group classrooms are well resourced and furniture and furnishings are appropriate. The school uses attractive displays of pupils' work to brighten the interior and to celebrate pupils' achievements. In a number of classrooms there is no central heating but portable radiators and heaters are used to provide suitable heating to all areas where required. The school's facilities for pupils who are ill do not meet regulations; the room is used as a cloakroom and there is no immediate access to a washbasin. The school has taken steps during the inspection to ensure that hazardous chemicals in science and kitchen areas are safely stored away. However, there are some inadequate security arrangements at the school with regard to the outdoor areas. The school grounds are extensive and include tennis and netball courts and a rugby pitch, helping to ensure the success of many of the school's sporting teams.

### **Provision of information**

The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and recognise its strengths. Communication with parents is good; the headteacher is a daily presence at the start and end of the school day. Parents are kept up to date and well informed about the school's events and activities through an attractive and informative weekly newsletter. The prospectus makes appropriate reference to the subjects children

study in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at each key stage. Parents and carers are provided with information every month giving grades for their child's achievement, effort and attitude. In addition, parents of Early Years Foundation Stage children are provided with an annual report. Parents of Year 1 children and above are provided with two written reports each year and may attend parent meetings in the spring term.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's complaints procedures meet all of the relevant requirements.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

The overall effectiveness of the setting is satisfactory and provision for the under-threes meets the requirements of the early years register. From the earliest age all children enjoy their learning and this is demonstrated by their developing self-confidence and eagerness to learn. Staff act as key workers across the setting and build good relationships with babies and children. However, there is a lack of consistency in staff's communication with babies and in working with young children to encourage them to respond. Children show good and sometimes excellent behaviour because they feel secure and cared for. Data and school assessments show that children generally enter the Nursery with skills broadly in line with expectations, make satisfactory progress and leave the Nursery in line with expectations. In the Kindergarten, progress increases and in Reception sees a marked acceleration, with children leaving with above and well-above age-related expectations. Children's personal development is good, reflecting excellent social skills, growing self-confidence and independent learning skills.

Provision is satisfactory, ensuring a good balance of all the learning goals and of adult- and child-led activities. Planning is linked to the use of assessments, strongly so in the Reception and Kindergarten classes. Children have good routines to ensure their understanding of being healthy, supported by clear policies and procedures to ensure good levels of hygiene. The setting provides a good introduction to children's education. However, there is a lack of space both indoors and outdoors and a lack of suitable resources for all children. Partnerships with parents are good, ensuring clear information and effective communication. The setting makes good use of learning diaries for all children, including for the very youngest the recording of feeding and changing times, and this results in good outcomes.

Leadership and management at all levels are clear and robust, providing a united view of strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement. Safeguarding is paramount, supported by appropriate documentation, and staff are well trained and qualified. They are excited by the new building and see it as a chance to improve provision. The setting has benefitted from good external support provided by specialist professionals and the local authority.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>5</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure the completion of the appropriate checks on all supply staff covering for absent teachers (paragraph 7)
- take effective measures to ensure the health and safety of all pupils through the safe storage and controlled use of hazardous chemicals and substances in line with the DfES guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (paragraph 11)
- ensure consistent procedures in the completion of full risk assessments and indicate the measures taken to control risks to pupils' health and safety on educational visits which have regard to DfES guidance *Health and safety of pupils on educational visits* (paragraph 12)
- resolve all issues arising from the latest fire safety audit and ensure that staff undertake appropriate training in fire safety and that appropriate checks are completed annually on all fire extinguishers, safety equipment and portable electric appliances in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (paragraph 13).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors (standards in part 4) and must:

- ensure that any person provided by an outside agency only begins work at the school after receiving written notification of the completion of checks on the person's identity, qualifications, right to work in the UK and suitability to work with children (paragraph 20(2)(a))
- include in any contractual arrangements with an outside agency the requirement to see a copy of the CRB certificate (paragraph 20(2)(d))
- in relation to staff not directly employed by the school, ensure that the single central register shows that written notification has been received by the school that checks have been completed (paragraph 22(5)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- improve security in and around the school site (paragraph 23(d))
- ensure that teaching areas are improved with regard to health and safety with particular regard to the storage of hazardous chemicals (paragraph 23(i))
- provide suitable facilities for pupils who are ill that comply with regulations (paragraph 23(k)).

---

<sup>5</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made)

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

In the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- improve opportunities for babies and young children to develop their early communication skills and enjoy making and listening to a wide variety of sounds and respond to different things said to them
- improve provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children of all ages by increasing their opportunities to play and learn outdoors.

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				√
--	--	--	--	---

### The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage		√		
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			√	

## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Preparatory and Nursery		
<b>Date school opened</b>	1912		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	0–11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 41	Girls: 29	Total: 70
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 12	Girls: 12	Total: 24
<b>Number of children aged 0–3 in registered childcare provision</b>	Boys: 32	Girls: 25	Total: 57
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£1,655–£2,645		
<b>Annual fees (childcare)</b>	£4.20 per hour		
<b>Numbers of children in receipt of Nursery funding</b>	34		
<b>Address of school</b>	Ocean View Drive, Bude, Cornwall EX23 8NJ		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01288 352876		
<b>Email address</b>	office@stpetrocs.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Anderson		
<b>Proprietor</b>	St Petroc's School Trust		