



St Ives Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111800
LEA Cornwall
Inspection number 282866
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Andrew Watters HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	The Burrows
School category	Community		St Ives
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Cornwall TR26 1DN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01736 796202
Number on roll	288	Fax number	01736 796668
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Shears
Date of previous inspection	27 January 2003	Headteacher	Mrs Sue Smith

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

When St Ives Junior School was inspected in January 2003 it was judged to require special measures. Initially, progress was slow mainly because of weaknesses in teaching, instability in staffing and unsatisfactory support for the headteacher, who was appointed after the inspection. The school is situated in a mainly residential area, outside the town centre. Nearly all the pupils are of White British origin and a quarter of them are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Just over 20% per cent of the pupils either leave or arrive at the school after the usual entry point in Year 3. When pupils enter the school their attainment is generally in line with what is expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of schools (HMCI) is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. The school judges its effectiveness as satisfactory, which is slightly modest. HMI judge it as good! The school is a very welcoming community that promotes the principles of social justice and equality very well. Although standards in national tests remain below average, particularly in writing and mathematics, they are rising rapidly throughout the school. Most pupils are making good progress and some do even better than this. The gap between what the pupils are expected to reach for their age and what they are currently achieving is closing at an increasingly speedy rate. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and some is outstanding. The strong drive for improvement and enjoyment is achieved successfully. The pupils behave very well and have positive attitudes to their learning. They really appreciate the help that they are given to succeed and improve.

The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. Through her resilience and determination, she has established a rigorous focus on raising standards for all pupils. She receives good support from the senior leadership team. Monitoring and evaluation are good. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and what needs to be improved further. Subject leaders play a strong part in this process. Assessment information is used effectively to track the pupils' progress and set challenging targets for improvement. Governors discharge their statutory duties well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school now gives good value for money.

When the school went into special measures it had lost its way. Expectations and staff morale were very low. The turnaround has been achieved by good leadership and a team of committed staff. The pupils and parents now have a school of which they can be proud.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards and the achievement levels for all pupils, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are rising. In each year group, based on their different starting points and capabilities, the majority of pupils are making good progress to improve their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Much of this is due to better quality teaching and the challenging targets that have been set for the pupils to achieve. Between 2003 and 2005, over half the pupils made better progress than expected and some pupils made outstanding progress. This improved rate of progress was reflected well in all lessons where standards were consistently in line with what is expected for the pupils' ages. Some pupils achieved better than this, for example, in mathematics in

Year 6. In the 2005 national tests, pupils achieved well in science but less so in English and mathematics, where their attainment levels remain below national averages. Standards in writing were particularly low. The school is successfully tackling the low attainment levels that have persisted in the past and there is no significant underachievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes. They concentrate well in lessons and get on with their work willingly, showing enjoyment and enthusiasm. They work well in pairs and support one another, for example, when the Year 6 pupils escort the younger pupils from assemblies. The pupils value the school's rewards for good behaviour, know that their opinions are valued and enjoy taking responsibility. Their participation in sports activities and choice of healthy food at lunch and break times enhances their understanding of healthy lifestyles well. They are ably prepared for the world of work because their basic skills are improving and their economic awareness is developed well in lessons, such as in mathematics and geography. Year 6 pupils have taken part in an informative day organised by local emergency service providers.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and enjoy a variety of social events, including residential visits to north Cornwall and a cultural visit to London. The pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths is enhanced effectively by celebrating the impact of key figures in history, for example, during Black awareness month. The school council gives the pupils a say in how their school is run and what changes should be made, such as the improvements to the playground. It also helps them understand the principle of democracy. Attendance this term is improving and at 94% is broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. However, too many pupils lose time at school because of family holidays in term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching ranges from outstanding to satisfactory and is good overall. Teachers have created a strong culture of improvement and have high expectations for all pupils. Stimulating classroom displays are used effectively to improve and enhance the pupils' learning. Lessons are well planned, with an unequivocal focus on improving the pupils' achievements. Pupils know that their teachers want them to succeed and enjoy their work. It is no surprise that they do! The pupils' work is matched well to their different starting points. It is interesting and challenging and this motivates them to work hard and try to do their best. Assessment information is used effectively to help the pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Adults

and pupils enjoy working together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and good humour. The quality of relationships is excellent. Teaching assistants play an important part in helping the pupils succeed in their work. They are well briefed and form effective partnerships with the teachers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is planned carefully and there is a good range of enjoyable activities which match the pupils' aspirations and capabilities. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to motivate the pupils and reinforce important teaching points. Key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are taught effectively in other subjects. The pupils make a positive contribution to the community. In the summer, some of them sang at local events and others joined in the town's contribution to the national Britain in Bloom event. There is a good range of after-school clubs, including opportunities to learn French, extend ICT skills, sing and participate in sporting activities. Many pupils attend and enjoy these clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for the pupils. They feel safe and valued and know that there is always an adult to turn to if they need help. Child protection procedures are firmly established and well known by all staff. Risk assessments are carefully attended to. There have been very few incidents of bullying. When these have occurred, they have been dealt with effectively. Parents are very positive about the school. One parent said: 'There is now a fantastic can-do culture.' The school buildings are well maintained and provide a safe and secure learning environment. This is much appreciated by all members of the school community. Pupils are taught about the nutritional values of foods and only healthy snacks are on sale. The pupils are set challenging targets and given good help to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management and the school's capacity to improve are good. The headteacher provides good and effective leadership. She is a resilient, determined and very positive leader. Her emphasis on teamwork and the accountability of all staff to play their part in raising standards has created a strong and effective team who are committed to improvement. There is a common sense of purpose and a clear sense of educational direction. The school's mission statement, 'to provide high quality teaching and learning and to raise achievement levels for all pupils' is being met well.

The headteacher receives good support from the senior leadership team, which includes the recently appointed deputy headteacher. The team is highly effective, provides good subject leadership and is making a significantly positive contribution to leading

and managing the school. Assessment information is analysed rigorously and used well to track the pupils' progress, set challenging targets for improvement and evaluate the impact of teaching on the pupils' achievements. Monitoring and evaluation are systematic and rigorous. The headteacher and senior teachers have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved further. This is reflected well in the revised action plan and three-year strategic plan. The local authority provides satisfactory support and is committed to monitoring the school's further development.

Questionnaires have been used well to seek the views of parents and pupils and ask them how the school could be improved. As a result, the pupils' homework is used more effectively to extend their achievements. The governing body discharges its statutory responsibilities effectively. It is led astutely by the chair of governors, who has established an effective partnership with the headteacher. He also ensures that the governing body keeps a close watch on how well the pupils are achieving.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St Ives Junior School The Burrows St Ives Cornwall TR26 1DN

2 December 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We have really enjoyed talking with you and visiting your lessons. You are all very friendly, cheerful and polite and have made sure that for the two days we have been with you we have felt a part of your school. Thank you for sharing your work with us. We could see that you always try hard to do your best and help each other. Well done! We think your school council does a very good job and works hard to improve things for you, like the changes to the playground, which you really appreciate.

As you know I have been visiting your school each term to check that it is getting better. I am very pleased to tell you that you now go to a really good school! We had a good time talking to your teachers and it was good to see how well they and you got on together. You really know what you are expected to learn and how you can achieve even more. Your teachers, the headteacher and all the other adults in school work very hard to make sure that you are safe and that you do well with your work. You have lots of fun in your lessons and really enjoy coming to school!

We have asked Mrs Smith and the teachers to continue with all the good things that are happening in your school to make sure that you do even better in your work, particularly in your writing and mathematics.

I shall take away lots of good memories about all of you at St Ives Junior and have really enjoyed being at your school. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Watters HMI