

Inspection of a good school: St Wenn School

St Wenn, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 5PS

Inspection dates:

7 June 2022

Outcome

St Wenn School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents, carers and pupils feel a great affection for this school. They value the caring, close-knit community. Staff are proud to work here. Leaders and governors are ambitious and want the best for every child. Pupils say that their school is like a family where everyone cares about each other.

Pupils get on well together and most pay close attention when learning. This means that lessons run smoothly. Pupils treat adults and each other with respect. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. They are confident that staff would listen to any concerns and act if needed.

The new headteacher, supported by the governing body, has quickly addressed the most pressing issues in the school. The impact of the changes is visible in the school, for example in the improved behaviour of pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious to do as much as they can for every pupil. They are well on the way to realising this through a well-developed curriculum and the wider opportunities on offer to all pupils. Parents and staff value the changes made and are strongly supportive of school leaders.

Most pupils become very confident readers. Staff who teach younger pupils to read are highly skilled. They teach phonics well and ensure that pupils understand the words they are learning to read. As a result, pupils develop very secure knowledge of the sounds that letters make. This could be seen in the work of Year 1 pupils, who recognise many complicated sounds. This also means that pupils become accurate and confident when spelling words.

While most pupils develop a love of books, this is not the case for all. This is because leaders do not ensure that all pupils regularly listen to enough high-quality books being

read aloud at school. Some whole-class reading activities are too complicated. Consequently, not all pupils gain a deep enough understanding of the content of the books being read.

The mathematics curriculum has been carefully designed to meet the need of the pupils at the school. As a result, pupils develop a good knowledge of mathematics as they progress through the school. This is clearly visible in the early years, where children use their very secure knowledge of numbers to play games and sing songs. Assessment is well used in mathematics, as it is in reading, to identify pupils who may need additional help. Teachers and other staff then provide effective support to help pupils catch up.

Most pupils progress well through the school and acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage in their education. A small number of pupils struggle to recall the knowledge they have previously covered in subjects other than reading and mathematics. This is because staff do not always check that all pupils understand the work covered before they move on to the next stage.

Leaders monitor the curriculum closely. Leaders give teachers clear guidance on what pupils already know, what they need to learn and the words they may need to understand. The school is currently reviewing the curriculum to further strengthen the links between subjects.

The impact of the improvements being made to the curriculum can be seen in the teaching of history. In this subject, what pupils need to know has been clarified to maximise learning for pupils as they progress through the school. As a result of these developments, pupils are remembering even more of the knowledge they have covered. Pupils are enthusiastic about history. They can accurately remember the key facts and concepts that they have covered.

All staff are clear that low-level disruption is not accepted at the school. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, with pupils attentive to the teacher's direction. Behaviour at break and lunch is well supervised and safe.

Pupils experience a broad curriculum that goes beyond the academic subjects to include issues such as equality and diversity. Pupils learn about the importance of helping others and take part in fundraising activities for local, national and international causes. Residential trips give pupils experience of life away from the small village in which most of them live. Consequently, pupils are learning to understand big issues and respect people with cultures and lifestyles that are different from their own.

Staff feel valued and well cared for. They say that their well-being is important to the new headteacher and that workload is managed effectively.

Leaders act swiftly and know the school well. The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require more attention. The governing body is improving its oversight of the school. However, this oversight is not yet robust enough to enable the governing body to monitor the long-term performance of the school effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make appropriate checks on the adults who work in the school. They make sure that staff know how to recognise risk. There are systems in place that staff use to record their concerns. Leaders follow up any concerns immediately. They work closely with other agencies when they should.

Pupils learn how to stay safe. They learn about risks online and out in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all pupils are supported to develop a love of reading. This is because pupils do not get enough opportunities to experience high-quality books being read to them well. Leaders have identified the need for a more systematic approach to this aspect of the teaching of reading. Leaders must now ensure that pupils experience a range of high-quality texts on a regular basis.
- Some pupils find it difficult to remember important information. This is because, sometimes, the curriculum moves too fast for them. Leaders must ensure that all pupils get the time and support they need to remember and recall important information.
- Governors do not have a strong enough understanding of the effectiveness of the school. Although governors have improved the way they oversee the work of the school, this is not sufficiently focused on their priorities. Governors must now clarify their expectations for the school and closely monitor the quality of provision that pupils receive.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2011.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	111901
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10199671
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Fenwick
Headteacher	Grace Smith
Website	www.stwenn.org
Date of previous inspection	9 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate safeguarding, inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding leader (who is also the headteacher). Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils, and evaluated record-keeping and staff training.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, reading leader, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and comments made by parents online during the inspection. They also evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Phil Minns, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Burgess

Ofsted Inspector

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