



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

**ST PETROC'S SCHOOL**

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## St Petroc's School

Full Name of School	<b>St Petroc's School</b>
DfE Number	<b>908/6001</b>
EYFS Number	<b>EY407716</b>
Registered Charity Number	<b>306578</b>
Address	<b>St Petroc's School 40 Ocean View Road Bude Cornwall EX23 8NJ</b>
Telephone Number	<b>01288 352876</b>
Fax Number	<b>01288 352876</b>
Email Address	<b>office@stpetrocs.com</b>
Headmaster	<b>Mr Matthew Way</b>
Chair of Governors	<b>Mr Richard Peirce</b>
Age Range	<b>3 months to 11 years</b>
Total Number of Pupils	<b>163</b>
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (80 boys; 83 girls)</b>
Numbers by Age	<b>0-2 (EYFS): 25    5-11: 59 3-5 (EYFS): 79</b>
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>
Inspection Dates	<b>06 May 2014 to 09 May 2014</b>

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The school has not previously had an ISI inspection.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## **INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair and two other governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### **Inspectors**

Mr Timothy Holgate	Reporting Inspector
Mr Richard Batchelor	Team Inspector (Director of Studies, IAPS school)
Mrs Paula Hobbs	Team Inspector (Head, ISA school)
Ms Diane Kimber	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Petroc's School was founded in Bude, on the north coast of Cornwall, in 1912 "with five boys and two dogs", and its founders led the school for 32 years. In 1926, it moved to its current site. The first girl joined the school in 1971 and a Nursery was opened in 1981. The school was a boarding school until 2001, and the boarding accommodation was transformed into a Nursery.
- 1.2 At the time of the inspection, the school provided education for boys and girls from the ages of three months to eleven years. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises three separate Nursery classes for children up to the age of four and Reception. The junior section of the school accommodates Reception and Years 1 and 2. Pupils then proceed to the senior section for Years 3 to 6. St Petroc's is a charitable trust whose trustees act as the school's governors. The current headmaster joined the school in September 2012.
- 1.3 The mission of St Petroc's is to create a happy and positive environment within which the school develops confident and balanced children prepared for their next school and life beyond it. The school aims to encourage the desire to discover, and to nurture and develop the potential of each child in a caring environment, rich with activities, opportunities, enthusiasm and energy.
- 1.4 The school provides education for 163 pupils (80 boys and 83 girls). In the EYFS, 104 children attend full or part-time and 59 pupils are in Years 1 to 6. The school has identified seven pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who receive support for their learning. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. No pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils are of white British origin and are drawn from professional and business families in the towns and villages of north Cornwall. The ability profile of pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- 1.5 National Curriculum nomenclature is used by the school from Reception to Year 6 and throughout this report to refer to year groups. The year group nomenclature used by the school in the Nursery and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

School	NC name
Little Turtles	Nursery (3 months to 2 years)
Sea Lions	Nursery (2 to 3 years)
Dolphins	Nursery (3 to 4 years)

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The school is highly successful in fulfilling its aim to develop confident and balanced children prepared for their next school and life beyond it. Pupils are well educated and they gain good levels of subject knowledge, understanding and skills for their ages and abilities. Their literacy and numeracy are excellent, as is their creative ability. Over recent years, performance in national tests at the age of 11 has been good, being above the national average for maintained primary schools in both mathematics and English. Pupils achieve a high level of success in their extra-curricular activities, especially in sport. They show excellent attitudes to their work and strong learning skills. They are invariably keen to do well and work hard and productively, both individually and collaboratively in groups. Pupils' success owes much to the good curriculum, which provides a solid foundation in the basic skills in English and mathematics, and the excellent extra-curricular provision. The effective teaching, some of which is excellent, enables pupils to enjoy their learning, achieve success and make good progress. Assessment procedures do not yet provide a precise measure of pupils' progress over time.
- 2.2 Throughout the school, pupils exhibit excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Boys and girls of all ages show a strong awareness of themselves and others, and by the time they leave school, their personal development is at an exceptionally high level. Their behaviour, self-confidence and sense of responsibility are excellent. These standards are enhanced by the excellent pastoral care, support and guidance provided by staff, who maintain the success, happiness and well-being of pupils as a high priority. Pupils' relationships with staff and with each other are exemplary, and standards of behaviour are high. Arrangements to promote pupils' welfare, health and safety are good, and ensure that risks from fire and other hazards are minimised and well managed. The safeguarding policy has, however, not been fully implemented efficiently in the recent past.
- 2.3 A good standard and structure of governance enables governors to achieve effective oversight of the school's operation, and they provide strong support for the school and its leadership. The monitoring of some school policies and their implementation has not always been fully efficient. Effective leadership and management enable priorities and targets to be identified to guide the future development of the school. Staff successfully support and promote the school's mission and purpose. However, they lack formal opportunities to share the best practice of the school's teaching and learning in the classroom. Some recruitment checks have not been completed promptly in the recent past. The school has formed an excellent partnership with parents, who are strongly supportive of the education provided for their children. Educational provision and arrangements to promote children's well-being in the EYFS are outstanding. Management of the EYFS and its overall quality and standards are good, although management responsibility for the whole setting is not clearly defined.

## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

- 2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:
- ensure that satisfactory references are always obtained before a person's appointment is confirmed and that, when a person starts work before the criminal records check is received, an assessment of risk is made and recorded, and suitable supervision put in place [Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
  - ensure that a barred list check is always carried out when accepting a criminal records check carried out by a previous employer or when the criminal records check is delayed [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(a) and 22.(3)(b), under Suitability of staff and proprietors and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];
  - ensure that checks of relevant qualifications and medical fitness are always carried out before a person starts work in the school [Part 4, paragraphs 19.(2)(b), 19.(3) and 22.(3)(c), under Suitability of staff and proprietors and, for the same reason, Part 3, paragraphs 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety].
- 2.5 See the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section 6 for the inspection findings in relation to the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 for children under three.

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

- 2.6 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Extend the assessment system in order to achieve a more precise measure of pupils' ability and their progress over time.
  2. Provide opportunities for staff to reflect on and share teaching strategies to enhance the learning experience for pupils across the whole range of ability.
  3. Enable governors to develop a more rigorous system of monitoring and evaluating the school's safeguarding policy and its implementation.
  4. Rationalise the overall responsibility for managing the efficient implementation of policies and practices across the EYFS.



### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of pupils' achievements and learning is good.
- 3.2 Pupils are well educated in line with the school's aim to prepare children academically for the next stage of their education. Pupils gain good levels of subject knowledge and understanding appropriate to their age and ability throughout the school. Standards of literacy and numeracy are high. Pupils' speaking and listening skills and standards of reading are excellent, and their writing is fluent. They are articulate and show good logical thinking ability, appropriate to their age. Older and more able pupils show strong reasoning ability, for example linking cause and effect well and explaining why exercise affects heart rate. Pupils show confidence in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) in a range of subjects.
- 3.3 Pupils' imagination and creativity are strongly developed. Good examples are shown in art and design technology in the Year 6 puppet theatre and the Year 5 newspaper accounts of the Battle of Hastings. Pupils' musical ability, especially their singing, is strong.
- 3.4 Pupils enjoy particular success in sport, drama and other activities and clubs. Sport especially enables pupils to achieve at a high level, both individually and in teams, regionally and nationally. Sports include cross country, rugby, football, cricket, netball and surf life saving. Pupils have won medals in local music and drama festivals. A significant number of Year 6 leavers proceeding to independent schools have won scholarships.
- 3.5 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2011 to 2013. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in national tests at the age of 11 have been good in relation to the national average for maintained primary schools, being above the national average in both mathematics and English. As the school does not carry out standardised tests of ability on pupils' entry, it is not possible to make a precise measure of the progress over time represented by these national test results. However, pupils' level of attainment, taken in conjunction with other inspection evidence from lesson observations, written work and interviews with them, indicates that pupils make good progress compared with similarly able pupils nationally. Pupils with SEND make good progress, as shown by their improving performance in external tests and teachers' assessments of their spelling, reading and mathematics. More able pupils make good progress in tackling more demanding class activities and tests, but sometimes lack the opportunity to demonstrate in full their independent thinking skills.
- 3.6 Pupils show excellent attitudes to their work and activities out of class. They demonstrate strong learning skills that enable them to benefit from their lessons and the tasks presented to them. They show effort and perseverance when facing a challenge, and are invariably keen to do well. They appreciate each other's success with generosity, and show strong teamwork and collaborative skills when working in pairs or groups towards a common goal. They concentrate hard and are attentive and responsive in class. When given opportunities to do so, they show independence and initiative in their learning.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

- 3.7 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is good.
- 3.8 The curriculum fulfils the school's aims to educate and develop well-rounded and robust pupils, well prepared for the challenges of secondary education. It includes the subjects of the National Curriculum, and a well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. The PSHE programme is taught as a separate subject from Reception and includes a useful range of life skills that support the emotional development and well-being of each pupil. Drama and music have been recently introduced as discrete subjects. These give pupils opportunities to perform in front of audiences as well as to promote their self-esteem and act as a platform to increase awareness of sensitive issues such as bullying. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn either the violin or cello. Pupils use ICT to support all aspects of the curriculum, seen in a variety of lessons and subjects such as English, art and mathematics. However, ICT is no longer taught as a separate subject and the school recognises a need to review the effectiveness of the current provision in terms of developing pupils' competence in this area. The overall allocation of subjects is balanced, and particular emphasis is placed on developing skills in the core subject areas of literacy and numeracy. Meeting the differing needs of pupils in these subject areas is generally well planned and implemented through the use of commercially produced schemes for numeracy and English. The curriculum provides good preparation for entry to local independent and maintained senior schools.
- 3.9 Curriculum planning is generally thorough. Long-term plans have been recently reviewed and more detailed curriculum plans include appropriate tasks to challenge pupils of differing abilities and to provide ICT opportunities. Teachers have a good overview of the curriculum within Years 1 to 6, but coherent plans to link learning opportunities between subjects and across different year groups are not yet fully developed. Curricular provision for those with SEND and the systems for identifying and supporting such pupils work very well. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely with class teachers and specialist staff, and those identified as needing support are given individual education plans that are well monitored. Pupils identified by the school as being more able generally receive appropriate challenge in class through extension material and alternative tasks, but are not always given full opportunity to think independently. This is recognised by the school and a new policy to meet the needs of very able and talented pupils has recently been produced, although it has not yet been fully implemented.
- 3.10 The academic curriculum is enriched by an excellent programme of extra-curricular subjects and activities. The pupils enjoy participating in this programme, which offers a wide range of activities and which they rate as one of the best features of the school. In all three terms, activities are offered both during school time and at the end of the day, enabling pupils to pursue many interests, including a book club, sport, drama, music, surfing, beach craft and cookery. The extended school day provides extensive opportunities for all pupils to take part in a wide range of sports, and for them to complete their homework in a supervised and supportive setting. The curriculum is also significantly enhanced by a large number of educational trips and visits that provide breadth to the pupils' experience and education. A residential visit for Year 6 provides pupils with additional challenges and opportunities. The pupils' wider educational and social experiences are also enhanced by good links with the local community, especially through many local sports clubs in the town.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.11 The contribution of teaching is good.
- 3.12 The quality of teaching successfully promotes the school's aims. A significant proportion of the teaching is excellent. It is effective in promoting pupils' progress, and providing them with the support and guidance that encourages them to fulfil their potential. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are dedicated and caring, putting the personal and educational needs of pupils at the forefront of their thinking and planning. Lessons feature good use of praise and encouragement. Most of the teaching is characterised by detailed planning and a good level of challenge and lesson activities, which encourage pupils to work hard and think for themselves.
- 3.13 Teachers know their pupils very well and the atmosphere in classrooms is friendly and purposeful. The teaching enables pupils to respect and trust their teachers, with whom they have excellent relationships. It develops confidence, stimulates effort and perseverance, and encourages pupils to overcome their difficulties for themselves, before asking for help, which is readily given. Lessons are well managed and classroom behaviour is of a high standard.
- 3.14 Most teaching is characterised by the effective use of clear learning objectives that are often reviewed, and success is checked throughout the lesson to enable assessment of the pupils' understanding. In such lessons, the use of focused questioning skilfully elicits positive responses, and often independent thought, from the pupils and leads to deeper understanding. This is typically encompassed within a framework of brisk, timed tasks that lead to learning at a good pace. Teachers take account of the learning styles of different pupils, and include imaginative challenge to broaden the pupils' knowledge and understanding, which results in significant progress. Generally, the teachers' expectations of pupils are high, although some more able pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to read books appropriate to their reading age, beyond the prescribed reading scheme.
- 3.15 Pupils with SEND are supported well in lessons by teachers and teaching assistants, enabling them to make good progress. They are given work appropriate to their needs. Teaching makes good use of resources, including interactive whiteboards and a variety of digital, printed and visual media, which add much to lessons. Teachers mount colourful and stimulating displays of pupils' work. These reinforce personal and academic expectations and enhance the classroom environment.
- 3.16 In a small number of less-effective lessons observed, teaching was too heavily directed by the teacher and pupils remained passive. When lesson planning is less flexible in responding to pupils' needs and abilities, pupils, particularly the more able, lack sufficient opportunity to think independently or to exercise extended reasoning or creativity.
- 3.17 The marking of pupils' books is nearly always frequent and up to date, and in line with the school's marking policy. At its best, it is accurate and encouraging and gives specific written comments and targets on how to improve. However, this practice is not consistent across all subjects and year groups. Older pupils report that good oral feedback is frequently given to them. Assessment of pupils' progress over time relies heavily on teachers' professional judgements rather than on nationally standardised data. A developing system of recording attainment against nationally expected levels is providing the school with better information to analyse and respond to individual pupils' needs.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- 4.2 This fully supports the school's aims to develop pupils' self-confidence through a happy and positive school experience. Pupils of all ages show a strong awareness of themselves and others, and by the time they leave the school their personal development is at an exceptionally high level. Thoughtfulness, loyalty, consideration, confidence, resilience and resourcefulness are all attributes seen in the pupils in abundance.
- 4.3 Pupils' spiritual awareness is excellent. They benefit greatly from weekly assemblies, in which they share their appreciation and celebration of many different achievements, including collective participation in sport and drama. The assemblies also include quieter moments such as listening to a recorded interview about birds by pupils in Year 3. Visits from speakers, such as a Christian group, add a further dimension to pupils' spiritual understanding while challenging their thinking. Pupils appreciate and benefit from many moments to reflect on their place in the school community and the wider world. Pupils responded sensitively when asked to reflect on how they felt when they made mistakes. They are conscious of non-material aspects of life and were able to express this during discussions with inspectors. Year 5 pupils were able to consider the cosmic scale of the universe and its origins, and others showed awareness of dilemmas when faced with life-changing decisions. Pupils are emotionally mature for their age.
- 4.4 The moral development of pupils is excellent. Older pupils demonstrate a sensitive and caring attitude to those younger, and understand a need to act as responsible role models and set a good example to the rest of the school. All pupils have a strong sense of responsibility for themselves, an awareness of right and wrong, and a keen sense of natural justice. They understand and appreciate the rewards systems of the school and regard the teachers' management of behaviour as fair. Stars and the effort grades in the 'form orders' interim reports engender a healthy approach to encouraging self-motivation and self-discipline. Older pupils have a strong grasp of moral issues when discussing such topics as chemical warfare and animal rights.
- 4.5 Pupils' social awareness is excellent. They are polite and courteous, and treat each other with respect and thoughtfulness. At lunchtimes pupils sit in 'family' groupings, with Year 6 taking a lead in serving meals, looking after the youngest and clearing up. Pupils' table manners are impeccable; they appreciate lunch as a special social occasion. Pupils listen carefully to each other's views and opinions, responding with sensitivity. Pupils respond enthusiastically to leadership roles and recognise the responsibility they have for others. Mixed-age friendship groups exist across the school and older pupils talk proudly about the ways they look after younger pupils. Pupils enjoy opportunities to support local, national and international charities.
- 4.6 The cultural development of the pupils is good. They respond with interest to lessons in which they discuss other faiths and cultures and make comparisons between different religions, although opportunities to experience cultural diversity at first hand are somewhat limited. Pupils expressed themselves eloquently when discussing the life of Nelson Mandela and demonstrated a mature understanding of the apartheid system. They show good appreciation of the creative arts and enjoy

opportunities to explore cultural differences through art, music and drama. They demonstrate a good understanding of their own Western cultural traditions, appropriate to their age.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care is excellent.
- 4.8 Pastoral arrangements make a strong contribution to pupils' excellent personal development, in accordance with the school's aims. Whilst form teachers are the central figures in the lives of pupils at school, their pastoral well-being is deemed a high priority by other teaching and non-teaching staff, who know the pupils extremely well. Relevant information about pupils is shared effectively amongst staff at regular morning meetings and staff briefings, ensuring that all pupils are well cared for and their individual pastoral needs identified and met. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves are excellent. Pupils respect each other's views and contributions, and older pupils enjoy supporting those in younger year groups.
- 4.9 Well-planned PSHE lessons provide pupils with clear guidelines on dealing with and avoiding particular behavioural situations, as well as building strong relationships with others. Teachers use lessons well to reinforce strategies to control emotions and resolve conflict. Pupils' excellent behaviour is fostered through the effective staff approaches to behaviour management. The various reward systems to promote good behaviour work well and are appreciated by pupils. Low-key and proportionate sanctions are sparingly used to moderate any misbehaviour. Pupils report that bullying is very rare and are confident that any such issues would be dealt with promptly and fairly by staff. Pupils feel safe at school and state that they are well looked after.
- 4.10 The school provides excellent guidance on the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Pupils feel that school lunches are of good quality and variety. Pupils maintain physical fitness as a result of the many excellent opportunities to participate in sporting and outdoor activities. The school has an appropriate three-year plan to widen educational access for pupils with SEND.
- 4.11 There are many opportunities for pupils to voice their opinions and express their views directly with staff, though the school is seeking to improve this further with the planned and imminent introduction of a formal school council. Pupils are currently enthusiastically engaged in preparations for this development and many are excited by the prospect of experiencing democracy in practice.

**4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.12 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is good.
- 4.13 Prior to the inspection, the school's policy for safeguarding pupils' welfare did not have full regard to the official guidance in force at the time. Before the end of the inspection this had been rectified, and the policy now also complies with the new requirements, recently published. Child protection has a high priority amongst staff, who are very much aware of the need to protect children and promote their welfare and well-being. Teaching and non-teaching staff have been provided with appropriate child protection training, and efficient records of attendance are kept. New staff are given effective guidance on safeguarding when first appointed. However, the policy has not been rigorously implemented in the recent past in respect of completing all required recruitment checks on staff in a timely manner. Close contact is maintained with local agencies as necessary to assist any pupils identified as in need of welfare support. The school provides guidance for older pupils on internet safety through the PSHE programme.
- 4.14 Efficient systems ensure that risks from fire and other hazards are minimised through the input of external consultants, who make regular visits to carry out safety audits and work with the school and its health and safety committee to ensure safe working practices. Fire alarm systems and fire-fighting equipment are appropriately maintained and regularly tested. Risk assessments for the school premises and for off-site trips are well constructed and effective.
- 4.15 Arrangements to care for pupils who become ill or injured are efficient. The great majority of staff are trained in first aid, most in paediatric first aid, and some at a higher level. Pupils with specific medical conditions are well known to staff, who understand the support they need. Drinking water is freely available to pupils within classrooms and elsewhere.
- 4.16 The school keeps efficient records of pupils' attendance, which are stored correctly. A comprehensive admission register is kept and has been maintained for the required period of time.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is good.
- 5.2 The governing body provides effective oversight of the school's life and work, and provides strong support for its leadership. Governors are allocated to one or more of four committees, overseeing finance, buildings and grounds, marketing and education, thus allowing the board to benefit from the considerable expertise and professional experience of its members. Each committee meets every term shortly before reporting to a full board meeting. Governors monitor the success of the school well, in terms of academic and extra-curricular achievement and parent satisfaction. Financial planning and management are prudent and well controlled, ensuring that the school has sufficient human and material resources to meet its aims. The governors' ten-year strategic vision for the school assists the senior leadership in identifying short-term priorities and targets to improve the education provided to pupils.
- 5.3 The governing body has a good insight into the workings of the school and its day-to-day life. Governors attend school performances and events, and make occasional visits between meetings. Parent governors, in particular, form a valuable link between the governing body and staff and other parents. Governors are mindful of the distinction between governance and management, and delegate significant responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school to its leadership.
- 5.4 Governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities, and nominated governors oversee health and safety, safeguarding and the needs of the EYFS. Governors approve some of the school's policies, but have not always been fully aware of the detailed regulatory requirements for safeguarding. They have not ensured that the staff recruitment process has been fully rigorous. Although they have carried out an annual safeguarding policy review, the board's minutes do not provide sufficient detail to confirm the process by which this was completed and efficient implementation ensured.

### **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is good.
- 5.6 The leadership team comprises the leadership, bursar, and the deputy head and director of studies, who are both full-time class teachers. As a result, much of the responsibilities of day-to-day management and administration lie with the leadership. Nevertheless, all teaching staff contribute to developing curricular provision and managing pastoral care. The leadership promotes a distinct ethos, committed to meeting the personal and educational needs of individual pupils, and identifies a clear sense of purpose and forward momentum to guide the future direction of the school. Staff at all levels are committed to embracing the school's philosophy. Leadership and management initiatives are successful in ensuring the good standards achieved by pupils and their excellent personal development.

- 5.7 Senior leadership adopts a collaborative and collegiate management style, and ensures that staff have the opportunity to evaluate the school's success and identify its strengths and areas for improvement. This self-evaluation process is starting to support the production of short- and medium-term plans that identify targets and priorities to improve educational provision and outcomes for pupils. Staff embrace change and share new ideas, although formal systems to evaluate and share teaching and learning strategies are not yet in place. The management of the provision for pupils with SEND is very good. New assessment procedures are being effectively adopted by teachers. The management of such data is starting to provide a clearer picture of pupils' academic performance, although this does not yet enable an accurate measure of progress over time.
- 5.8 The hard-working and committed form teachers are dedicated to the well-being and success of the pupils. The induction process for new staff is well planned and recorded, and includes the necessary training in safeguarding, health and safety, and other welfare areas. The new appraisal process enables staff to evaluate their own professional lives, and involves a lesson observation and the identification of targets to support the future development of the school. The dedicated non-teaching staff play a key role in supporting the school's ideals and contributing to its success. Recent professional training has enabled staff to understand the new assessment systems and consider ways of developing pupils' self-confidence. All staff have undergone the necessary criminal records checks, but in the recent past a few other required checks have not all been completed promptly.
- 5.9 The school maintains excellent relationships with parents. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate that parents are highly appreciative and positive about all aspects of the education provided for their children, and especially the quality of communication with the school, the extra-curricular opportunities, and the school's leadership and management. The school handles parents' concerns with consideration, and any complaints are dealt with effectively and promptly in line with the published procedure.
- 5.10 Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the school. A parents' forum ascertains their opinions on a variety of specific issues, such as the new assessment scheme and 'form order' interim reports, and these feed into the school's development plans. The leadership has close engagement with the strong and active Friends of St Petroc's Committee, which organises fund-raising and social occasions. Parents are also welcome to attend assembly on Friday, when achievements are celebrated, and many do so.
- 5.11 Parents of current and prospective pupils are provided with all the required policies and information about the school. The parent handbook is a useful means of providing helpful information about the school's systems and routines. A weekly newsletter, the *St Petroc's Post*, is produced every Friday during term time, and is sent to all parents by email and also posted on the website. It contains recent news and valuable information concerning the organisation of the school day and weekly routines.
- 5.12 Parents are kept well informed about the academic progress of their children. Between two and four parents' evenings are held throughout the year for each year group. At these evenings parents can arrange 30-minute meetings with their children's form teacher during the course of a specific week, at a time convenient to them. These allow parents to discuss all aspects of their children's progress and to look at their books. Parents receive informative written reports about progress at the



end of the academic year, and also, from Year 3, regular 'form order' interim reports. Staff, including the leadership, are also available at the beginning and end of the day for informal conversations with parents, and appointments for more detailed discussions can be arranged at any time.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**

## **6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **6.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

- 6.1 The setting makes outstanding provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. Children of all ages have access to well-planned, imaginative and varied learning environments both inside and outdoors, which encourage play and exploration through a well-balanced mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The setting consistently achieves high standards, with a high-quality educational programme for children of all ages. Good use is made of the wider environment to enhance children's experiences, including regular trips across the field for children under three. Older children over the age of three have opportunities to explore the local environment, such as a recent visit to a garden centre. Children in Reception have regular lessons at a local swimming pool. The Reception class also benefits from specialist physical education teaching as well as after-school clubs that change regularly to stimulate interest.
- 6.2 Children are very well supported by a highly qualified and motivated team of staff to acquire the skills and capacity to develop and learn effectively. Consequently, nearly all children reach the expected levels of development by the end of the Reception year, and many exceed expectations, so that they are well prepared and ready for the next stage in their learning. Extremely effective assessment of learning, based on diligent observations, informs planning that fully reflects the individual needs and interests of the children. A wide range of teaching strategies, together with support and intervention to match individual needs, ensures that all continue to make progress. In the most effective interactions, practitioners talk and sing to the youngest children and use wide vocabulary to extend their learning. For the older children, adults make good use of questioning to support and challenge every child.
- 6.3 Partnerships with parents are excellent and they are kept very well informed about their children's progress, with opportunities for them to contribute to the assessment process. This includes providing daily information about the youngest children's progress and sleep patterns, and 'learning journal' records and online observations for the Reception children. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and those spoken to expressed unanimous satisfaction with all aspects of the setting.

## **6.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being**

- 6.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. The very youngest children make strong attachments to those who care for them and excellent lines of communication are formed between key workers and families. For the older children, close relationships are characterised by a very warm and welcoming atmosphere, and as a result, children feel safe and secure. Consequently, children are happy and thrive in a nurturing environment, and thus have a strong base for developing their confidence to explore the world around them.
- 6.5 Fair and consistent behaviour management helps children to respond positively to adults' expectations. Independence and responsibility are promoted as children are actively encouraged to strive and explore to do things for themselves, from the youngest children attempting to pull up their own sleeves to wash their hands, to older children pouring their own drinks and serving food to their friends. Children are keen to use their imagination, and talk and play co-operatively both with adults and their peers.
- 6.6 Health and safety procedures are well known by staff and fully implemented to ensure that children's welfare and well-being are given the highest priority. Healthy snacks and lunches are provided for the children and the curriculum promotes healthy eating. Adults provide gentle reminders about personal hygiene when necessary to younger children, while older children explain the reasons for washing hands. Regular physical education lessons and access to the school field give younger children a positive experience of physical activity. Children of all ages are extremely well prepared for transition to the next stage of learning through visits to meet their next teacher. Links with local primary schools are strong, and thorough transition records are maintained.

## **6.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision**

- 6.7 Leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Governors take an interest in the success of the early years setting. However, governors and leaders have not always ensured that school policies include EYFS requirements and they have not been monitored and implemented in full. Staff recruitment checks have not all been completed promptly in the past. Managers of the younger children and those responsible for the older children organise their departments well and have a thorough knowledge of their educational programmes. As a result, they have clear and appropriate expectations of the children in their care as well as a high regard for their welfare. Safeguarding is given the highest priority by all EYFS staff, who receive regular training in child protection and paediatric first aid. Risk assessments are comprehensive and effective. Management responsibility for the EYFS provision is shared amongst several members of staff, and as a result, practices are not always consistent across the setting.
- 6.8 Staff have a strong commitment to continuous evaluation of the quality of provision and have ambitious plans for development in all areas of the EYFS. Meetings between staff and managers, and with the leadership, ensure that the needs of the EYFS are recognised and appropriately planned. Managers also have informal supervision meetings with other staff to provide support and discuss any professional issues. Professional development is actively promoted and staff are given opportunities to undertake regular additional training. Effective appraisal

systems are in place and staff feel able to share any concerns with managers. Staff liaise closely with parents and excellent links have been forged to share information. Strong links with outside agencies assist in the moderation of EYFS assessment profiles and obtaining teaching advisory services.

#### **6.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision**

- 6.9 The overall quality and standards in the EYFS are good, allowing the children to flourish in a secure and caring environment in which they feel safe and content. Children under the age of three enjoy exploring early mark-making skills during activities with paint and crayons. By the end of the EYFS, children make confident efforts in writing their names and use phonic skills to make plausible attempts at words they have learned. Children enjoy problem solving. Those younger make sure that all their friends have a bowl for snack time, and older children show mathematical skill by confidently counting beyond 10, and many Reception children beyond 20. They use mathematical language confidently in their play. Children listen attentively, share resources and show consideration for others. They become immersed in the exploration of a variety of exciting resources. Children under the age of three experiment with handling bangles and trying to balance them on mug trees or their arms. Older children make dens using critical thinking skills.
- 6.10 Children's personal and emotional development is excellent. Younger children become confident in responding to unfamiliar adults with smiles, and older children talk about their activities with confidence. The children are extremely well cared for by a dedicated team of staff, who meet the needs of individuals with good attention to detail. A broad range of stimulating activities that reflect children's interests are continually evaluated and developed. As a result, children enjoy learning, are highly motivated by enthusiastic staff, and feel secure and happy.
- 6.11 The requirements to promote children's safeguarding and welfare have not been fully met, though there is a shared understanding and commitment amongst EYFS staff to protect children. Practice within the EYFS consistently reflects the highest aspirations for all children's safety, well-being and learning. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points and they are prepared extremely well for school and the next stage in their learning.

#### **Compliance with statutory requirements for children under three**

- 6.12 In order to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006, those responsible for the registered provision must:
- ensure that staff recruitment checks are always completed promptly.

**Section 2 includes any identified action the Early Years Foundation Stage is recommended to take in order to improve its provision, other than take the action specified above.**