



Sir Robert Geffery's Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112025
LEA Cornwall
Inspection number 285121
Inspection dates 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006
Reporting inspector Colin Lee AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Saltash
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cornwall PL12 5EA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01752 851362
Number on roll	164	Fax number	01752 851119
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Twallin
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2004	Headteacher	Mrs Julie Curtis

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller-than-average, rural primary school draws its pupils from a wide area and over a third live outside the catchment area. All pupils are of White British or European heritage, with none at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Although the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is slightly below average, this is rising. Pupil numbers are increasing rapidly, with 35 more having joined the school during the last academic year. Pupils joining the school at the start of the reception year have broadly average levels of attainment. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school's origins are in a Foundation Trust established by the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers, who continue to represent the Foundation. Several of the governors are appointees of the Trust.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is now a good school, with some outstanding features. The school has been transformed since the last inspection, when it was found to have serious weaknesses. The rapid turn-around is due to inspirational leadership by the headteacher and the hard work of teachers, governors and pupils. Parents are now very happy with the school and are confident that it provides a good quality of education. Inspectors agree with the school's own view of its effectiveness. The school provides good value for money.

All groups of pupils make good progress because they are taught well. When pupils enter the Foundation Stage good provision helps them to achieve well. They end the reception year with above-average standards and, similarly, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Outstanding features of the school include the pupils' personal development, the quality of care, guidance and support, and the partnership with parents, neighbouring schools and community organisations. Pupils contribute enormously to the running of the school. Their views are taken very seriously and they were correct when they told inspectors, "We have a voice, we make decisions and we help the school to improve."

The excellent improvement since the last inspection shows there is a clear capacity to improve further and the school has identified its next priorities very accurately. Inspectors agree that the role of subject leaders needs to be developed. It is also necessary for pupils' learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to be assessed more thoroughly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject leaders to ensure that they have full knowledge of achievement, standards and provision across the whole school.
- Improve the assessment of pupils' learning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to provide more detailed tracking of their progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points and previous under-achievement has been completely eradicated. Many pupils have made exceptional progress in a short period of time, more than catching up with where they should be and now attaining standards above those expected. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most exceed the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2, further good gains in learning occur, especially in reading, writing, mathematics and science and standards are above average at the end of Year 2. This has been confirmed by performance in national tests, which has been above national averages in all tests for the past two years.

National test results at the end of Year 6 in 2005 were broadly average but a significant number of pupils made good progress from the start of Year 3. Progress by pupils of all abilities in Years 3 to 6 is now consistently good. There is a wide range of ability in the current Year 6 but their standards in English, mathematics and science are above average overall. Pupils are on track to achieve the challenging targets set for them. This shows how well recent teaching has compensated for the pupils' inadequate progress in the past.

Standards in information and communication technology were below average at the time of the last inspection. There has been good improvement and standards are above average in most year groups although they are only average overall in Year 6 because there has not been enough time for pupils to catch up on all that has been missed in the past.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are of a very high quality. Pupils of all ages show a genuine respect for each other and all adults in the school. Good attendance and punctuality reflect their enjoyment of school. Behaviour is consistently good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally strong. The work of the Eco Committee and the Global Citizenship programme is giving pupils an excellent awareness of local and world issues. They have raised funds for those less fortunate than themselves and have contributed to a farming project in Africa.

Pupils make excellent contributions to the school and local communities. The School Council is regarded by all pupils as being highly effective in representing their views, and members' attendance at governing body meetings has been instrumental in improving the quality of the school environment. These negotiating skills will stand them in good stead in the future, as will the running of the school bank by Year 5 pupils. The overall development of skills that contribute to pupils' future well-being is quite outstanding. Older pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities that contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school and the safety of pupils. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is a marked improvement on that at the time of the last inspection. Good teaching is now evident in all year groups.

The quality of learning is high because teachers set clear learning objectives for lessons as a whole and, more specifically, often for each task within a lesson. Pupils fully understand these objectives and regularly carry out self-assessments that review how well they have progressed towards the objectives. Teaching assistants support teachers and pupils very effectively. They make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Pupils are strongly driven towards meeting their teachers' high expectations of them. Teachers' thorough planning provides pupils with work that is well matched to their needs. The good, ongoing assessment of the pupils' progress constantly leads to minor changes in future work to ensure that needs continue to be met. This is an excellent feature of teaching in English and mathematics in particular but is not yet so evident in other subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good curriculum that successfully develops cross-curricular links between subjects and is making learning purposeful and enjoyable. A good Foundation Stage curriculum, based on pupils' interests and the local environment, is further developed during Years 1 and 2. Specialist teaching in Years 3 to 6 in the foundation subjects builds well on pupils' prior learning. Subject-focused weeks, visits and visitors to the school enhance the curriculum well. Pupils and parents value the drama productions and the excellent range of activities that are run out of school hours. The school's own farm and nature trail and very good links with the community and church effectively broaden pupils' learning experiences and enthusiasm for learning. Successful involvement in a wide range of sporting competitions further raises pupils' enjoyment. Planned personal and social programmes, including residential visits, promote very successfully pupils' understanding of being healthy and safe as well as doing much to develop their self-confidence and responsibility.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding care, guidance and support are significant strengths of the school. Exceptionally good procedures are in place to ensure that pupils feel safe and secure at all times. Child protection procedures are rigorous. Pupils are fully confident that they can seek help and advice from teachers and other adults when they need it and confidently use the 'peer mediators' to sort out small problems at breaks. Relationships are very positive and pupils speak sensibly about how they feel safe in school. Home visits are very effective in promoting care and well-being when the very youngest children start school. Teachers monitor the progress of pupils very carefully and they are especially good at involving them in evaluating their own progress and understanding the targets set for them to improve. Risk assessments are well developed, for example, safety issues are constantly reinforced when pupils visit the school farm. Parents recognise and appreciate the outstanding care and support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The foundation of the school's excellent improvement since the last inspection is the headteacher's outstanding, inspirational leadership. She has skilfully guided the school through a period of enormous changes

in staffing and approaches to pupils' learning. The key stage co-ordinators, both appointed since the last inspection, work very well with the headteacher as a lead learning team. This is a very effective team whose hard work has quickly turned the school round so that it now provides a good quality of education that is improving still further all the time. The significant improvements in achievement, standards, teaching and learning are due to the guidance of the headteacher and her senior colleagues and the way that they have motivated teachers, pupils, parents and governors to work together to make these improvements.

Senior staff have had to carry out many roles and responsibilities. As the school grows and new teachers gain in experience, the school is in a position to spread responsibility, most especially by developing the role of subject leaders. While co-ordination of English, mathematics, science and ICT is very good, subject leaders' knowledge of pupils' standards and provision is generally confined to one key stage and they are not sufficiently aware of the whole-school picture.

There is thorough, ongoing self-evaluation to which pupils, parents and governors make good contributions. Continuous monitoring of every aspect of the school's work by both staff and governors means that there is good awareness of the impact of what is being done. The school knows exactly what it needs to do to improve further and the last two years have shown that the capacity to improve is excellent.

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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?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	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	2	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	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

We very much enjoyed visiting your school and we want to thank you for talking to us and showing us your work.

What we liked most about your school

• You made us very welcome. • You work hard for your teachers, who teach you well and do their best to help you learn. • You have an excellent headteacher and all of the staff, and you, help her to run the school very well. • Teachers plan plenty of interesting work for you in lessons, and activities like sports clubs, drama and music are very good opportunities for you to learn outside lesson time. • You are very friendly to one another and always help someone who needs it. • The School Council, the Eco Committee, play leaders and peer mediators are all doing very good work for the school. • Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

What we have asked the school to do now

• We have asked the teachers responsible for different subjects to look at what is being done in that subject throughout the whole school. • We have asked all the teachers to check on your work in some subjects more often.