

Cardinham School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111911
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289098
Inspection date	25 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Best
Headteacher	Sylvia Fair
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002
School address	Cardinham Bodmin PL30 4BN
Telephone number	01208 821326
Fax number	01208 821387

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a small village and surrounding hamlets and farms. All pupils speak English at home and none are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. The facilities for teaching physical education are situated about 300 metres from the school building.

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 a good school where, to quote a parent, 'all children are valued and nurtured in order to fulfil their potential'. Children start school with average levels of skill and ability. They achieve well at all stages of their education and when they leave at the end of Year 6 they attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. A noteworthy feature of their work is their writing, which is accurate, lively, well-presented and, from Year 2 onwards, often of considerable length. These successes result from consistently good teaching which is planned to meet pupils' individual needs. Teachers have an accurate knowledge of each pupil's progress. Pupils discuss the quality of their work in detail with the teacher and hence they have a very good understanding of how to improve it, although the quality of teachers' written marking is more variable in providing guidance for pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they get on very well together. Older pupils take care of the younger ones, and pupils report that there is little bullying, with any that occurs being dealt with effectively. Pupils are taught to value themselves, other people and the environment in which they live. They have an excellent knowledge of keeping healthy and safe as the school places great emphasis on healthy eating and provides a wide range of physical activities which pupils enjoy greatly. Parents comment particularly that the school develops the self-confidence their children will need to succeed at secondary school.

The curriculum is good, with a range of additional activities that is unusually broad for a school of this size. Very good use is made of the local environment. Both teachers and pupils have limited access to information and communication technology (ICT). This restricts the range of teaching approaches available to teachers, and also limits pupils' opportunities to use ICT in a wide range of situations. Pupils receive good care, guidance and support which begins when they start school, when the relevant member of staff visits each home.

Leadership and management are good. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. For instance, it has identified the need to increase the attainment of more able pupils and has taken the necessary action which is leading to improvements in their performance. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and has improved recently, for instance through the keeping of excellent records of pupils' progress. Governors are perceptive and skilled, and are rigorous in holding the school to account. Staff, including teaching assistants, have plenty of training to meet their own and the pupils' needs. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, for instance in pupils' presentation of their work, and the school is well-placed to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision of information and communications technology (ICT) to enable teachers to broaden their range of teaching approaches, and to give pupils ready access to ICT when it can help their learning.
- Improve the consistency of marking so that all pupils have a record of the guidance they have received and so have a more secure basis to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school the achievement of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is good. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, especially in the development of their social and communication skills. By the end of the Reception Year their attainment is above the expected standards. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, at the end of which standards of mathematics, reading and writing remain above average. Standards at the end of Year 6 are also above average and in recent years all pupils have attained at least the national expectation of Level 4 in tests in English, mathematics and science. Proportions attaining the higher Level 5 have been somewhat greater in English than in mathematics, and the school is working hard to raise attainment in mathematics. This is having the necessary impact on standards. Some younger pupils have been identified as mathematically very able and are receiving the necessary support and challenging work to help them attain their full potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The great emphasis the school places on teaching pupils to care for themselves, other people and for the environment leads to their excellent personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils value and respect others' opinions and are able to express themselves, for instance through the regular meetings of the school council. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe, for instance of when it is appropriate for them to walk or cycle to school. They greatly enjoy school, especially the many opportunities for sport and other activities off the school site. Their behaviour is excellent both in and out of lessons. In 2006 the usually high attendance was marred by a persistent gastric complaint and the school has worked hard this year to ensure that attendance has returned to above-average levels. Pupils' excellent contributions to the school, local and wider communities, for instance through performances and charity collections, are especially valued by parents. The skills pupils will need in adult life are mainly developed well, although limited access to ICT restricts their progress in this area.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers know the pupils well and plan lessons that stretch and challenge them, leading to the good progress they make. Pupils say that they rarely find the work easy or too difficult. Very good use is made of time in lessons. Teaching assistants provide good support, especially in the Foundation Stage where there is currently a large number of pupils. Teachers give pupils very good verbal feedback on their work but written marking is less consistent in the way it helps pupils to improve their work. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to work independently and in teams, but teachers' limited access to ICT restricts their ability to utilise its many possibilities as a teaching resource.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum has particular strengths, for example in sport and music, where many pupils can play an instrument. Very good use is made of the local environment as seen in a fascinating study of the nearby River Fowey from source to estuary. Foundation Stage children get a good range of indoor and outdoor activities that develop their learning skills well. Older pupils greatly appreciate and participate in the wide range of additional activities on offer. Planning for pupils' personal and social education has benefitted from recent initiatives. Similar development is needed in ICT, where although current provision is satisfactory, limited equipment restricts pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The superb care that pupils receive explains why they trust the adults and feel safe in school, and develop their personal qualities outstandingly well. There are good arrangements for child protection and the necessary checks on adults working with them have been carried out. Very good personal education is contributing well to the guidance pupils receive. Pupils get good academic guidance. They are set targets for improving their work and their progress is carefully monitored. However, the lack of consistency in marking limits the quality of academic guidance in some areas.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. All staff in this small school make a good contribution in this area. Monitoring and evaluation have led to the correct identification of aspects in need of improvement. In most cases, such as the boosting attainment of more able pupils and attendance, effective action has been taken to put things right. This now needs to be extended to provision for ICT and the quality of written marking across the school. Recent appointments are having a very good impact in moving the school forward. The school rightly enjoys a very high level of confidence among parents and pupils, who feel that their opinions are heard and in most cases acted upon. Governors are able and enthusiastic and give the school the right level of both support and challenge. Many things have improved since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

08 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Cardinham School, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4BN

I very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work when I visited your school recently. I want to thank those of you who took time talking to me. I especially enjoyed attending your lessons and seeing your work around the school.

You and your parents are right to believe that your school is a good one. These are some of the best things about it:

- You make good progress in your work and attain above average standards by the time you leave Year 6.
- You behave very well, get on very well together and help each other. You told me that, although some bullying happens, the staff deal with it well.
- You know how to keep healthy and safe, and know how to care for the environment and why this is important.
- You are taught well. Teachers know what you need to learn and all the staff help you to learn quickly.
- You are taught interesting things which make good use of living in a lovely part of Cornwall. There are lots of trips and clubs for older pupils.
- You are well cared for by the staff and feel you can talk to them about problems. You are given targets you understand and which help you to improve your work.
- The staff and the governors lead the school well.

I have asked the school to improve a few things. I have asked that there is more ICT equipment for the teachers and yourselves. This will help teachers to make lessons even more interesting and help you to have ICT available whenever it is useful in your lessons. I have also asked that your written work is marked in a consistently helpful way, so that you have a very clear idea of how you could improve it.

Thank you again for your help, and good luck in the future.

Mr Paul Sadler Lead Inspector