

Burraton Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111972
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310746
Inspection date	16 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Carey
Headteacher	Martin Bell
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2004
School address	Fairmead Road Saltash PL12 4LT
Telephone number	01752 843019
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

How well the school has dealt with apparent underachievement by the most able pupils at Key Stage 1.

Why there are differences in achievement in subjects at Key Stage 2, and what the school has done about them.

Evidence was gathered from data on current standards and achievement, examination of pupils' work and school documents, observation of lessons, discussions with the headteacher, chair of governors and staff, and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a large school. The great majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds and a very small minority are from minority ethnic families. A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language and receive support. The proportion of pupil with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has a local authority unit that has ten pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties. The pupils receive core skills learning in the unit, but integrate in mainstream for art, music, physical education, assemblies and playtime.

The school has recently gained Thinking School accreditation with the University of Exeter.

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 and improving school. It is well led and managed and the headteacher provides very clear direction for how it should improve. He is well supported by staff and governors. Leaders at all levels are effective overall, although there is some variation in expertise as there have been recent appointments at senior level. The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate and the actions it has taken to improve achievement are having a positive impact. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Standards are broadly average but fluctuate between years because of the differences between year groups and also because the numbers of pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties in each year varies considerably. Overall, pupils achieve well given their often low starting points when they enter the Reception class. In the past, there was occasional underachievement by the most able pupils at Key Stage 1, but this has been successfully dealt with through providing more challenging teaching. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics and science. Although achievement is good for most pupils in English, some of the most able do not do as well as they could. The school's own analysis shows this is because teaching does not sufficiently challenge all pupils and it is taking steps to correct this, but the impact is not yet evident. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress and those who have intensive support for several weeks at a time often make very good progress. Pupils in the attached unit make good progress, taking into account their particular complex learning difficulties.

Pupils take great pleasure from school and their attendance is good. They enjoy almost all lessons and their enthusiasm for the very wide range of activities the school provides is exceptionally good. Their understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, the part that particular foods play in their growth and development, and the importance of exercise are outstanding. They readily take on responsibilities and play an active part in community activities. For example, the 'playground squad' makes sure that everyone has someone to play with and 'peer mediators' help settle differences between pupils. Pupils in the main school also look after those from the attached unit when they join main school lessons. Pupils take an active part in the wider community. For example, pupils cleared a beach of rubbish and received local recognition and praise. They show a keen grasp of democracy and citizenship issues through election of school council members. The great majority of pupils behave extremely well and safely. However, a very small minority allow boisterous behaviour to become unacceptable, especially at lunchtimes, to the concern of some parents, but the school is dealing with this. The great majority of pupils get on well together and show considerable concern for the well-being of each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a very good understanding of their own cultural heritage and a sound grasp of the values and beliefs of other cultures in Britain today. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives.

Teachers almost always plan their lessons well and usually make sure that work challenges pupils. The school focuses on helping pupils to think about how they learn and what they need to do to improve their knowledge and understanding. This approach is largely successful and pupils answer questions or explain their work thoughtfully, and think about what else they might need to do to help them make better progress. However, occasionally the most able pupils are not challenged enough, because questioning or activities are not demanding or clearly focused on making them think about their work in enough depth. This is most evident in upper Key Stage 2 literacy lessons. Most lessons are conducted at a fast pace and have a wide range of activities that catch pupils' interests. Marking is generally good, with most giving clear

indications of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next to make better progress, or how their work might be better. However, this is not always the case. A small amount of marking gives little information on how well pupils perform and gives praise for work that does not reflect pupils' abilities.

The curriculum is good. There is a very wide range of trips and visitors that make the curriculum interesting and many out-of-school clubs and activities. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the extensive musical and sporting activities and their success in sports competitions. For most pupils, the curriculum is well matched to their abilities. The school is working hard to increase the curriculum links between Reception and Year 1 so that pupils entering Year 1 with relatively low skill levels are helped to continue to make progress by working on aspects of the early years curriculum.

The school's care and support for pupils is good and is largely a result of extremely good relationships between adults and pupils and the excellent links with external services that support pupils' welfare. The great majority of parents regard the school highly. They think it is a caring school and, typically, say 'My children enjoy school and continue to progress well. They take part in interesting projects which keep them enthusiastic about school life.' Most think they are well informed and, as one parent put it, 'we are kept well aware of the prevailing thoughts in education'. The school is safe and secure, and the school is always looking at how to make it even safer. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good, as is the quality of care and support for pupils in the special unit. Academic guidance through the use of targets is effective. Opportunities for pupils to discuss their targets and progress with teachers and parents means that they have a thorough knowledge and understanding of how well they are doing and how to do even better, although this is not always well enough supported in marking.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Relationships between staff and parents are good and children settle readily in the Reception class. Children start school with most having attended a wide range of pre-school settings. Their skills are generally below those expected for their age on starting, but they make good progress. Children leaving Reception in 2007 exceeded the expected standards, an improvement on recent years, although a small proportion did not meet expectations in their literacy skills. Achievement has improved with increased accurate assessment and matching of work to children's needs. Activities are well organised and, while children have a large element of free choice, all activities are planned with specific learning objectives. Teaching is good, with all adults focusing on encouraging children to talk and to work and play together. Adults provide sensitive support, helping children make particularly good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that work is always challenging, especially for the most able pupils in the upper part of Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that marking consistently tells pupils how well they are doing compared with their abilities, and guides them on how to make further progress.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Dear Pupils

Burraton Community Primary School, Saltash PL12 4LT

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I spoke to several of you in meetings and around school, and you told me a lot about how much you enjoy being there and what your school is like. You were really helpful.

These are the main things I found out about your school.

- Your school is good and improving. Teaching is good. It makes you think about how you learn and you make good progress.
- The headteacher knows what the school needs to do to become even better than it is now. He and all staff and governors are working hard to make that happen.
- The relationships between everyone in school are very good and this means that you really enjoy being there. The way you take part in the wide range of activities the school provides, especially music and sport, is excellent.
- Nearly all of you behave very well and you take good care of each other.
- Your understanding of what you have to do to stay healthy is brilliant!
- The school is safe and secure and staff are always looking at ways to make it even safer.
- The way you take on responsibilities is excellent. It helps prepare you well for your future lives.

To improve things further, I have asked the school to do the following things:

- Make sure that work is always challenging, especially for those of you who in the upper part of Key Stage 2 who find learning easy.
- Make sure that when your work is marked, you are told how well you are doing compared with how well you should be doing, and that you are told how to do even better.

You can help. If you think you could do better than you are doing, ask an adult to tell you how.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley Lead Inspector