

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

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112025
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	325511
Inspection date	27 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	182
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J R C Twallin
Headteacher	Julie Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Landrake Saltash PL12 5EA
Telephone number	01752 851362
Fax number	01752 851119

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- pupils' current standards and achievement, especially the impact of work to raise standards of writing
- the impact of work to improve pupils' understanding of the diversity of British culture
- the standard of pupils' behaviour
- the impact of the development of the curriculum in all areas of the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Evidence was gathered by observing lessons, scrutinising documents and pupils' work, analysing parent questionnaires and from discussions with staff and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not evaluated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Landrake and surrounding rural area. The proportion of pupils with a variety of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. All pupils are of White British or White Cornish ethnicity. The school was founded by the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers in 1704 and the company continues to provide Foundation Governors. Provision is made for children in the EYFS in the Reception class. The school shares its site with a privately managed pre-school, which also provides care for pupils before and after school.

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. Pupils really enjoy their school life, especially the outstanding curriculum and exciting environment which the school offers to all its pupils. These high levels of satisfaction are reflected in pupils' excellent attendance. Facilities such as the school farm and varied outdoor environment, which includes two 'Trim Trails', stimulating classrooms and excellent provision for information and communication technology (ICT) combine to offer a vibrant educational setting. Pupils have many opportunities for additional and extra-curricular activities beyond their everyday curriculum, such as visits and sport. Parents are universal in their praise. Comments such as 'A school which is a shining beacon', and 'It offers a fantastic range of opportunities in and out of school hours', are typical. Staff give pupils excellent care and all requirements to safeguard children are in place.

The exceptional leadership of the headteacher has maintained the considerable improvement noted in the school's last inspection report. Pupils' personal development and well-being remain outstanding. Indeed, they now behave exceptionally well and report no bullying. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and common sense, such as when discussing their work. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. The skills they will need in adult life develop rapidly through opportunities, for example, to manage the school farm, make presentations to governors, design new facilities and negotiate with contractors. Pupils' ideas are listened to and treated seriously by adults, who receive them through the 'school improvement box'. Their spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. While pupils' cultural development as a whole is good, their experience and understanding of the cultural diversity of British society is a relatively underdeveloped aspect. Nevertheless, the school ensures that they have some opportunities to broaden their awareness through, for instance, visits to London. Pupils' achievement is good, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children start school with expected skills and knowledge and make good progress in the EYFS. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are significantly above average in reading, mathematics and science. Standards are also above those expected in ICT, music, art and physical education (PE). The school is making great efforts to raise standards of writing and there is evidence that this is beginning to have an impact, with older pupils producing accurate and imaginative work. The teaching strategies used, such as 'Kung-fu punctuation', motivate pupils to learn. A particularly strong feature of the school is the excellent academic guidance that pupils receive. They assess their own and each other's work, and have an exceptional understanding of what they need to do to improve its quality and reach their challenging targets. Although individual pupil's progress is tracked well, occasionally the school has been slower to analyse the progress of some groups, such as younger boys.

Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers use similar approaches so that pupils always know what is expected of them, such as when discussing their work with a partner. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident, and very good use is made of their specialist subject knowledge, in French or art for instance, to teach pupils throughout the school. Marking of work is thorough and helpful in showing the pupils how to improve. Teaching assistants are skilful and are generally used well, especially in Years 2 to 6, where the consistency of good and better teaching leads to an excellent overall impact. Occasionally in lessons involving younger pupils, work takes place at a slower pace.

Leaders and managers are dynamic and enthusiastic, and totally committed to providing the best possible education for their pupils. The school has an exceptional commitment to developing

the skills of all its members, including pupils, class teachers, those in training for the profession and leaders and managers. It is therefore truly a learning community. In spite of their limited experience, recently appointed senior leaders have made a rapid impact, for instance in improving the already excellent provision for ICT. Governors are experienced and decisive and are well known to pupils. They have an extremely clear view of the school's progress and give outstanding support. Nevertheless, the school's leadership and management as a whole is not yet outstanding because, while evaluation of its work is broadly accurate and used well to identify priorities for development, it is not yet as sharp or precise as it should be, particularly in the identification of the progress of groups of pupils. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. There are excellent links with the local community, including with parents, and at global level such as with a school in Uganda. Nevertheless, national links outside Cornwall are less well developed. Overall the school has made good improvements since the last inspection and, with leaders' burning desire for all aspects of the school to be outstanding, it is well placed for these to continue.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision for children in Reception is good. The leadership and management are good and children are happy, feel safe and secure, and enjoy the wide range of activities available throughout the day. Parents comment favourably on the very good links and smooth transition between the pre-school and Reception. Behaviour is excellent. There is a high standard of care for the children by all staff and relationships are excellent. Effective planning gives children the opportunity to explore an exciting range of activities in stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Consequently, most make good progress in all areas of their learning. However, boys do not always make the same good progress as girls in their writing. The personal development of children is good and they are encouraged to become independent and take responsibility for themselves and their learning through choosing activities. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, although at times opportunities are missed by teaching assistants to reinforce the learning objectives of the task, such as by encouraging boys to sit still and develop their concentration and writing skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen self-evaluation to check the progress of different groups of pupils so that all make the best progress possible, including the younger boys.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to experience and understand the diversity of cultures present in British society.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Sir Robert Geffery's VA CE Primary School, Landrake PL12 5EA

We very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work when we visited your school recently. Thank you for making us so welcome. We especially enjoyed speaking to you because you are confident and friendly and express your views very clearly.

We agree with you and your parents that Sir Robert Geffery's is a good school. These are some of the most important things we found out about it.

- You make good progress and pupils in Year 6 reach well above average standards in reading, mathematics and science tests. You also do well in subjects such as ICT, art, PE and music. Your progress in writing has not been as good in the past as in other subjects, but is now improving.
- Teaching is good because you are given challenging work that you find really interesting. We were especially impressed by the way you know how to achieve your targets by assessing your own and each other's work.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, and your behaviour and attendance are also excellent.
- You greatly enjoy school, especially all the different activities on offer. The school farm and its links with the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers give you very special opportunities.
- The school has very good links with the pre-school, so children are happy and settled when they start school in Reception
- All the staff and governors are working really hard to make the school even better.

We have asked the school to make sure they always spot and help any group of you that are doing less well, especially some of the boys lower down the school, and to give you more opportunities to learn about the range of people who live in Britain.

Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler

Lead Inspector