

Grade-Ruan Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111989
Local Authority	Cornwal
Inspection number	337803
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Alex Baxter

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 of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Bill Cole
Headteacher	Tom Harman
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and an assembly, observed break and lunchtime activities and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of children's progress, and the provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, 25 parental questionnaires, 33 pupils' questionnaires and 10 staff questionnaires were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The children's variable skills on entry, including an above-average number who arrive other than at the normal time, and the consistency of teaching and learning across the school in meeting the resulting wide range of pupils' needs.
- How well teachers use assessments and targets to accelerate pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and for girls.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management, given the uncertain nature of the position of leadership and management, in bringing about improvement.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a combined Reception and Year 1 class. The two other classes in the school include a Years 2, 3 and 4 class and a Years 5 and 6 class. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average; there is variation across the year groups and at times this proportion is above average. Most special needs are related to moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who leave or enter the school other than at the normal time is above average. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. The substantive headteacher is on long-term leave of absence and the school is currently led by an acting headteacher.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Grade-Ruan is a good school. It is a caring, inclusive community with a few outstanding features. These include the high-quality care from staff that promotes the pupils' outstanding behaviour and contributions to learning. In particular, it ensures that pupils are and feel very safe. One pupil reflected the views of most when saying, 'Everyone's friendly at this school and teachers are kind to us.'

Despite continued uncertainty regarding the position of the headteacher, under the skilled guidance of a first and then a second acting headteacher, it has improved in a number of respects. After disappointing results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2008, the school has worked hard to improve standards. There was significant improvement in 2009, especially in English and science, and the current quality of pupils' work shows further improvement. The guidance pupils receive on how to improve their work is more helpful. Pupils know their targets, and teachers' marking shows them how to make their work better. From broadly expected levels of skill on entry, pupils across the full range of abilities, increasingly this year those with more ability, make good progress. Pupils who arrive from other schools other than at the normal time of entry also make good progress. Girls, too, are finding their individual targets very helpful and are now making better progress in mathematics. Achievement is good and attainment is above average, also reflecting the way pupils really give of their best and greatly enjoy coming to school.

The current acting headteacher uses his experience supportively to establish an effective team approach to leadership and management, which is using and extending the skills of the staff. The school is following a carefully constructed development plan, which has identified key priorities. The pupils' welfare is fully safeguarded. Good links with parents and the local community promote the pupils' confidence and help them to achieve more and reach higher standards. These good links also lift confidence in the school and help it to improve. The governing body serves the school well and is not flinching from the difficult decisions needed to secure the position of headteacher, the school's finances and its viability into the future. The current strengths in leadership and management, which in particular, include effective self-evaluation and accurate school development and strategic planning, and its success in re-establishing pupils' good achievement, show a good capacity for continued improvement.

Good teaching is founded on the very good relationships and behaviour and high expectations that are evident in all classrooms. At times, the pace of teaching is slowed by an over use of worksheets, limiting opportunities for imaginative writing or real life, practical problem-solving in mathematics. The curriculum places a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology

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(ICT) skills. There is a good range of activities, such as a Year 5/6 residential trip to Brittany, which make very positive contributions to the pupils' excellent healthy living. However, opportunities to extend the pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain and to promote community cohesion are not as securely developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend pupils' writing and mathematical skills by reducing the use of worksheets, providing more time for extended imaginative writing and for solving real life mathematical problems in a practical way.
- Develop the pupils' awareness and understanding of multicultural Britain by more specifically promoting this aspect of community cohesion within the curricular topics which join subjects, and for example, by establishing links with schools in more culturally diverse areas of Britain.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Inspectors observed that in lessons all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, greatly enjoy their learning and enthusiastically give of their best. Similarly, very positive attitudes were seen during assembly, 'Wake and Shake' physical exercises and during group work in the ICT suite. A scrutiny of pupils' work and their responses in lessons showed above-average skills in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. This is despite an increasing number of pupils arriving from other schools, occasionally with weaker basic skills. In response to their broadly average skills on entry, these standards show good achievement. Progress varies between satisfactory and good in Years 2 to 4, but strengthens in Years 5 and 6 and is occasionally outstanding, especially, for example, when pupils are encouraged to think for themselves. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, when pupils had to recall number facts to meet a challenging five-minute deadline.

Many pupils, often from a very early age, show outstanding skills in speaking and listening and singing, and a majority of pupils also use computers confidently, for example, to extend their basic numeracy skills. Pupils really enjoy working with partners and take real pride in seeing who can achieve their targets in the shortest time. This supportive form of friendly competition is a feature, for example, in Years 2 to 4, that supports sound progress. Although attainment continues to rise, some pupils, especially in Years 3 and 4 in the lessons seen, did not have sufficient opportunity to write imaginatively and at length or to solve real life problems practically in mathematics and this constrained their progress.

The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is impeccable and reflects their outstanding moral and social development. The atmosphere is relaxed and happy yet totally learning focused. Spiritual development is good, especially when investigating in science, for example, where there is joy in their learning activity. Pupils have a good understanding of their local cultural heritage, but their awareness of Britain's multicultural community is less developed. In all other respects pupils are well prepared

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for life beyond this small school, achieving good standards. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe. Their full participation in school activities, including singing with harmony in assembly and contributing on the school council, demonstrates their excellent attitudes towards learning and in undertaking responsibility.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, who respond very well and follow instructions carefully. Teachers use resources such as ICT well, for more-able pupils to complete extension tasks. Work is routinely marked to a high standard, with very helpful comments designed to improve it. Pupils also assess their own and each other's work, often against clear individual targets, and this helps their understanding of the next steps they need to take. Other typical strengths include warm relationships and good questioning, which are successful in developing the pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers plan tasks that match the needs of the pupils. This is generally an accurate feature in setting an optimum challenge for the lowest- and highest-attaining pupils, and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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for those new to the school. At times though, average pupils could be challenged more, especially in mathematics. Writing and mathematics in Years 2 to 4 occasionally lacks stimulation because there is an over-use of worksheets, which constrains the time available for practical enquiry and extended imaginative writing. The pace of learning quickens through Years 5 to 6 as teachers set practical challenges, which pupils like and which give them more time to think and work in groups.

The pupils' enjoyment, excellent behaviour and adoption of healthy lifestyles are promoted strongly across the curriculum. The pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed well by linking subjects in projects such as 'Ancient Egypt'. However, opportunities to further enhance the pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain are not yet developed well enough. All pupils are taught French and receive a well-balanced programme of learning activities. However, at times opportunities for more imaginative writing and practical problem-solving are constrained. The school takes advantage of its location in planning the curriculum and makes good use of local amenities, partner schools and other providers to deliver specialist activities such as 'tag rugby', music and singing. Regular visits to places of interest such as Goonhilly and residential visits further enrich pupils' learning.

In response to high-quality care, pupils say that they feel very safe, show great confidence in the adults who support them and move about the school in a very assured way. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Provision to safeguard pupils is fully in place.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

During the continuing absence of the substantive headteacher over the past two terms, the school has been well served by the good work of two experienced and capable acting headteachers. The current acting headteacher is building well on the work of his predecessor and is working closely with governors to carefully plot the future development of the school. With good support from governors he is implementing a well-founded school development plan. As a result, the pupils' welfare is safeguarded well and team leadership, the quality of teaching and standards continue to improve. There are good partnerships with other schools, the local community and with parents, which help to ensure equal opportunity, for example, by enabling all classes to enjoy regular educational visits. These partnerships also keep staff well informed, enabling

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them to keep pupils free from discrimination. The inclusive nature of the school is clearly evident in the way newly arriving pupils are so warmly welcomed into school life. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Good local dimensions of community are seen in the links with the church and local lifeguards. Global aspects are developed soundly through the teaching of French. However, the school acknowledges that the national dimension of community cohesion is underdeveloped. Even so, its contributions to national charities, such as 'Children in Need', are positive features and links with urban schools farther afield are planned.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Teachers' planning in this mixed Reception/Year 1 class is informed by exemplary assessment of the children's progress and is highly successful in meeting children's individual needs. The provision is extremely well led and children are kept safe. Children are making outstanding progress across all the areas of learning and many are on course to exceed the levels of skill normally expected on entry to Year 1. The children's communication and social skills are particularly strong and show that their achievement is excellent. Teaching and the quality of care provided for the children are of the highest quality. They are based on an optimum balance of adult-led learning and activities chosen by the children themselves, both indoors and out of doors. The teacher and her assistant encourage children to learn from and with each other. Year 1 pupils, for example, 'teach' their younger Reception friends how to follow rules and routines and this is another very positive feature. There is a consistent emphasis on children learning

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independently through practical activity. For example, as imitation snow cascaded down on to his little train in a 'small snow world' table-top model, one little boy exclaimed, 'This is an avalanche.' Such accurate and lively use of vocabulary typified the children's outstanding speaking skills and their great enjoyment of school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of the parents are happy with the work of the school. There was unanimous agreement in the parents' responses to the questionnaire that their children enjoy school. There was very strong agreement that their children are kept safe at school, are helped to have a healthy lifestyle and that they receive good information about their children's progress. A small minority of parents indicated concerns related to the position of the headteacher. Inspectors were mindful of these parental concerns and examined them during the inspection. They concluded that the school is currently well led and is implementing well-considered plans to secure continued improvement and the future success of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Grade-Ruan CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 65 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	56	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	52	10	40	2	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	56	8	32	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	17	68	5	20	2	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	56	8	32	0	0	2	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	40	13	52	2	8	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	13	52	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	60	5	20	2	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	32	13	52	2	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	36	10	40	2	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	36	6	24	5	20	2	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	76	2	8	2	8	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grade Ruan Cof E Primary School, Ruan Minor, TR12 7JN

We really enjoyed meeting you when we visited your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you on the school council who gave up your time to talk to me. Yours is a good school, with some outstanding features. We especially liked your excellent behaviour and the way you so very willingly try hard in lessons. You are very knowledgeable about how to stay healthy and safe, and we were also very impressed with the exemplary way adults look after you.

These are the other things we liked:

- Teaching is good and helps you to make good progress in your work and to reach above-average standards by the time you leave Year 6. Most of you learn to speak and listen extremely well.
- You know and understand your targets really well and this supports your good achievement.
- The acting headteacher, staff and governors run the school well. They have lots of good links, especially with the church and with your parents, and these help you to do well and to greatly enjoy your time at the school.

To help the school to improve further, we have asked the acting headteacher, staff and governors to do two things:

- Make sure that you have plenty of time to write your own stories and to solve real life mathematical problems in a practical way as you move through the school.
- Develop your awareness and understanding of multicultural Britain.

Keep giving of your best and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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