

Carclaze Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136070
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	382021
Inspection dates	23–24 February 2012
Lead inspector	Geoff Cresswell

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	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ashley Shopland
Headteacher	Simon Pollard
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	23–24 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Geoff Cresswell

Additional inspector

Alan Payne

Additional inspector

Anne Wesley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes in the school, including a session taught by a specialist teaching assistant. Thirty lessons were observed; six of these observations were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read. The pupils' work was looked at in detail and inspectors spoke with pupils and parents and carers informally throughout the day. Inspectors looked at the school's documentation, including that relating to pupils' learning, behaviour, safeguarding and self-evaluation. Inspectors took account of the responses to 89 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Carclaze Community Primary School opened as a new school in a new building in September 2010 following the closure of Carclaze Community Infant and Junior Schools. There have been some key changes in senior leadership, teaching and other staff. The school is a larger than average primary school. Virtually all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost no pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average, the majority of whom have speech, language and communication needs. The school does not meet the current floor standard for the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

The school operates its own breakfast club and after-school care provision which were included as part of this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is improving well but is not yet good because although standards in key subjects are rising there is a legacy of underachievement that is impacting on how well pupils achieve. This is being addressed rigorously and significant improvements in teaching and behaviour are testimony to this.
- Pupils in Year 6 are now on track to reached standards in line with national expectations in reading and mathematics. This is a notable improvement from when the school opened but weaknesses remain, particularly in boys' writing and in how well all pupils use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching over time is consistently good and at times outstanding. It is the determining factor in the good progress that is now being made by pupils across the school and is effective in developing pupils' skills and motivation in English and mathematics. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from well-planned, skilful intervention by staff.
- The parents and carers, pupils and staff have an overwhelmingly positive view of the school, although concern is expressed about a few pupils who do not always conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour, particularly at break times. Inspection evidence supports this view. However, the enthusiastic, willing and hard-working response of pupils in lessons is a strength and contributes to their good progress. Pupils feel safe, collaborate very well and enjoy school.
- A significant factor in school improvement is the steely focus of those in senior management on raising standards by managing teacher performance, improving the quality of teaching and establishing commonly applied codes of behaviour. The school improvement plan is detailed and linked to the effective training of staff followed up by consistent monitoring of teaching. This effective practice is very well developed in English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage, but other subjects are not led with the same degree of cohesion.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics to above the national average by:
 - further improving boys' writing, especially in Key Stage 2, by analysing the information from assessment to identify common weaknesses and using the information to guide planning and teaching
 - putting in place a progressive framework for developing skills and strategies to develop pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply mathematics in other subject areas.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils in the playground by:
 - planning the use of space to provide purposeful activities that allow all pupils to partake in energetic, safe play
 - establishing sanctions and rewards that enable staff to create the same very positive learning environment that dominates the rest of school.
- Equip leaders of subjects, other than English and mathematics, to drive significant improvement by:
 - clearly identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the subjects they are responsible for
 - ensuring all subjects are taught in sufficient depth
 - ensuring that each subject leader can monitor and evaluate pupils' learning in his/her subject and implement necessary improvements

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are correct in their view that pupils are progressing well. A significant proportion of children enter the school with skills below the expected level. However, assessment data over time and observations indicate children learn fast in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Knowledge of phonics to help the children read is established well and they make good progress in the beginnings of writing. They make good progress in numeracy by using number in practical 'hands-on' situations. Children cooperate together and take responsibility for their learning, for example, in choosing a recipe to follow or using a science kit to investigate their 'finds' from outside.

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As pupils move through Years 1 and 2, they build on their knowledge of phonics well. When readers were listened to, the least able were able to draw on their knowledge of phonics to help them progress. Younger pupils are now well motivated to write and have a sense of achievement from their efforts. This is an improvement from when the school opened but the school recognises that this is still work in progress. Pupils also continue to develop numeracy skills well. As a result, the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics.

The consistently good progress overall in English and mathematics is a feature of all year groups in Key Stage 2. The attainment of the current Year 6 is broadly average in reading and mathematics, but still below average in writing. The school's extensive assessment and tracking data for all pupils indicate that good progress is an established feature but that there is still ground to make up, particularly for the older pupils. Floor targets were missed by a small percentage last year. Pupils can explain their individual targets and are clear about what they need to do to improve. This includes disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, who are equally well motivated about their learning and are making good progress relative to their starting points. In the classroom, the learning of number facts and computation is effective, as is the development of a love of reading. The pupils' own work books are a testament to the good progress made over time. Some writing is vibrant and can make the reader laugh out loud. However, the pupils' work also reveals that handwriting, presentation of work and spelling are not good enough. This is particularly true of some of the oldest boys, and although they have made just as good progress as the girls in the last 18 months, their writing was weaker to start with. In class, pupils are good at using their knowledge of mathematics to solve real-life problems in mathematics lessons, but are not provided with enough opportunities to use these skills in other subjects. This is in contrast to reading, writing and communication skills, which are used well across the curriculum.

Quality of teaching

Since the school opened in 2010, there has been a strong focus on improving pupils' writing. Teachers have a clear strategy for equipping pupils with a rich vocabulary. It begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continues to be a feature of good teaching throughout the school. Punctuation and grammar are taught systematically with clear guidance on what is expected and what pupils need to do to improve. However, the teaching of spelling has not yet had the same impact because it lacks rigour. Teaching does not yet pay full attention to the systematic development of handwriting skills and presentation in general. As a consequence, while the content of work is often good, the presentation does not consistently match this standard.

The teaching of reading is very effective. It has a good balance between the technical skill of learning to sound out letters and generating a love of books. Teachers track pupils' progress in reading very carefully and provide group reading sessions that have a well-defined focus. Progress in these sessions is at least good. Mathematics is taught equally well across the school. Learning is focused, and work

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is challenging and tailored to the individual needs of pupils. Teachers have clear expectations of what pupils need to learn and communicate this well.

In lessons, teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and use questions skilfully to extend pupils' understanding. There is an atmosphere of trust where pupils are confident to express ideas. Expectations of good behaviour are high. Pupils are made aware of their targets and good quality marking makes clear what pupils need to do to improve. When teaching is outstanding, as seen in a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils were challenged to be inventive and use powerful language that hooked the attention of the reader. Expectations were high as to presentational skills and the pupils rose to the challenges set. Teaching assistants, across the school, are effective in making sure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs can join in fully with the lesson and make good progress. The specialist teaching for those pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties is particularly effective.

The planned curriculum is appropriate although at times opportunities are missed for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. The opportunities that teaching provides for pupils to work together, to explore moral and social issues and to learn about different cultures promotes their personal development effectively.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They play their part in helping to create an orderly environment conducive to learning. This starts at the beginning of the day in the school's breakfast club, and extends to the after-school club where the relaxed, positive atmosphere promotes a responsible reaction from the pupils.

Improvement in pupils' behaviour has been a priority since the school opened and measures taken have proved very effective. The number of exclusions has reduced dramatically. Parents and carers recognise the improvements, one parent commenting, 'I have seen the turnaround in very difficult children.' The very large majority of parents and carers have a positive view of behaviour and consider that adults deal with behavioural issues effectively. The school's behaviour records support this view. A small minority of pupils are rightly concerned about the behaviour of a few boys at break times. A small amount of boisterous behaviour was observed during the inspection, arising mainly from lack of purposeful activity available for the pupils at the time. The pupils are adamant that classmates and peers are not bullied or systematically picked on for any reason such as race or religion. The school carefully monitors the rare occurrences when bullying occurs. A concern was raised by a parent that bullying was not dealt with quickly. Inspectors investigated this concern in depth and found that bullying issues, of any kind, are given a high priority and action taken to deal with any problem.

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Attendance has risen sharply since the school opened, rising from a low level to the current situation of being above average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and agree with parents and carers that the school has good measures in place to keep pupils safe and happy.

Leadership and management

Since the school opened, senior leaders have focused relentlessly on raising standards and improving behaviour. They have been successful. The systematic approach to professional development, backed by thorough monitoring of progress, has resulted in improved learning taking place. It has also promoted equality and tackled discrimination within the school. Their efforts have seen a closing of attainment gaps between boys and girls and much improved progress by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Good progress is now ensured for all groups of pupils and as a result pupils' achievement is on an upward trajectory.

The school's evaluation of its own performance is accurate and senior leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders and by those responsible for mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage has had a significant impact over the last 18 months on improving teaching. This can be seen in pupils' books, in lessons and in the tracking of progress. However, the same level of rigour has not yet been established by leaders of subjects across the breadth of the curriculum to improve achievement further.

The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced, but the variation in leadership at times affects the depth to which some subjects are covered. Key basic skills are developed in a systematic and progressive manner. The school is effective at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Tolerance and respect for the views and beliefs of others are promoted appropriately and the opportunities for pupils to reflect and to express wonder, vitality and creativity make the provision for pupils' spiritual development a strength.

The governing body has been very successful in managing the complex requirements of a new build, allowing senior staff to concentrate on improving teaching and learning. A core of governors has a good awareness of how well the school is performing. The procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and are reflected in the parents', carers' and pupils' well-placed confidence in this and many other aspects of the school. Good improvements in teaching, achievement and behaviour have been made since the school opened and this indicates that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Carclaze Community Primary School, St Austell, PL25 3TF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at the work you do.

You clearly enjoy school and we agree with you that you are taught well. This is why we saw you making good progress in the lessons we watched and also in your books, especially in English and mathematics. Although you are making good progress in writing, some of you still need to improve your handwriting, presentation and spelling. This is especially true for some of the boys. We can see that you enjoy reading and know how to work out words that are difficult to read. You get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You work well together in lessons and almost all of you behave well although we agree with you that a few children do not behave as well as they should, especially when they cannot find enough to do at playtimes.

Your headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers have done a good job in helping the teachers to make your reading, writing and mathematics better as well as improving behaviour. Your governors have also helped a lot with the new building.

Overall, we think your school is satisfactory, and to make it improve further we have asked the school to make what you do in English and mathematics better than in most schools. We also have asked the school to make the playground a more exciting place to be so that behaviour gets better. Finally, we have asked the teachers in charge of subjects other than English and mathematics to work with all staff to make learning even more exciting in these other subjects. You can help by continuing to work hard together in lessons. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Cresswell
Lead inspector

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