

Devoran School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111872
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	363785
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Richard Light

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	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Johnson
Headteacher	Carol Breakwell
Date of previous school inspection	21 April 2008
School address	Market Street Truro TR3 6QA
Telephone number	01872 863223
Fax number	01872 863223
Email address	head@devoran.cornwall.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Inspection number	363785

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. In total, 18 lessons were observed and nine teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and some staff with positions of responsibility. Inspectors observed the school's teaching, looked at pupils' work and the school's curriculum planning, and evaluated pupils' progress data. Questionnaires from older pupils, teaching and support staff, and 124 parents and carers were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the level of progress of different groups of pupils during their time at the school?
- How consistent is teaching across the school?
- How effective are leaders and managers at all levels at bringing about improvements?

Information about the school

The school serves Devoran village. It is an average-sized school. Most pupils attend from the local catchment but an increasing number travel from outside this immediate area. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided for in a Reception class. The school has a breakfast- and after-school club on site managed by the governing body. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national figure and most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The school has achieved a number of awards, including Healthy Schools Award, Investors in People and Activemark. ♦

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Devoran School provides an outstanding quality of education. Key to this success is pupils' outstanding behaviour which plays a pivotal role in the quality of their learning. The outstanding quality of care, guidance and support enables pupils to make excellent progress in their personal development. In the words of one parent, 'My child has excelled academically, but the most rewarding aspect is the change in his behaviour, aspirations and happiness because staff go the extra mile.'

From skills similar to those expected by the time they begin school, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle very well and make an excellent start to their education.

The school is extremely successful in working with significant partners to extend pupils' education beyond what would normally be expected. Together with the excellent relationships between staff and pupils, this contributes to the outstanding behaviour seen in lessons, around the school and during before- or after-school provision.

Standards are high. Pupils make good progress in their learning relative to their starting points due to the consistently good and improving teaching combined with carefully targeted support. During the inspection, some teaching did not explicitly refer to what pupils should be learning at key points in lessons and, as a result, pupils' progress was not maximised.

The curriculum contains a range of well-constructed activities which are extremely successful in promoting pupils' contribution to their community. It is also very effective in ensuring pupils understand how to lead extremely safe and healthy lifestyles. This is reflected in the national awards gained by the school and the very high uptake of healthy school meals. ♦ The development of pupils' cross-curricular literacy, mathematics, and information and communication technology skills is given high priority in planning and prepares pupils very successfully for their future lives. The headteacher provides very strong and reflective leadership for the school. She leads a committed staff team that shares the school's aims and values. Good self-evaluation ensures the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for further development. The arrangements for monitoring teaching and school improvement plans are generally good and identify broad areas for improvement, although in some respects there is a lack of precision and detail in follow-up action to ensure more rapid progress. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the school's work which include new systems for recording pupils' progress, improved provision for extended services and more appropriate challenge for higher-attaining pupils. The pace of improvement, combined with the school's use of resources to achieve excellent value for money, demonstrates the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be outstanding by maintaining a clear focus on precisely what pupils need to learn throughout lessons.
- Sharpen self-evaluation activities by leaders and managers at all levels to ensure that explicit actions in school improvement planning bring about improvements with clear criteria on which to judge success. Sharpen self-evaluation activities by leaders and managers at all levels to ensure that explicit actions in school improvement planning bring about improvements with clear criteria on which to judge success.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils achieve extremely well academically and personally. Pupils make good progress with their academic learning in the classroom due to the excellent relationships and very well established classroom routines that ensure learning proceeds smoothly. Pupils' interest in learning is stimulated when they have the opportunity to contribute to the curriculum and planned lessons. Pupils' enjoyment and achievement are particularly marked in English. During the inspection, this was observed when Year 2 pupils applied their knowledge of paragraphs to retell stories of Adelita the Mexican Cinderella and when Year 6 used a 'toolkit' to write a balanced argument. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as shown by their above average attendance, because they feel valued.

Pupils make excellent progress in developing their social skills and become very happy, confident individuals before the time they leave school. They conscientiously take on extra responsibilities around the school, for example by participating in the school council, helping younger pupils at lunchtimes or organising 'fines day' fund-raising activities.

Playtime buddies and Lantern Parades in Truro help develop pupils' contribution to their community exceptionally well. Through carefully planned lessons, pupils' levels of independence and self-control become high. Pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence are boosted further when their achievements are recognised and celebrated in assemblies. Further to this, older pupils develop their public speaking skills extremely well, for example through the Youth Speaks competition. A high number also develop a thoughtful and reflective outlook through skills gained at innovative clubs such as Philosophy or Thinking Skills. Through the valued Parents and Children Together programme, the overwhelming majority of pupils say they feel very safe in school, and parents and carers recognise the high levels of care they receive.

◆ Previous variations in performance between groups and subjects have now been closed so that all groups perform well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A combination of high attainment and good academic progress means that pupils' overall achievement is outstanding.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers understand the needs of pupils very well. They have excellent relationships with pupils and encourage them to participate widely in the life of the school. All staff deploy their very good subject knowledge well to provide good support and challenge for all groups of pupils. Lessons are well paced and contain practical activities which enable pupils to apply learnt skills and maintain their interest. A calm and purposeful atmosphere exists in all classes. Teaching assistants contribute significantly to pupils' learning because they encourage pupils to do as much as possible for themselves. Staff have conducted some research to tackle the underperformance in some boys' writing. This has had a positive impact and has accelerated pupils' progress.

Teachers have good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and recording their progress. There is inconsistency in the use of information gathered during lessons to precisely focus on what children have learnt. This results in some pupils not maximising progress and teachers not being able to review accurately what pupils have learnt. Excellent examples occur, such as in an outstanding Year 6 English lesson where whiteboards were very effectively used to check pupils' understanding of contrasting connectives.

The excellent curriculum provides a very broad range of activities which effectively meet the different needs and interests of all pupils. The school uses the local environment very well to provide practical experiences for learning such as 'Wellie Walks' to Restronguet Creek. The excellent curriculum is enhanced by the specific extra-curricular clubs such as

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

Story Telling, designed to directly address pupils' learning needs. This adds impact to the already broad range of well-attended, extra-curricular clubs, including the before- and after-school care.

◆ The strong staff teamwork and close partnership with parents, carers and other professionals underpin the school's very caring and supportive environment. The individual education plans and detailed support, including excellent partnership arrangements with a wide range of external agencies, ensure that the needs of those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, are met very well.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has embedded a very caring and thoughtful school ethos based on a nurturing philosophy. This inclusive style of leadership is shared by all members of the school community. Ambitious targets have resulted in an environment where pupils can thrive. Their successes are shared collectively and valued through reward certificates they receive in assemblies and in newsletters. Similarly, staff strengths and skills are recognised and made best use of. The commitment to professional and personal development is an embedded part of the school ethos. Leaders and managers at all levels have fostered an environment where everyone is treated with trust and dignity. Some have assumed their responsibilities quite recently. They have good analytical skills and subject knowledge, although these have not yet had time to demonstrate their full impact on accelerating pupils' academic progress.

The governing body challenges and supports the school well. Governors care deeply about the quality of education pupils receive and are involved in monitoring the school's work through visits to lessons and presentations from staff. ◆ Systems are in place to ensure statutory requirements are met and finances managed prudently. The school uses its resources exceptionally well.

Parents and carers receive high-quality information about the personal care and academic progress of their children, and the vast majority are very supportive of the school, sharing in the strong sense of pride and belonging that permeates all aspects of the school's work. Highly positive relationships extend to excellent partnership arrangements with a wide range of external agencies; this ensures individual needs can be met. Links to the local secondary school enhance learning very well in science for pupils known to be gifted and talented.

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

Data to assess and track pupils' academic progress are significant and considerable. Identified actions by leaders to improve the quality of teaching, or how this information is accurately shared through the school development plan with governors in order to hold the school to account, is less clear. Through the highly inclusive ethos, the school successfully promotes equal opportunities and does not discriminate. School values are well modelled and taught by staff, and have a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and personal development. The school promotes community cohesion well, as is demonstrated by the developing residential programme and Spanish pen pals. Local links are extremely strong.

◆ Arrangements to protect and keep pupils safe meet requirements well. All staff and governors are well trained in child protection procedures, and adults are fully vetted and checked before they are employed by the school. Staff, pupils and parents and carers state they feel very safe and secure with the school.

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Staff form very positive links with families through the extensive Learning Together programme of induction. Excellent transition plans for individual children moving into Year 1 ensures a very smooth passage to the next stage of their education. Parents and carers are provided with detailed information early, helping to ensure that children develop key learning behaviours rapidly. Excellent and detailed observations that build on previous experiences are used exceptionally well to provide individual daily lessons in phonics (the sounds that letters make) and number work. Creative development is nurtured very well when children have time to explore and investigate at length ideas that interest them such as 'Space' or 'Superheroes'. Activities such as weighing jelly in balance scales foster a strong collective community with children working well together and cooperating well with

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

adults. The indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and adapted to children's responses meaning that they are always interested in and enjoy their learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is relatively new in post. She has good, clear ideas on how to improve the setting further but these have yet to be implemented. Shared planning between staff for Reception-age children who attend before- or after-school care at the school ensures they are very well catered for. As a result of the very effective teamwork, good leadership and well-organised, imaginative teaching, children become happy and confident, making exceptional progress in lessons.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2

Views of parents and carers

A much higher than average proportion of parental questionnaires were returned. One parent commented, 'We are very happy with our children's education. They have progressed academically, socially and physically. Their needs have been well met and school is such a positive experience for them.' ♦ Parents hold extremely positive views of all aspects of the school's work. Parents and carers appreciate the very high standard of support provided for their children. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that communication could be improved from the school or that the individual needs of their children were not met. Inspectors noted that the school has plans in place to address these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Devoran 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 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 192 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	57	47	38	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	69	34	27	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	40	64	52	9	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	40	65	52	9	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	69	56	51	41	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	41	59	48	10	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	54	54	44	0	0	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)	56	45	62	50	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	38	64	52	11	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	42	57	46	8	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	43	56	45	9	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	65	52	48	39	9	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	71	57	45	36	6	5	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 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



3 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Devoran School, Truro TR3 6PA

Thank you for the warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed by your outstanding behaviour in lessons and around the school. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons, talking to you about your school and looking at your work.

We believe there are things that your school does very well. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a very good start to school life and achieve very well.

All the adults in the school take very good care of you to make sure you are very safe. Your attendance is good. You say you enjoy shaping the way you learn in lessons and the exciting activities or visits teachers plan for you. You behave very well, look after each other very thoughtfully and gain excellent personal skills to help you grow up. You know the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise.

Your teachers work hard to make sure you are making good progress. The good teaching you receive helps you develop high skills in English and mathematics. We have asked them to make sure they focus very closely on what they want you to learn all the way through lessons to improve your progress even further.

We have also asked all the leaders and managers to look more closely at all that is going on at the school. They should provide teachers and governors with regular and detailed information about how you are all progressing. In this way, they can all help to make your school an even better place in which to learn. ♦

I am sure that the school, with all your help, will continue to get even better. It was a pleasure to meet you all. Best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light

♦ Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.