

# Berrycoombe School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111924
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	357005
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Richard Light

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Twigg
<b>Headteacher</b>	Craig Robertson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Berrycoombe Vale Bodmin PL31 2PH
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<b>Email address</b>	secretary@berrycoombe.cornwall.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed nine teachers. They held meetings with key members of the governing body, staff, individuals who work in partnership with the school and two groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at key documents, such as the school's plans for improvement and the governing body minutes, and pupils' work, as well as questionnaires returned by 63 parents and carers, and older pupils.

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

- Whether teaching is sufficiently challenging to secure and maintain good progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics.
- The impact of systems devised by leaders and managers at all levels in tackling weaknesses and securing improved outcomes for pupils.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in setting the strategic direction for the school, monitoring its work and holding the school to account.
- How well strategies to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence ensure pupils' future economic well-being.

## Information about the school

The school serves an urban community in Cornwall. It is an average-sized school. Most pupils attend from the local catchment. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided for in a Reception class. The school has a breakfast club on site managed by the governing body. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to free school meals is above the national figure and most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils with social and communication learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. A higher than average number of pupils leave or enter the school other than at the normal times. The school has achieved a number of awards, including Healthy Schools Award, an Activemark and an Inclusion Kitemark.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school with a strong commitment to rapid improvement, fostered by the teamwork of the headteacher and senior leaders, together with a wide range of external partners. As a result, it is improving quickly. Pupils recognise the targeted support and good-quality care they receive and develop as individuals in a supportive environment. Attendance is improving significantly from very low levels and is now average as a result of rigorous action by the school in combination with external agencies. Most parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. One parent noted, 'The headteacher, class teacher and parent-support adviser have all been very supportive and positive.' These views are representative of the very large majority of those who returned the Ofsted questionnaire and are supported by inspection evidence.

Progress made by pupils in English and mathematics by the time they leave school in Year 6 is satisfactory but improving quickly. Pupils' progress has improved significantly over the last two years as a result of rigorous and frequent checks on their work and improving teaching. This has meant that pupils' attainment is also rising significantly. Attainment remains low at present as improvements have been from low starting points. School data and inspection evidence show that the pace of improvements is being maintained. Teaching is satisfactory and improving, with an increasing proportion that is good. There are good relationships in most classrooms, where pupils' own self-evaluation of, and positive attitude to, learning are key features. Pupils are not yet making good progress as good teaching is not embedded across the school. Sometimes, activities do not meet pupils' varying needs as well as they might or it is not clear enough to pupils what the outcomes of planned activities should be. Marking is much improved and pupils can refer to specific examples where they have been helped by comments explaining their next steps in learning.

Pupils report they feel safe and most are confident that any problems that do arise are dealt with by staff. They have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in a healthy lifestyle. The satisfactory curriculum provides a range of activities to meet the needs and interests of pupils, and makes good provision for some aspects of personal development, such as social skills or moral understanding in assembly. The undertaking of positions of responsibility, such as assembly monitors and participation in local events, including 'Heritage Day' celebrations or 'St Piran's Day Festival', enable pupils to make a good contribution to their local community. However, there are limited opportunities to develop pupils' wider cultural awareness or links to the national and international community so they can make a better contribution towards it. Pupils apply their reading, mathematics and information and communication technology skills in lessons, but less frequently in real-life contexts. Pupils fund-raise significant amounts for a range of local charities. ♦

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Self-evaluation is accurate and results in clear and appropriate priorities for future action. Significant improvements are underway, although the school readily recognises that there is much more to do. Challenging targets, combined with the effective use of assessment information, are used well to raise attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, the quality of subject leadership is variable and some improvements are not fully embedded. Consequently, the capacity to sustain improvements is satisfactory. ♦



Up to 40% of 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 and accelerate pupils' progress further so that by the time of National Curriculum tests in 2012:
  - 88% of Year 6 pupils attain Level 4 in English and mathematics combined
  - 88% of Year 6 pupils make two levels progress in mathematics between Key Stage 1 and 2 and,
  - 92% of Year 6 pupils make two levels progress in English between Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Improve teaching so that at least 80% is good or better by February 2012 by making sure that teachers:
  - identify clear learning outcomes for the different ability groups in the lesson
  - plan ranges and sequences of lesson activities that are well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum by:
  - developing greater opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in a range of real-life contexts
  - enabling pupils to raise their cultural understanding and make a greater contribution to the national and international community.

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

**3**

Children start at the school with levels of skill lower than those expected. Throughout the school, they make satisfactory but improving progress with their learning in the classroom and achieve well in some aspects of their personal development. Their good understanding of how to lead healthy lives is reflected in the national awards gained by the school and the high uptake of healthy school meals. Pupils enjoy most lessons and collaborate well to complete group tasks and evaluate their work. They usually work at a good pace, though occasionally this drops. Their interest in learning is heightened when they have the opportunity to apply their skills in practical situations, such as using everyday items from catalogues to develop their understanding of percentages. ♦

In Year 2, pupils explained well how the use of descriptive language in their sentences improves their own writing. Mathematical language was developed well in Year 4 when

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pupils explored the relationship between fractions and decimals using chalk number lines. Previous variations in the performance of different groups of pupils have now been levelled with the result that all groups make satisfactory progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the carefully targeted support they receive.

Behaviour in classes is good due to the close attention and support pupils receive from adults during lessons. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour in lessons are well managed. A majority of pupils and a minority of parents and carers who returned the Ofsted questionnaire raised concerns over behaviour around the school during semi-supervised times. During the inspection, some routines were interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour and, consequently, behaviour overall is satisfactory.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel valued and safe. They conscientiously take on extra responsibilities around the school, for example by participating in the school council or as lunchtime helpers. Pupils' communication, teamwork and personal qualities are enhanced well through the class gardening programme and smiley club for pupils in Key Stage 2.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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## How effective is the provision?

Teachers and other adults understand the pastoral and academic needs of pupils well. They have good relationships with pupils and encourage them to participate widely in the life of the school. Staff deploy their subject knowledge to provide adequate support and challenge for different groups of pupils. Most lessons are well paced and maintain pupils' interest. A purposeful atmosphere exists in most classes. Teaching assistants contribute to pupils' learning because they encourage pupils to evaluate their learning and to do as much as possible for themselves.

The school has worked effectively to establish consistent approaches to teaching and the marking of pupils' work. Teachers have good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and recording their progress. However, there is variation in how well this information is used to ensure pupils are given work of the right challenging level. For example, it was less effective in one English lesson during the inspection. Examples of good challenge exist, including in mathematics. In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils used their mathematical knowledge well to develop their place value understanding when multiplying and dividing numbers by 100. Where teaching was satisfactory, lesson planning was sound but not enough structure was provided to support pupils' learning fully and it was not clear enough to pupils what the teacher expected as an outcome to the tasks set.

The school has taken some steps to widen its curriculum. It uses the local environment well to provide historical experiences for learning, such as visits to a local steam railway in costume as evacuees or to Truro Museum, though activities to maximise pupils' progress in writing following these events are not always grasped. Cyber-bullying theme weeks and school council consultations develop pupils' contribution to their local community well and foster positive partnership relations but the school is aware these links do not permeate to the national or international level. Some opportunities for pupils to make connections between different cultural aspects of their learning in assembly are missed. However, a range of well-attended extra-curricular clubs, including the breakfast club, enhance the curriculum effectively.

The strong staff teamwork and close partnership with parents, carers and other professionals underpin the school's caring and supportive environment. The good partnership arrangements with a range of external agencies are successful in developing parental and carer aspirations and their views of education. Such partnerships help to alleviate the extreme social, emotional and behavioural barriers that many pupils and families face. The individual education plans and detailed support, including the breakfast club, ensure that the needs of all pupils are met well. ◆◆◆◆◆

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school has a caring yet purposeful ethos. The headteacher's inclusive style of leadership is welcomed by members of the school community. The school's staff have responded well to the headteacher's drive for improvement. The senior leadership team benefits from the complementary skills of its members. Ambitious academic and attendance targets have resulted in an environment where pupils' progress has rapidly increased. Their successes are shared collectively and cherished through reward certificates they receive in assemblies and in newsletters. Similarly, staff strengths and skills are recognised and valued. Their analytical skills and subject knowledge are used to accelerate pupils' academic progress. Recently, identified actions by leaders to improve the quality of teaching have been acted upon robustly to bring about improvements. ♦

Parents and carers receive good information about the personal care and academic progress of their children, and the vast majority are very supportive of the school, sharing in the rapid progress and developments that are continuing. One parent commented, 'My child can now swim 25 metres thanks to the school swimming lessons, is very confident using computers due to IT lessons and thoroughly enjoys gardening at school.' This view summarises the feelings of most parents and carers. Links to the local secondary school enhance learning well, for example in science, for older pupils.

The governing body challenges and supports the school adequately. Members of the governing body care deeply about the quality of education pupils receive and are involved in monitoring the school's work through visits to lessons and reports from staff. They receive high-quality information regarding the performance of the school and act to address concerns. Systems are in place to ensure statutory requirements are met and finances managed prudently. All staff and some individual governors are well trained in child-protection procedures. Adults are fully vetted and checked before they are employed by the school. Staff, pupils, parents and carers say that they feel safe and secure with the school.

Through the inclusive ethos, the school successfully promotes equal opportunities and does not discriminate. School values are well modelled and taught by staff, and have a positive impact of pupils' attitudes and personal development. Participation in activities, such as fund-raising and visits by local community workers to assemblies promote community cohesion well locally, but the school recognises its promotion in a national and international context is more limited. ♦♦♦♦



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage staff form positive links with families early through the well-planned programme of induction and support combined with early partnership work with a range of agencies. Improved transition arrangements for children moving into Year 1 ensure a smooth passage to the next stage of their education. Parents and carers are provided with detailed information and guidance early and this helps to ensure that children quickly develop a positive attitude to learning. Detailed observations that build on previous experiences are used effectively to provide individual daily lessons in phonics (letters and sounds) and mathematical work. Creative development is nurtured well when 'Pirate Petra' uses imaginary pirate treasure to help children count numbers to 20. Activities, such as chanting phonic songs and rhymes, foster a strong collective community with children working well together and cooperating well with adults. The indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and adapted to children's responses meaning that they are interested in and enjoy their learning. Arrangements to effectively monitor the quality of outdoor play are hampered by the design of the outdoor area and occasionally opportunities to extend learning for more-able children are missed. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has sound subject knowledge and clear ideas on how to improve provision further, including targeted action to address weaknesses in the development of language. As a result of effective teamwork, well-organised lessons and clearly established routines, children become happy and confident, making satisfactory progress to enter Year 1 with skills slightly lower than those found nationally.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

An average proportion of questionnaires were returned. Most parents and carers who responded have very positive views on most aspects featured in the Ofsted questionnaire and recognise the safe and caring environment the school has created. A minority of parents and carers have concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Data and observations on this inspection indicate that behaviour was satisfactory overall.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Berrycoombe 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	59	20	32	5	8	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	34	54	24	68	4	6	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	33	52	24	38	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	48	21	33	10	16	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	30	48	25	40	6	10	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	46	23	38	9	14	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	38	26	41	10	16	1	2
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)	24	38	27	43	4	6	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	10	26	41	8	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	35	18	29	16	25	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	44	18	29	11	18	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	23	37	16	25	12	19	8	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	46	23	37	8	13	2	3

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



7 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Berrycoombe Primary School, Bodmin, PL31 2PH**

Thank you for the warm welcome when we visited your school recently. 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 well. All the adults in the school take good care of you and make sure you are very safe. Your attendance and progress you make in lessons has improved significantly. You say you enjoy being part of the school community, and the exciting activities and visits teachers plan for you. You look after each other thoughtfully and gain good personal skills to help you grow up. You know the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise.

The governing body, headteacher and other staff are determined to ensure that the school continues to improve quickly. Your teachers work hard to make sure you are making progress. The teaching you receive is improving and helps you develop the skills you need in English and mathematics. We have asked teachers to make sure they challenge you more by giving you the right level of activities in lessons to help you make even better progress.

We have also asked the headteacher and his team to look more closely at the activities that are planned for you to do in the curriculum so you can apply some of your skills in real-life situations. 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

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