

Veryan CofE School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112011
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	357026
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2011
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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Dean
Headteacher	Annie Lapham
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed four teachers. The inspectors observed the school's work, attended assemblies, evaluated break times, and before and after-school activities, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, and parents and carers. The inspectors looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. In addition, questionnaires completed by 41 parents and carers, 42 pupils and nine staff were analysed.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The consistency in quality of teaching and learning, especially through Years 2 to 4, and in mathematics, in promoting pupils' progress.
- The use of assessment and teachers' feedback in setting high expectations and in showing pupils how to improve.
- The work of leaders and managers, including the governing body, in sustaining continuous improvements in pupils' achievements.

Information about the school

This is a small village primary school with four mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Currently all the pupils attending the school are of White British heritage and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but there is wide variation in the year groups across the school. There are an above average number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual time is above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed Reception and Year 1 class.

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

Veryan is a good school. Despite some instability in staffing in recent years, it has improved well since the previous inspection and continues to do so. The headteacher promotes good teamwork in an unobtrusive, yet very effective manner and this has strengthened the shared commitment to improvement. She empowers staff and the governing body to make valuable contributions to the running of the school. Above all, the school's exemplary care, guidance and support and excellent procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare underpin consistently good quality provision. They are also major factors in helping pupils to feel very safe and to willingly and wholeheartedly participate in sports and to adopt very healthy lifestyles. The school's caring ethos and sense of community also lift pupils' confidence and promote the pupils' good achievement and full enjoyment.

Children make a good start in Reception and continue their good progress through the remainder of the school. Progress is good for pupils across the range of ability and backgrounds, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those arriving from other schools. This continuity of progress in response to good teaching and learning reflects good improvement through Years 2 to 4. It shows that good use of assessment and earlier identification of pupils' needs and well-targeted intervention and support, often on a one-to-one basis with a caring adult, is bridging gaps in previous learning. Progress is particularly good in Years 5 and 6, especially as pupils are given greater opportunity and show greater maturity in taking responsibility for their own learning. As a result, overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average, most notably in speaking and listening and in reading and using computers and, more recently, in mathematics. Pupils' attainment in writing is broadly average. While it often shows a good breadth of vocabulary and expression, pupils' writing is too often constrained by underdeveloped handwriting and punctuation skills.

The headteacher has established effective mechanisms for monitoring the quality of provision and to accurately assess pupils' progress. To accomplish this she has developed the leadership roles of staff and encouraged members of the governing body to play a full part in monitoring the work of the school. As a result, self-evaluation is good, focuses on the right priorities and is illustrated by the consistently good teaching and learning across the school. In addition, the acceleration in pupils' progress, now most notably and recently seen in the pupils' above average attainment in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), further demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and residential and other visits. Topics which link subjects together, for example 'Dinosaurs', provide good opportunities to extend pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. However, the curriculum

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does not always include sufficient time for pupils to complete their writing tasks or to work more independently by exploring their own ideas.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To further support the progress pupils make, especially in writing, teachers should:
 - teach a more consistent style of handwriting and develop pupils' punctuation skills more systematically as they move through the school
 - strengthen the quality of the curriculum so that it provides more time for pupils to complete their writing and more opportunities to work independently by setting up lines of enquiry for themselves.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From broadly expected levels of skill on entry, teachers are now ensuring that pupils, equally boys and girls, achieve well and enjoy their time at school. Because of early and effective intervention and support this is equally the case for all groups of pupils, including the more able. Visits to classrooms showed that pupils are particularly responsive to adult questioning and are eager to express their ideas aided by their confident speaking skills. During the whole-class introductory session in an English lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, enthused by a film clip of Doctor Who, pupils rose to the teacher's challenge to create and describe a story setting. Pupils showed an impressive breadth of descriptive terms to illustrate their ideas. They learnt effectively by sharing ideas and their good progress made in the lesson was further illustrated by their quickening response to further computer-generated scenes. Similarly in a mathematics lesson in Years 2 and 3, the pupils learnt well and completed various problem-solving tasks presented as a carousel of activity. For example, they showed improved ability and good progress in using and applying numeracy and problem-solving skills to calculate the cost of a meal in Tudor times. Learning during guided reading sessions also demonstrated good progress, with pupils learning well using laptop computers to compile play scripts of favourite stories and extending word recognition and comprehension skills by sharing and reading stories and discussing characters with adults. As in most other lessons, the open way in which pupils discussed and extended their ideas before they began their writing gave a clear purpose and structure to their work. At times though, pupils' writing is constrained by underdeveloped handwriting, punctuation and independent learning skills, which also results in some pupils taking too long to write down their ideas.

Pupils share very good relationships with each other and with adults and are very courteous to those visiting the school. Pupils greatly enjoy school, say they feel very safe and behave well. They say, 'Teachers help us when we get stuck and everyone around you in this school cares about you.' Consequently, attendance is above average. Pupils adopt very healthy lifestyles and are knowledgeable about healthy eating and the importance of exercise, with many showing a real interest and commitment to sports. Pupils accept responsibility and contribute diligently as members of the school council, supporting charitable events or on the Year 6 committee when helping others at playtimes. However, a few need adult guidance and encouragement to sustain full effort in class, especially when writing. The pupils' mostly above average levels of skill, good

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achievement and very good relationships prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

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	2
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	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?

All staff manage pupils' behaviour effectively and use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking. Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to introduce learning intentions and provide many opportunities through the week to motivate pupils and enrich their learning by using laptop computers. Teachers make good use of the curriculum to engage and interest pupils. Where pupils experience and understand meaningful links across subjects, for example between history and mathematics, they make good progress. This happens, for example, when pupils use computers and take part in role play to study the Ancient Egyptians and the Tudors. Strengths in extra-curricular activity, including breakfast and after-school clubs and especially in sports clubs, further enthuse and benefit pupils through first-hand, practical learning experiences. Consequently, pupils in Year 6 talk knowledgeably about how the Ancient Egyptians used pictures to form their hieroglyphic writing and pupils in Years 2 and 3 show good understanding by explaining that wealthy people during Tudor times enjoyed a far more nutritious diet than poor people.

Teachers in all classes now assess pupils' progress accurately and use the information effectively to identify relevant learning objectives and to plan learning activities that

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enable pupils across the range of abilities to build systematically on previous learning. All staff give good quality oral advice and, in their written marking, identify supportive next steps to help pupils to improve. At times though, teachers' marking does not set high enough expectations and/or promote pupils' handwriting, punctuation and self-evaluation skills rigorously enough. In addition, as pupils themselves stated, and as some unfinished work showed, pupils do not always have enough time to complete their writing and this constrains their progress. Pupils know their literacy and numeracy targets well and this is helping to advance their skills and understanding of words and numbers productively.

Provision for the care, guidance and support and the safeguarding of pupils' welfare are significant strengths of the school. All staff provide high quality pastoral care for the pupils, engage fully with outside specialists such as educational psychologists and are particularly sensitive and effective in helping pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Staff promote good relationships with parents and carers, value the pupils' contributions, respond well to their differing needs and take great care to welcome and induct those newly arriving at the school. Such positive relationships and actions and careful monitoring combine to ensure that pupils enjoy school and attend 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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher promotes the caring ethos of the school strongly and is equally successful in moulding staff and the governing body together as an effective team. Staff at all levels say they feel empowered and hold to high, but realistic, ambitions and support a good drive for further improvement. This shared ambition helps pupils not only to succeed, but also to find enjoyment in learning through, for example, frequent use of computers. Good governance also plays a strong role, alongside the headteacher, in meeting statutory requirements, including excellent safeguarding procedures. More recently these have included regularly updated risk assessments to oversee complex repairs to flood damaged outdoor areas and rigorous steps to safeguard the pupils' increasing use of computers.

The school develops good links with parents and carers and outside agencies, which are particularly effective in supporting pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Self-evaluation is effective because all staff have a much more informed understanding of school data and are better equipped to rectify any variations in the progress of different groups. As a result, the pupils' good progress, especially now in mathematics, shows that the school provides good value for money. Some other initiatives, for example to lift pupils' writing skills to at least national expectations and to involve parents and carers

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more in helping their children to learn, have not yet been in place long enough to impact fully.

The school promotes equality of opportunity well and works diligently to overcome discrimination. These are evident in the improved and now good provision in all classes, which enables pupils to derive equal benefit as they move through the school. The school is a close community and promotes community cohesion effectively through assemblies, teaching French, village and church events and by contributing to national and international charities; there is also a productive visit to London's more culturally diverse community and good links with local schools. The school is actively seeking ways to link with more ethnically diverse parts of the United Kingdom to improve its promotion of community cohesion.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision is well led and ensures that children's welfare is safeguarded in an exemplary manner. Staff make good use of detailed and accurate assessments of the children's skills and promote very good links with parents and carers to make sure that the children's individual needs are met effectively in this mixed-age class. Adult led learning is consistently effective. As a result, children learn and make good progress across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Free access to the relatively newly created, well-equipped and secure outdoor area enables children to experience and benefit from a well-balanced range of adult-led learning and activities chosen by the children themselves. Occasionally, adults do not make best use of children's engagement in freely chosen activities to extend speaking, number and independent learning skills. Even so, the children's developing love of learning and great enjoyment of school are clearly seen, for

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example, in their joyful discovery of 'fossils' in the outdoor sand tray and their role play in their indoor 'Dinosaur museum'.

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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a broadly average response rate to the questionnaire. A very large majority of parents and carers, including those who spoke to an inspector, expressed agreement with all the statements. Almost all parents and carers agreed that teaching is good and that children are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. Additional written comments were also mostly very positive and are endorsed by inspection findings. A few concerns mainly about taking account of parents' and carers' views and meeting pupils' needs were noted to have been addressed diligently by the school and were not evident during this inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Veryan Church of England 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	59	14	34	2	5	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	25	61	14	34	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	56	15	37	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	44	19	46	3	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	26	63	14	34	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	54	16	39	1	2	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	54	17	44	0	0	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)	19	46	19	46	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	59	11	27	5	12	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	56	14	34	3	7	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	54	12	29	5	12	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	28	68	7	17	2	5	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	59	13	32	1	2	1	2

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).

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">■ 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.



18 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Veryan Cof E Primary School, Veryan, TR2 5QA

Please accept our thanks for welcoming us so warmly during our recent inspection of your school. You were all extremely polite and helpful and greatly appreciate your school. Much thanks to the members of the school council who talked to me so eagerly. You said that you enjoy school because of the many friendships that you make and the high quality of care that the staff provide for you. Your very positive responses in the questionnaire also show that you feel very safe in school. We found that Veryan is a good school that continues to improve.

These are the other main things we found.

- You make good progress as you move through the school, especially now in mathematics after some good improvement this year. An increasing number of you are doing particularly well in using computers, in speaking and listening and in reading.
- You behave well and enjoy your learning because you do a lot of interesting things and because teachers value your efforts and teach you well.
- You live very healthily and contribute well to your school and community.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors work well together as a team and are good at bringing improvement.

To help the school to improve we have asked the teachers to help you to make better progress, especially in writing, by improving your handwriting and punctuation. In addition we have asked the teachers to give you more time to complete your writing and to set up and write about your ideas and enquiries.

You can help by keeping your great enthusiasm for school and trying even harder to finish your work in good time.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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