

Boscastle Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111929
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	378395
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Dennett

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keirean Kehoe
Headteacher	Sarah Duffy
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2009
School address	Fore Street Boscastle PL35 0AU
Telephone number	01840 250329
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, observed three teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Informal discussions were held with parents and carers before school. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at policies, pupils' books, safeguarding records and evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning. Twenty questionnaires from parents and carers were examined.

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

- Whether or not more-able pupils were making sufficient progress in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 1.
- How well pupils were using their mathematical thinking skills across the curriculum.
- To what degree marking is being used to inform pupils what they can do to improve their work and move on to the next level in their learning.
- How well the governing body supports and challenges the management of the school, based on a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Whether or not provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the outdoor area, is having a positive effect on children's attainment and progress.

Information about the school

Boscastle is a much smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. Nearly all pupils come from a White British background. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; most of whom have specific learning difficulties. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school holds Healthy Schools status.

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

Boscastle is a good school. Children settle in quickly and progress well in the Reception Year. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in English and mathematics is above average. This represents good progress from their starting points. There has been a marked improvement since the last inspection as a result of effective leadership, management and governance. Attainment has risen at Key Stage 2 and the quality of teaching has improved. Accurate self-evaluation is based on the detailed analysis of data and current targets are challenging. All the issues raised by the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. All these factors indicate that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Teaching is consistently good and, as a result, the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in lessons, as seen during the inspection. This is because teachers have developed a consistent approach to the effective use of assessment in lessons. Added to this, support given to those pupils who may be potentially vulnerable or at risk of falling behind in their work is timely and well targeted. Occasionally, in a few Key Stage 1 numeracy lessons, insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' mathematical language. Consequently, some pupils make less progress in using and applying their mathematical thinking skills. More-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged at Key Stage 1 to attain the levels of which they are capable.

Pupils say the curriculum is interesting and parents and carers report that their children are keen to continue learning at home, for example researching information for topics. The effective relationships that exist within the school community and the high expectations of behaviour from staff underpin pupils' positive attitudes to learning. A strong feature, resulting from the good care afforded pupils, is the emphasis the school places on moral and social values. As a result, pupils treat one another and all adults in the school community with friendly respect. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons and, occasionally, outstanding. Attendance is broadly average and is adversely affected by the number of families taking holidays during term-time.

Since the last inspection, the robust leadership and management have promoted the contribution of the governing body, which now plays a key role in continuing to improve the school's performance and helping shape its strategic direction. However, much of its monitoring of the school's provision is informal and is only carried out by a few members. The findings of the visits have only recently been recorded. Links

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with parents and carers and the community are strong and the school benefits from these close ties.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in Key Stage 1 by:
 - increasing the challenge for more-able pupils so that they attain the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics
 - placing greater emphasis on developing pupils' application of their mathematical thinking skills across the curriculum.

- Improve the involvement of the governing body in monitoring provision in the school by:
 - giving more formal opportunities for members to visit lessons and talk to staff
 - improving the recording of monitoring visits in accordance with the model currently being trialled.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When children start in Reception what they can do varies between individuals, but is generally below the levels expected for four-year-olds. In a literacy lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils quickly moved forward in their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to work out unfamiliar words. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 read fluently and their writing skills are developing well. However pupils' mathematical skills are not as high as their literacy skills.

As pupils move through Key Stage 2, progress in English and mathematics accelerates. Pupils produce high quality work in these lessons and they achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically discuss solutions to mathematical problems, showing how they are applying their knowledge of multiplication. In English, pupils confidently use sophisticated vocabulary when talking about how to construct complex sentences. They make sentences with embedded clauses and explain what these are accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities produce work of a good standard. Results in national tests show that they perform better than national expectations. School tracking shows that any gaps in achievement for different groups of pupils continue to narrow. Pupils enjoy their learning, want to do well and try hard to succeed. These positive attitudes mean that pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Pupils feel safe at school. They are knowledgeable about a wide range of safety issues, including internet safety. Pupils get on well with each other in lessons and at playtimes. They report that lessons are very rarely disrupted by poor behaviour and any incidents at break times are dealt with swiftly. Pupils have a good knowledge of what contributes to a healthy lifestyle and this is well supported by school activities, and reflected in the school's Healthy Schools award. The effective 'playground

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committee’ leads the way in how pupils contribute to the school community. Pupils are very much involved in the local community. For example, pupils plan and organise their involvement in the local duck race. In this way, pupils are developing good decision-making skills.

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	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

There are some strong aspects in the quality of the school’s provision, for example the good and outstanding teaching of English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 observed during the inspection. This confirms the school’s view of lessons and explains pupils’ good progress. The most effective teaching makes learning fun and challenges pupils to think in depth. Teachers use different methods for questioning pupils, for example tailoring questions at an individual level, which keeps everyone on their toes. The best lessons are characterised by pupils’ shared enjoyment of the pursuit of new learning and pleasure in achievement.

Staff plan work which mostly takes account of how pupils have done in previous lessons and the range of ability in each class. Teachers mark pupils’ work carefully and give helpful pointers to improvement. The best marking analyses pupils’ work in detail so they know how successful they have been. As a result, pupils are ambitious to move to the next level in their learning. Working walls in the classroom, such as for letter sounds, support pupils’ learning well.

The curriculum covers all that is required well. It is enhanced by visits out of school

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

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and visitors in school. Over the year, the school offers extra-curricular clubs which cater for a wide range of pupils’ interests. Music lessons are offered to pupils and they say they really enjoy music. The visual arts are promoted well and many examples of high quality artwork are to be seen around the school. The provision for physical education is enhanced by the school’s involvement in sports activities with other schools.

Interventions in Key Stage 2 for pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties are effective in moving them forward in their learning. The work of support staff makes a useful contribution to their progress, although very occasionally they are not sufficiently supportive during introductory sessions. The way in which the curriculum themes weave in the school’s ethos of care and respect is effective. Consequently, the quality of guidance offered to pupils for their personal development is consistently good. Older pupils say they feel well prepared for the next phase of their education and enjoy their visits to the local secondary school in the summer term. The school works constantly with parents and carers and the educational welfare officer to promote good attendance. Although broadly average, attendance has improved slightly since the last inspection.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher works well with the small number of other staff to create an effective and forward-looking school. They have promoted a culture of equal opportunity successfully, where every pupil feels part of a family. One pupil said, ‘We love being here because everyone gets on so well.’ Parents and carers echo these sentiments. The headteacher has improved the quality of teaching and learning by focusing on a consistent approach to the use of assessment in all three classes. In this way, the school has demonstrated an ambitious drive to ensure all pupils have an equal chance to achieve as well as they can.

The school reviews performance data to set challenging targets, and is confident pupils will continue to achieve well. A strength in the staff team is the regular dialogue relating to pupils’ continuing progress. This means that parents and carers are well informed about their children’s progress. Decisions about where to place additional support are underpinned by a careful review of the progress pupils make. The school has good relationships with a range of partners and these widen pupils’ horizons, for example, enabling visits from those of different faiths. Consequently,

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from a rich curriculum, including national and international themes, youngsters from different families get on well with one another. Community cohesion is good overall, although the school has no regular international links.

The governing body has a precise understanding of the strengths of the school. Governors are well informed about the progress made in addressing the school’s priorities through the headteacher’s reports. Their own monitoring of provision is largely informal and until recently, has not been recorded. The governing body has made a good contribution to the school’s improvement and continues to balance challenge and support well. It has a clear vision for its future and makes an informed and purposeful contribution to development planning. The school integrates issues related to safety into the curriculum so that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe. In this way, the governing body has ensured that the requirements for safeguarding pupils are met well.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress at this stage and by the end of their first year in school they are well prepared for Key Stage 1, although their communication, language and literacy skills are still below average. They settle into school life quickly, understand classroom routines and have good relationships with adults. Children make friends and learn happily, both indoors and outside. Out of doors children enthusiastically work together to make rangoli patterns with seed and beans. They discuss what they have done with the teaching assistant and compare their work with each other. Their communication skills are developed well.

Adults are sensitive to children as individuals and promote their well-being and

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learning well. The classroom and outdoor area offer a lively and welcoming environment for learning. Children initiate their own learning. This means that children choose eagerly from a range of worthwhile activities which promote communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and problem solving.

The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that staff constantly review children’s learning opportunities and are skilled in using assessment to plan new activities. Consequently, children achieve well. Partnerships with other professionals are strong and links with the nearby pre-school are good.

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

Just over half of all parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is above the national response rate. They were overwhelmingly positive in their support for the school and how well it educates and looks after their children. Parents and carers commented particularly upon the high quality of leadership, good teaching and the effective care of pupils. This was summed up typically by a parent who commented, ‘I cannot praise Boscastle School and its staff highly enough.’ A very few parents and carers felt that they would like some more information about their children’s progress. Inspection findings indicate that the school provides parents and carers with good information about their children’s progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Boscastle Community 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 inspector received 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 50 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	85	3	15	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	16	80	3	15	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	85	3	15	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	80	4	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	14	70	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	80	4	20	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)	16	80	4	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	14	70	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	60	8	40	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	55	9	45	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	85	3	15	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	18	90	2	10	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



28 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Boscastle Community Primary School, Boscastle PL35 0AU

Thank you for welcoming me on my recent visit. I came to see how well you are all learning. I enjoyed my two days at your happy, friendly school. Thank you for talking to me about your work and what it is like to be a pupil at your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

You, your parents and carers, and teachers told us that Boscastle is a good school and you are right, it is. You are taught well and you make good progress in English and mathematics. Occasionally, in Key Stage, a few of you could make even more progress.

The adults take good care of you. They help you to grow up well, to learn how to keep healthy and safe and to care for each other. You enjoy your lessons and the activities you are offered. Your teachers and the school's governing body all want to make your school even better. I have suggested that in Key Stage 1 they increase the challenge for those of you who can get the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. I have also said that they should help you make better use of your understanding of mathematics in other subjects. I have asked members of the governing body to visit the school more regularly and make sure they write down what they see.

For you, the most important things are to carry on working hard, making your contribution to school life, and to continue growing into caring and responsible young people. You have all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Dennett
Lead inspector

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