

Truro Nursery School

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The headteacher, senior staff and members of the governing body have an outstanding vision for the school and have done much to establish its fine reputation and maintain high standards of teaching and achievement.
- Children make extremely good progress across all areas of learning. They do particularly well in learning to get along with other children and adults as well as in acquiring exceptionally good speaking and listening skills.
- They rapidly gain early reading, writing and number skills.
- Teaching is outstanding. Staff plan together as a whole team and carefully consider what the children enjoy and need to learn next so the children are enthused and inspired.
- The stunning outdoor area contributes extremely well to children's learning and development. It provides a wealth of exciting opportunities for children to investigate, explore and question the natural world.
- The addition of Forest School activities has made an excellent outdoor provision even better.
- High-quality leadership, monitoring, management and governance ensure excellent teamwork and consistent approaches to teaching and care practised by all staff. This strongly enhances children's learning and development.
- The school has many visitors from other settings to observe its well-renowned good practice. Staff share their expertise well and lead much training in the local area.
- The staff's high morale shows that they feel part of a friendly, highly effective team, committed to providing very high quality learning experiences for the children. They are justly proud of their school; one member of staff said, 'I am very proud to be part of the Truro Nursery School team. It's a joy to come to work.'
- Behaviour is exemplary, and children concentrate well for long periods of time. They become absorbed in activities they have chosen for themselves as well as those led by adults. Parents are confident their children are safe.
- Children in this nursery develop a real thirst for knowledge and a love of learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector spent two days in the school and completed seven observations of teaching sessions, accompanied by the headteacher during most of them.
- The inspector observed the full breadth of the school's indoor and outdoor activities and talked to children at work and play.
- The inspector met with a group of governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders and also took note of 12 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspector took account of the 33 responses to the online survey (Parent View) as well as an analysis of the school's own survey of parents' views. She also spoke informally with a number of parents and grandparents as they collected their children from school.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on children's progress as well as the county's comparative data, school improvement planning, long and short term teachers' planning, leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governors' meetings and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Anne Wesley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school, which caters for children aged between three and four years of age in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is broadly average in size in comparison with similar settings.
- The school runs a morning and afternoon session but offers flexible wraparound care and is open from 8am until 5.30pm.
- Truro Nursery was designated as a rural early excellence centre; as such, it provides a range of services in the area at a number of locations. Services include 'stay and play together' sessions, family learning programmes and a range of training opportunities for other providers.
- The majority of children are of White British heritage and very few are learning English as an additional language. A small proportion have disabilities or special educational needs; these are mostly speech and language difficulties.
- The school is a strategic partner in the Cornwall Teaching School. It has achieved the supporting communication standard ICAN accreditation' (an Early talk programme) and part of the British Council Comenius partnership so has links with nurseries in Sweden, Spain and the Czech Republic

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Involve the children even more in their own learning by allowing them to develop their own individual targets for progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Most children join the nursery with skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected for their age; however, there is always a significant group who have below what might be expected in communication skills. Rapid progress means that many children leave the nursery with skills that exceed the expectations for their age.
- Local authority statistics on the results at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, collected over the past four years, show that this nursery consistently outperforms other settings, both locally and nationally.
- The learning of the most able children is extended through more demanding activities and tasks. They have a thirst for knowledge and rise to the challenges set and make rapid progress. For example, a small group were working on making a chart for 'visiting times' in the role play hospital. They drew clocks and discussed in depth where the hands should go, even trying to explain how long the visit would last.
- Disabled children and those with special educational needs make excellent progress. Early assessments ensure that staff know which children need extra support so that work begins rapidly in helping them become successful learners.
- Language and communication skills quickly develop because there is a wealth of real experiences to talk about. All adults seize every opportunity to further children's speaking and understanding skills through careful questioning, discussion, by joining in their role play and by providing interesting practical experiences. For example, it was not good enough for a child to say 'It's a big bird'; although the child did not know it was a pigeon, after some prompting, he ended up saying, 'I think it is a big robin that has lost its red tummy.'
- Early reading and writing skills are developed very rapidly, with many meaningful opportunities for mark making. Children naturally choose to write labels, make lists and use clipboards for planning their creative projects.
- Mathematical skills develop equally rapidly. Whilst telling a story about increasing numbers of animals on a page, children were encouraged to think about 'more than' and the more able 'how many more?' In their play, good links are made with their knowledge of mathematics; two girls fishing in the water tray successfully matched the fish they caught to numbered pebbles.
- Children are very well prepared for moving on to Reception classes because they gain high levels of independence and extremely well developed communication skills. Adults stand back to encourage them to do things for themselves. Adults' expectations are high, with the result that children show a high level of responsibility and need very little guidance in preparing the daily snack for each other and will happily persevere in putting on their outdoor dungarees because they have learnt the satisfaction of doing things for themselves.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding and enables all to learn most effectively. Staff are relentless in ensuring every child succeeds.
- All staff have a very sound knowledge of how young children learn and ensure that sessions are based on constant evaluations of children's needs and interests. The way teachers plan learning is a real strength of the nursery, focusing very well on continual assessment of what the children need to take their learning forward, thus ensuring the rapid progress children make. A key worker had noticed an able group of children were beginning to use a wider range of descriptive language so the planning for the following day included an 'environmental table' with a range of interesting objects and the group work was planned to encourage full descriptions.
- Children are also involved in planning activities and the large floor books showing their floor plan of the 'Hospital' and list of the resources they would need explain well why they are so motivated by what is on offer to them in the nursery.

- Activities inside and outside are extremely imaginative and motivate children so that they want to learn. A forest school lesson exemplified this perfectly when children were inspired to explore, look closely and describe what they could see, hear and touch. They demonstrate a thirst for knowledge; a child was examining catkins very closely, not knowing what they were and, after some thought, decided that they were caterpillars hanging from the tree.
- Children's learning journeys give a detailed account of the outstanding progress they make. They are also a source of great pride to the children who love to discuss the things they have done and what they were learning. They are beginning to discuss what they might want to learn next; developing this would involve them further in their own learning.
- Parents are kept well informed about how to support learning at home. At the end of each session, information is put out on a noticeboard about the learning that has taken place. Parents find this very helpful as they know what they might continue at home.
- Storytelling, reading books, discussions about characters, searching for information and conversations about book preferences all foster a love of books and an enthusiasm for learning to read. Early reading skills are taught superbly, with children listening to environmental sounds and trying to make the sound themselves, preparing them extremely well for learning the sounds letters make and then blending the sounds to read and spell the words. Even the youngest children are already making links between letters and the sounds they make.
- Teachers use every opportunity to teach children skills they can use in different ways. Children were counting animals on a page and the teacher suggested that they touch each one as they counted it so they knew if they had left any out. Later, in a mathematics session, they were using this strategy as they were doing adding and taking away with a set of plastic ladybirds.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children show a high level of engagement and interest in their learning. They are happy to come to nursery and eager to explore the exciting indoor and outdoor environments; they are very curious about the world around them.
- They happily make choices of where to play and learn and can confidently explain their choices. They learn to persevere with tasks and collaborate well with their friends. They develop independence and confidence in their learning, which has a positive impact on their outstanding achievement.
- The behaviour of the children is outstanding; they are equally well behaved indoors and outdoors and whether they are engaged in activities they have chosen themselves or are led by adults.
- Relationships in the nursery are excellent. Children know they are well cared for and that they will be listened to and their view respected; as a result, children quickly learn to respect and care for each other. The calm and purposeful atmosphere generated by staff is mirrored by the children.
- Children are very familiar with the nursery routines. They are expected to behave well and they do. Parents agree that the behaviour in the nursery is especially good and, as one parent said, 'they learn quickly what they are expected to do and then nothing gets in the way of them learning.'
- The school's work to keep the children safe is outstanding. Discussions with parents, results of Parent View and the school's own survey confirm that parents are confident that their children are safe in the nursery.
- Children display an extremely good awareness of safety. They talk of the 'safety circle', a phrase used in forest school lessons, and know that denotes an area to be viewed with caution; as a child explained, 'it tells me where to stand to be safe'. They have a good range of opportunities to learn about safe behaviours so they safely use computers, scissors, art resources and knives when preparing snacks.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. For example, the contact

the nursery has with nurseries in different countries has given the children an insight into different cultures.

- The school promotes equality of opportunity, positive relationships and tackles discrimination rigorously. The staff ensure all children are given the chance to succeed and children are taught to accept and celebrate differences.
- Children attend regularly and parents are made aware of the importance of attendance. All absence is followed and support put in place if necessary.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school has maintained its momentum since the previous inspection. Under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the considerable strengths noted previously have been built on. Her exemplary leadership is underpinned by her knowledge of the school. Self-evaluation is securely based on first-hand observation of all learning activities.
- The leadership of teaching is outstanding. Senior leaders have a fierce ambition for continual improvement. The performance of teachers and other staff is excellently managed and they respond very positively to chances to further develop their skills. All members of staff have areas of responsibility and are held to account for them. Senior leaders use their checks on teaching to ensure that staff pay is linked to the quality of teaching and the continual improvement in children's achievement.
- The high calibre of the quality of teaching in the nursery is well known and they share their practice generously by leading much local training and welcoming many visitors into the classes. The 'stay and play' outreach sessions held in locations around the local area are very much appreciated by the families who use them and many children settle into school very quickly as a result of this very early introduction to education.
- Children's progress is monitored extremely well. Adults have a clear picture of where each child is achieving success and where they need support. Children are encouraged to reflect on their learning and think for themselves about what progress they have made and what they might need to do next. They are regularly consulted about what they would like to learn. Staff ensure that every child has the chance to succeed.
- The school has excellent links with other schools, enabling it to participate in high quality training delivered by national experts. The links made with nurseries in other parts of Europe through the British Council project further enhance what these staff can offer their children. For example, seeing children at play outside in Sweden showed the staff fully the potential for their 'Forest School' provision.
- The curriculum provides many exciting activities to appeal to the children's interest and to widen their view of the world. The children begin to get an understanding of cultural diversity and learn that the world around them is full of interest and excitement. Their time in nursery is enhanced by lots of trips out and visitors who bring new experiences to them.
- The local authority, which has confidence in the strong leadership, provides a light touch support to this outstanding nursery
- Safeguarding is rigorous and effective and meets statutory requirements. Ensuring children's health and well-being has high priority and all the measures are of a high quality.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body receives detailed evaluations of the specific steps taken to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning. Governors understand data very well and ask searching questions. As a result, they know well that the children's progress compares very favourably with other schools and that all groups achieve equally well. Governors also make frequent visits to the school, often talk to parents and children and watch the children learning so they know for themselves the high quality of the teaching in the nursery. This also enables the governors to support training and recruitment, and ensure that staff performance and pay

link well with the school priorities. They ensure staff are rewarded for teaching well and their pupils making good progress. They have seen the school through some difficult times financially and have supported the headteacher well in securing financial security. They are fully involved in school self-evaluation and development planning and ensure that they carry out all their statutory duties.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	111790
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	434589

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Douce
Headteacher	Helen Sills
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 June 2011
Telephone number	01872 274693
Fax number	01872 274693
Email address	head@truro-nursery.cornwall.sch.uk

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