



Coverack Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111822
Local Authority Cornwall
Inspection number 289063
Inspection date 8 February 2007
Reporting inspector Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Hill
School category	Community		Coverack
Age range of pupils	4–11		Helston TR12 6SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01326 280529
Number on roll (school)	40	Fax number	01326 280529
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Mita
		Headteacher	Martin Dalton
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
4–11	8 February 2007	289063

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Coverack Primary is a much smaller than average size school. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. The school has very few pupils with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is about average. The school provides for children from a wide rural area including some from Travellers families. A significant number of parents are employed in local tourism which is seasonal work. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Children's attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year group.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of Coverack Primary School is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is good and their academic achievement is satisfactory. Parents hold very positive views about the school and give it good support. As a parent wrote, 'Everyone gets on well together at Coverack School'.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. These have been effective in promoting pupils' personal development. The headteacher, with staff, has created a positive and welcoming school atmosphere which is appreciated by pupils, parents and the community. The school has correctly identified the need to raise achievement in writing and improve information and communication technology (ICT). Good progress is being made in ICT but leaders are aware that there is more to be done to raise achievement in writing. Subject leadership responsibilities have been effectively shared in this small school and the roles are developing satisfactorily.

Satisfactory teaching and a sound curriculum enable pupils to make satisfactory progress overall. Children in Reception get off to a good start and make good progress because of effective provision. Teachers have good relationships with pupils. Instructions and explanations are clear and informative. Pupils make good progress when they are challenged and tasks are well matched to their abilities. However, this is not always the case. In a few lessons, pace and challenge are not demanding enough, particularly for the more able, and learning slows. Raising achievement in writing is a whole-school priority. Although satisfactory progress is being made, the range of writing opportunities provided, particularly those in other subjects, is insufficient. Assessment information is not used consistently well to set individual learning targets to help pupils improve. The marking of pupils' work does not always provide clear guidance to help pupils improve their work. In a school of this size, the number of pupils in each year group is usually in single figures and one pupil's performance represents a high proportion of the year group's performance. As a result, standards can fluctuate enormously from year group to year group. In the current Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

Good pastoral care and support contribute to pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy school and show a keen interest in the activities provided. The positive atmosphere and very good relationships give rise to good behaviour. Pupils are friendly, polite and get on very well with others. New arrivals soon settle into Coverack's family atmosphere. Attendance levels are below average, but the school works hard to promote and monitor good attendance. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of healthy foods and the need for regular exercise. Pupils are reasonably well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing by providing a wider range of opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes.

- Ensure that all lessons maintain a brisk pace and that tasks are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Use assessment, marking and target setting consistently to improve pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children in Reception make good progress in all areas of learning. Standards can fluctuate enormously in each year group because of the small numbers of pupils. For example, during the past five years, standards in Year 2 have ranged from well above average to well below. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in reading because of effective strategies for developing their reading skills. Pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 shows that progress in writing is improving as a result of the school's drive on writing. Writing is currently a whole-school area for improvement. The range of writing opportunities is being increased but it remains limited, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their writing skills in other subjects are often missed. Pupils with learning difficulties make sound progress, but the more able pupils are not always challenged enough. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are considerate, friendly and polite. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. A group of pupils commented, 'We enjoy school and learning is fun'. Behaviour throughout the school is good because of clear expectations and very good relationships. Attendance levels are below average because some parents who are employed in the tourism industry tend to take their family holidays during term time and through the transient nature of a few Travellers families. The school has effective systems to monitor and promote good attendance. Pupils lead healthy lifestyles. They speak knowledgeably about healthy diets such as the importance of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. They appreciate the need for regular exercise. Pupils possess strong moral and social values. They are keen to help others who are less well off than themselves. This is demonstrated by their success in raising funds for well known charities. Pupils' acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills is sound. These skills, together with their good social skills, prepare them adequately for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

All teachers have very good relationships with pupils and ensure a positive climate for learning. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear and informative, and promote learning well. Pupils are attentive and respond well to the teachers' questioning. Teaching and learning are more effective when expectations of pupils' learning are high and the lessons maintain a brisk pace. In addition, pupils make good progress when challenged by demanding tasks. However, this good practice is not consistent in all lessons. In a few lessons, expectations are not as high and tasks are not matched well to pupils' abilities particularly the more able. When this happens, pupils are not challenged enough and the pace of learning slows. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and contribute well to pupils' progress, particularly those with learning difficulties. There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work. It does not always state why a pupil's work is good or provide guidance on how pupils might improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. Provision for ICT is much improved and is used well to support teaching and learning. Opportunities for pupils to write in a range of styles and in other subjects are improving but are still not sufficient. Despite being a priority for improvement, the amount of pupils' writing on display is limited. Visits out of school and a camp for Years 3 to 6 add to pupils' interest and enjoyment. A successful gardening club, run by the school, has won local awards. The approach to personal, social and health education, together with an emphasis on responsible behaviour, contributes well to pupils' personal development. Healthy lifestyles and staying safe receive good attention. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides a good range of stimulating activities to promote good learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good pastoral care, guidance and support have a major influence on pupils' good personal development. Adults know the pupils well and have established very good relationships with them. New arrivals settle quickly into the school's positive ethos. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective so pupils are safe and secure at school. Pupils are very responsible and keep themselves safe.

Although satisfactory, the systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress are not as robust as those for supporting their personal development. Teachers do not always use assessment well enough to guide learning. Teachers' use of assessment to plan learning and set challenging individual learning targets is inconsistent. As a result, not all pupils are clear about what they are working towards in order to improve their writing and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management have been effective in promoting a positive school climate, good personal development and establishing good partnerships with parents and the local community. However, leaders and managers have been less effective in promoting consistently good teaching and pupils' good achievement. Since the last inspection, the school has shared subject responsibilities amongst the staff more effectively. The roles of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating their areas are developing satisfactorily. Maternity leave and staff absence has slowed some of the school's developments, particularly in English. The English leader has returned and is taking steps to continue the drive on writing. There is good teamwork among the staff and a clear commitment to school improvement.

School self-evaluation and development planning are satisfactory. The school has a reasonable view of its strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring and development of teaching is not fully established. Good practice is shared and the school is beginning to tackle shortcomings. Leaders have correctly identified raising achievement in literacy and improving ICT as key priorities. The school is wisely focusing on a few priorities. The English leader is aware of the importance of monitoring pupils' work and teachers' planning to check how well the planning for improving writing is being implemented. Under the direction of a new and knowledgeable ICT leader, the school is making good improvements in provision which is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and make a positive contribution to the school. Improvements since the last inspection and the capacity for further improvement are satisfactory.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I found out. Coverack Primary is a satisfactory school. The positive atmosphere and the way you treat each other are real strengths. The school is soundly led and teaching and learning are satisfactory.

These things were strengths of the school

- The school has a positive and welcoming atmosphere.
- Children in Reception get off to a good start.
- You clearly enjoy school and the activities offered.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress in reading.
- You behave well and you are considerate, friendly and polite.
- Facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) have improved and you use these well to support your learning.
- You get on very well with other pupils and adults.
- The staff know you well and you receive good care and support from them.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

These are the things the school has been asked to improve

- Some of you could make more progress in writing and your teachers are working hard to make this happen.
- Sometimes your teachers could challenge you more and ensure that the lesson moves on at a good pace.
- Sharper learning targets and clear marking could help you make faster progress, especially in writing.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.