



# Mount Hawke Community Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 111868  
**Local Authority** Cornwall  
**Inspection number** 289081  
**Inspection date** 19 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Alexander Paul Baxter

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 address</b>	Rodda's Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Mount Hawke
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Truro TR4 8BA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01209 890230
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	190	<b>Fax number</b>	01209 891742
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Martin Woodley
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Burcher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This school is below average in size. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and all pupils are fluent English speakers. The number of pupils who have free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average, but is higher in some year groups than others. Children's attainment on entry, although variable, generally matches the level expected for their age.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has made very good improvements since the last inspection. The improvements have been brought about through the excellent leadership of the headteacher who is very effectively supported by senior staff and the governors. They have successfully adopted a team approach that ensures that all staff and parents are fully involved in the life of the school. Parents are particularly supportive of the school; one typical written comment was, 'This school provides a completely supportive educational environment'. Other comments included, 'We like the way children learn independence and social skills as well as doing well academically'.

In response to excellent care, support and guidance, the pupils' personal development and well-being are of the highest quality. The pupils are kind, considerate and extremely well behaved. They commit themselves wholeheartedly to their work and play and really enjoy their time and do well at school. In keeping with the school's ethos of respecting one's-self and others, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very strong.

Achievement by pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is outstanding. By the time they leave school standards are above average in English and very high in mathematics and science. The progress made by the Year 6 pupils in 2005 in Years 3 to 6 was in the top 6% of all schools. The very high standards in mathematics and science reflect the high quality of teaching and academic guidance through the school and the pupils' commitment to learning. Pupils say, 'Teachers are always willing to explain things again to make sure we understand'.

The quality of the teaching and the curriculum is outstanding and accounts for the even better achievement of very able Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science in the national tests in 2006. The strengthened creativity of the curriculum, incorporating, for example, topics such as 'Global Awareness Week', has a similar impact on the pupils' personal qualities as that on their academic skills.

Children make a good start in the Reception Year where they make generally good progress. However, their independent learning is constrained, on occasion, by the limited equipment and opportunities provided in the outdoor play area. The good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, but pupils' handwriting skills by the end of Year 2 are not good enough.

The leadership and management are outstanding. The school's success lies in the extremely effective way it evaluates its impact on pupils' achievements, both academic and personal, and the subsequent and equally successful way that it brings about improvement. These are the qualities that give the school an excellent capacity to make even more improvements in the future.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' handwriting by the end of Year 2.

- Improve the equipment and learning opportunities provided in the outdoor play area for children in Reception.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils achieve outstandingly well by the time they leave the school. This stems from the consistently high quality teaching, which has a cumulative and very beneficial impact on pupils' learning and progress.

Most children generally have the expected level of skills when they start school, but this can vary from year to year. Often several children start with less well-developed communication, language and literacy skills and this makes a difference to the standards that they ultimately achieve. By the time they leave school standards are above average in English and very high in maths and science.

Children make good progress in Reception. Many exceed expectations in personal, social and emotional skills and attain the expected levels in other areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Good, and often very good, progress continues through Years 1 and 2, where teachers use real life experiences to build on previous learning. Standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, but the quality of handwriting is too low and does not match the quality of what is written. Pupils make outstanding progress through Years 3 to 6, as their developing skills enable them to learn independently and respond to very challenging and stimulating teaching.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. Pupils become confident, mature learners who have a very high regard for each other. They are proud of their school and appreciate the stimulating opportunities offered to them. This was seen in pupils' responses to a visit by older pupils from the local secondary school, including several ex-pupils of Mount Hawke. They listened most attentively, reflecting on the underlying message of the danger of fire, and then applauded spontaneously at exactly the right moment to congratulate their visitors.

Pupils say, 'Everyone here gets along together'. Their behaviour is exemplary, reflecting the fine example of the caring adults who work in the school. Attendance is slightly above the national average, owing in no small measure to the pupils' great enjoyment of school and the headteacher's diligence in dissuading parents from taking holidays during term time. Pupils live up to their 'Healthy Schools Award'. They are very aware of safe lifestyles and talk knowledgeably about healthy diets. Pupils make a very good contribution to the local community by supporting initiatives such as the opening of the village green and inviting members of the community to attend their celebration assemblies. The school council promotes charitable fund raising for the wider community, initiates events, such as talent shows, and helps to bring about

improvements to some outdoor facilities. The pupils' well-developed skills in evaluating their own efforts and working independently prepare them fully for their future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers and their assistants promote excellent relationships with the pupils and encourage high expectations for attainment and behaviour. However, in Reception and Years 1 and 2, expectations of pupils' handwriting are not always consistently high enough. Pupils' contributions are encouraged and valued. Lessons are typified by the precise way teachers share what the lesson is about with the pupils; as a consequence, pupils become even more committed and accomplished learners. From Reception to Year 6, teachers use a wealth of very effective practical learning activities often linked to everyday experiences; for example in Years 1 and 2, when investigating shapes, and the current emphasis in all classes, on developing pupils' writing through 'Exciting Writing'.

Teachers use assessments of the pupils' work extremely well. They set demanding, but achievable challenges, well matched to the pupils' ability. The sharp use of questions to explore pupils' understanding is also used well to assess where pupils are and what they need to learn next.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school provides an outstanding curriculum that is well matched to the pupils' differing needs and capabilities. Occasionally in Reception, children's independent learning is constrained by the limited equipment and opportunities to learn and play in the outdoor area. Pupils' personal development benefits enormously from the excellent range of extra-curricular activities. These include a variety of residential opportunities, such as to the Isles of Scilly, which are much appreciated by pupils and parents alike. These activities are extended by excellent links with the community. The creative dimension of the curriculum is being developed well through 'The Big Project' (including dance, drama, art and music events) and by increasing cross-curricular links developed in writing. For example, pupils in Year 6 wrote about Queen Victoria's feelings as Empress of India. Many opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT), for example to enrich writing, and to learn practically further enrich their skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pastoral care and academic guidance are both exceptionally strong. Parents are very supportive and contribute to the high quality of the guidance given to the pupils. Staff enable pupils to uphold the school's '4 Bs'; 'Be good to yourself. Be a friend to

everyone. Be caring with books and equipment. Be proud of your school.' The excellent procedures for assessing pupils' work are something that have improved significantly since the last inspection. They enable staff to identify pupils' individual and, where applicable special, learning needs very accurately. Staff set clear targets, share them fully with pupils and address them rigorously. The significantly improved achievement by potentially higher attaining pupils in Year 6 and the pupils' excellent personal qualities illustrate this well. Among many appreciative comments, parents agreed that, 'This is an excellent, caring community school'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher sets high expectations and is an inspirational leader. The school's success is rooted in its excellent approach to evaluating its performance and its great effectiveness in addressing weaknesses and bringing about improvement. The school is modest in judging its overall effectiveness as good for it has a very well established and proven track record of bringing about improvement. These include raising pupils' achievements recently in writing, promoting consistency in teaching and developing a stimulating curriculum. Subject coordinators and governors fulfil their roles very effectively. A strong team approach typifies leadership and management; it is committed to raising standards and promoting pupils' well-being and enjoyment of learning.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and visiting your lessons. You were all extremely polite and helpful throughout the day. I would like to let you know that I found your school to be excellent and could sense that you and your parents quite rightly feel the same. Your outstanding achievements and excellent behaviour reflect your hard work and the excellent teaching and care provided by all the adults. Your headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Your school is truly a wonderful place in which to learn and play.

Here are some other highlights

- The way that your individual needs are met and the way you are cared for is of the highest quality.
- Your attitudes to work and the way you care about each other are superb.
- You are encouraged to consider for yourselves how well you are doing and how you could do even better.

What I think could be even better

- Some of you need to improve your handwriting by the end of Year 2.
- The outdoor play area for children in Reception should be a more interesting and exciting place to learn.