



Whitemoor Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111900
Local Authority Cornwall
Inspection number 289092
Inspection date 7 November 2006
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whitemoor
School category	Community		St Austell
Age range of pupils	4-11		PL26 7XQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01726 822274
Number on roll (school)	64	Fax number	01726 822274
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Sharon Hawkey
		Headteacher	J Allen
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a considerably smaller than average primary school. It serves a mainly rural village community, although some pupils choose to attend from further afield. A greater than average percentage of pupils join or leave the school during their school career. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and also the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are above the national average, and well above in some year groups. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Although there is some yearly variation, children start school in Reception with experiences, skills and abilities which are well below those 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: 3

Whitemoor is a satisfactory school that provides a sound education for its pupils. The strong focus on providing good care results in the overwhelming majority of pupils and parents alike praising the school's 'warm and welcoming' atmosphere where everyone is caring and supportive. This is well demonstrated in the way that all children settle quickly, whatever their backgrounds or whether starting in Reception or joining from other schools. Consequently, pupils are good at welcoming new friends and develop caring attitudes to one another - no mean feat with new pupils regularly joining during the year. Good relationships with staff and the wide range of interesting activities mean that pupils much enjoy coming to school and behave well. These are all key factors in pupils' good personal development.

Pupils generally reach standards which are below average by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. It is difficult to compare this school with others because of the small number of pupils in some year groups and the statistical difference that one pupil leaving or joining that year group can make to the results. Nevertheless, from their different but generally very low starting points, all pupils make satisfactory academic progress.

All pupils achieve satisfactorily because teaching overall is satisfactory and the school provides an adequate curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Although all teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, they do not always make sufficient use of this information to plan lessons that challenge pupils enough to achieve well. This prevents achievement from being better than satisfactory. Assessment is used satisfactorily to set targets in English and mathematics. However, these are not always precise enough to focus pupils on what they need to do next to improve, or referred to consistently enough in all teachers' marking to raise standards and achievement and secure good progress.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leaders make regular checks to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve, but the checks are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure a consistency of practice which is good enough to enable pupils to achieve well. Leaders know what is needed to take the school forward and have demonstrated a satisfactory capacity to improve the school further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help teachers make better use of assessment information to plan lessons that always challenge pupils and extend their achievement.
- Ensure that teachers' marking helps pupils understand what to do next to improve their work.
- Improve teaching by developing the expertise of the school's leaders in checking and ensuring consistency of practice across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards fluctuate greatly year by year but the general picture is one where pupils leave school at 11 with below average standards. Pupils nonetheless make satisfactory progress during their time in the school since they generally enter with attainment that is well below that normally found, particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills. They have much catching up to do, and in some cohorts this is greater than in others, partly because these cohorts have a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress in their personal development, which underpins the satisfactory advances they make in their work.

Children make satisfactory overall progress in Reception but make good progress in their personal and social development with most meeting their expected goals in this area. As a result pupils enter Year 1 with some stronger achievements but are overall below the nationally expected levels with particular weaknesses remaining in their literacy skills. Standards for pupils in Year 2 were exceptionally low in both 2005 and 2006, reflecting the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in these years, with over half the pupils in 2006 receiving support. This nonetheless represents satisfactory progress for these pupils from their exceptionally low starting points. Likewise, Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress from their below average starting points to reach below average standards overall in the national tests in recent years. The school works hard to ensure that the high proportion of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 settle quickly and make the same progress in lessons as others. Pupils with learning difficulties in all years make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is good. This is reflected in pupils' enjoyment, positive attitudes and good behaviour. Right from the start in the Reception class, pupils quickly learn to share and help one another because of the focus on developing these skills. Pupils themselves stress this is a key factor underpinning their enjoyment of school, explaining, 'Everyone's considerate and kind'. Consequently, they get along well and help one another, as demonstrated by their readiness to welcome new pupils to the school. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staying safe. Cultural development is satisfactory because pupils' understanding of other cultures and living within multicultural Britain is still developing. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and are proud to have an impact on the life of the school by being members of their school council. Attendance is currently average and has improved over the past year, due to the school's systems and the headteacher's work with parents and other agencies.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and is closely linked to the satisfactory progress pupils make through the school. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Consequently, pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. Behaviour is managed well. Activities planned for mixed-age classes ensure that all pupils are included in lessons. However, teachers do not always take sufficient account of assessment information to adapt work for pupils' capabilities. As a result, in some lessons, pupils could be challenged more and make greater progress in their learning. Teachers' marking is inconsistent and often limited comments fail to make clear to pupils how they can improve their work. Teaching assistants contribute effectively to pupils' learning, particularly when supporting those with learning difficulties, ensuring they make the same progress as others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of mixed age classes. It is enriched by a wide range of well-planned activities outside the school day and the use of visitors and visits which support pupils' learning and also help to foster pupils' positive attitudes. Specialist teachers in music and art, as well as the provision of French and Spanish throughout the school, enrich the curriculum further. The programme of personal, social and health education gives pupils a clear understanding of how to keep healthy and safe and effectively promotes their good personal development.

Pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) abilities are developed satisfactorily and are enabling pupils to develop their skills for the world of work. However, teachers do not always remind pupils to use what they have learned in other subjects or plan enough opportunities to allow pupils to reinforce their skills. This is seen, for example, when the quality of pupils' written work in other subjects does not always match that seen in English lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, care, guidance and support are satisfactory but with considerable strengths in the pastoral care provided for pupils. Most pupils and parents recognise this is a caring school where pupils' well-being is of paramount importance. This is a key factor in pupils' positive attitudes to school. Health and safety procedures are well understood and any pupils who are at risk are quickly identified and supported well. Pupils say that they feel safe and know whom to turn to, if necessary. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good because it allows a significant majority access to a

mainstream curriculum. Outside agencies and parents are involved effectively, particularly when supporting those pupils with statements of special educational need.

The academic guidance and support provided by the school are satisfactory but there are some inconsistencies. Procedures to enable the school to track pupils' progress more carefully are being introduced. However, assessment information is not used well enough in some lessons to inform teachers' planning, set high expectations or help pupils with the next steps in their learning to allow pupils to make better than adequate progress. The quality of marking is satisfactory but it is not used consistently enough to show pupils what they need to do next to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision, which is shared by staff and governors, of a school that is striving to improve and where every child matters. Leaders analyse data to see what works well and what needs to be improved. As a result they are able to accurately judge the school's overall effectiveness, but they are too generous about some aspects of its work. Consequently, the school's understanding of its overall effectiveness is satisfactory rather than good. This is because the checks they make to see how well they are doing are not sufficiently rigorous to allow leaders to improve the quality of teaching, ensuring it is consistently good and raising pupils' achievement. The governors are committed to the school and provide sound support to the staff and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The school husband its resources securely and is adept at fundraising to support its activities. The school takes into account the views of parents, resulting in an overwhelming majority responding positively when asked about the effectiveness of their school.

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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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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 for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We think your school is giving you a satisfactory education. We are pleased to hear that you like school and that the grown-ups are kind and look after you well. We think that they help you to know just what you have to do to keep safe and healthy. We were happy to hear that there are plenty of things for you to take part in, such as the visit to the theatre to see 'The Gruffalo' and your different clubs. We think you are good at welcoming new friends to your school, are polite to adults and behave well.

Whitemoor is a satisfactory school. In order to make your learning even better, we have asked the adults at your school to

- make sure you are given lots of opportunities that stretch you to do your very best
- make sure that teachers are always helping you to know what you need to do to improve your work even more
- keep checking exactly what the school does best and what could be better so that you all learn as well as you possibly can.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.