

Warbstow Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111940
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289107
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk

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 on roll	
School	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Parsons
Headteacher	Elizabeth Morris
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2002
School address	Warbstow Launceston PL15 8UP
Telephone number	01566 781388
Fax number	01566 781388

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school, located in the centre of the village, has three mixed-age classes. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average and almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Warbstow Community Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. There are a number of strengths that are highly valued by all parents. These include the way the children are looked after while in school and the many opportunities they have to extend their experiences and learn in enjoyable and exciting ways. As one parent wrote, 'My children are dreading going into Year 6 because it means that they are in their last year there and don't want to leave'. The underachievement of the last three years, by older pupils in English, is being effectively tackled with the support of the governing body. Strong and effective partnerships with the local authority and other external bodies have been a significant factor in the recent rapid improvement in achievement. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The teaching staff work together well as a team which strengthens the leadership and management in the school. The school knows where its weaknesses still lie but the actions required to address these are not planned systematically to show what the school intends to achieve by specific times in the future. Pupils' achievements are good. Standards are average by the end of Year 6. These pupils have made significant progress in the last two years. The pupils in Year 5 are on course to exceed targets in English and mathematics. Pupils in Year 3 have caught up after being below average at the end of Year 2. The good provision in the Reception class helps children make good progress in the key areas of writing and sounds work. Throughout the school pupils are now making good progress in English but are making more variable progress in mathematics because the impact of recent training for teachers is still to be felt. Teaching and learning are good. The teachers know the abilities of pupils and teach them what they need to know to improve. Expectations are generally high although question and answer sessions are not always demanding enough, especially for more able pupils. Marking of English is better than that of mathematics. Teaching assistants provide teachers and pupils with good support. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy their education, including many opportunities to make decisions about school life. Pupils are well involved in village activities. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a very good range of clubs and sporting opportunities, for a school of this size, which encourage healthy lifestyles. The impressive number of visits helps to extend the pupils' interest but not enough is provided to help their understanding of the cultural diversity of modern British society. Care, guidance and support are good throughout the school. Academic guidance and the support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities are also good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the rate of progress in mathematics in Years 2, 3 and 4.
- Ensure that actions designed to remedy weaknesses are systematically planned and monitored.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about the diversity of cultural backgrounds of people living in Britain today. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The national test results for English were exceptionally low in 2006 for Year 6 and well below average for Year 2. The downward trend in pupils' attainment, taking into account the small numbers of pupils, has been halted. Pupils' achievement is now good and pupils are reaching

average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Children enter the Reception Year with skills expected of those of their age. They make good progress in Reception, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal development, benefiting from a well organised curriculum. Progress through the school in English is good for all pupils because work which is well matched to their needs is combined with the effective teaching of spelling, sounds and writing. The significant minority of pupils who were underachieving in English are now reaching the expected levels. Progress in mathematics is more variable. Emphasis on mental arithmetic and clear targets for improvement have helped older pupils to catch up; their progress has been good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

A good start is made in this area of development in the Reception Year, particularly in the development of teamwork, and children are confident in choosing their own activities. Skills in working independently and in groups develop well by Year 6 and this has a positive impact on their learning and the progress they make. Their attitudes and behaviour are good in lessons and around the school. Older pupils use their initiative in looking after younger ones during playtimes. Pupils enjoy school, attendance is above average and they are prompt into school. They are responsive to their teachers, who could do more to encourage them to elaborate on their answers. The pupils respect their school and their contribution to the community is good. Pupils' preparation for life after school is good and is enhanced by skills such as problem solving and teamwork. They have a well developed sense of each other's needs and, through the school council, have undertaken many projects to make school better for everybody, for example installing the friendship bench and modifying rules about boys playing football. They have a good understanding of how they should adopt a healthy lifestyle and of the importance of keeping themselves safe. The pupils have very positive attitudes to sport and all are keen to represent their school. They take a keen interest in the quality of school meals and have influenced the range of choices available. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good with many participating actively in village life and with other schools. In this relatively mono-cultural community, pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is satisfactory but is a less well developed aspect of their personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In all classes careful planning for the range of ages and abilities is good and leads to interesting, enjoyable lessons. Teachers are confident about judging their pupils' standards and know how to support them to reach challenging targets. There are good arrangements for grouping pupils across the school for sounds and spelling work that has had considerable impact on their achievement in reading and writing. The marking of pupils' mathematics work is not particularly helpful in reinforcing these targets and there are lessons where teachers do not demand enough thinking during the question and answer sessions. However, teachers have improved their techniques in other ways such as by using computers linked to whiteboards and through paired work, which suits the boys. Effective additional support helps less able pupils to improve their writing. This has helped to narrow the gap between reading and writing, a cause of earlier underachievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is an impressive range of clubs and activities that enhance and enrich the curriculum for a school of this size. Some of these involve being with pupils from other schools and these make a significant contribution to the pupils' confidence and self-esteem as well as their enthusiasm for sport and the expressive arts. The school's involvement in the Cornwall County Show is an example of how the school sets out to widen pupils' experiences. There are insufficient opportunities in the curriculum for them to improve their awareness of the cultural diversity of modern Britain. The curriculum for the Reception Year is well matched to the language needs of the children and benefits from a good outdoor area. The daily use of the community centre sports hall has increased the opportunities for pupils to take part in dance, drama and music activities. Whilst there is a good range of catch-up programmes for reading and writing there are not enough for mathematics to ensure the less able make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Assessment procedures and the guidance pupils receive through information about standards and achievement have improved rapidly since the involvement of the local authority. Pupils who need support or extra challenge are identified quickly and teachers are flexible about grouping in the mixed-age classes and between classes. Currently, the impact is more effective in English than in mathematics. Individual and group targets are frequently reviewed with the pupils, and pupils say how they now know 'what they have to work on to get better'. Adults carry out all the necessary checks to safeguard pupils' best interests. The headteacher and staff are friendly and approachable and ensure that pupils are provided with good pastoral care.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior leaders are good at involving the parents and the wider community to ensure the good personal development of the pupils and enrichment of the curriculum. Consequently, parents are highly positive about the school and their children's welfare. However, the management of strategies for improvement is less effective. The school development plan is adequate but not sharp enough; it lacks precise time scales and measurable targets against which success can be checked. The need for greater rigour in monitoring is demonstrated in the school's own self-evaluation which describes rather than evaluates the impact of recent action. The school has benefited from considerable support from the local authority and from government-funded programmes. A new staff team has enthusiastically seized opportunities to observe each other teach and to observe high quality teaching and learning by others. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. The improved systems for tracking pupils' progress have significantly raised teachers' expectations of pupils' learning in reading and writing. The teaching staff have quickly built a shared understanding of what is required to bring about rapid improvement in standards. The use of consultants has ensured that action is regularly evaluated and governors have played an impressive role in checking that standards are improving and that the school is addressing its weaknesses. The school is in a satisfactory position to carry out the necessary improvements.

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Annex A

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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	2
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?	2

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.

Annex A

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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

- 15 June 2007 Dear Pupils Inspection of Warbstow Community Primary School, Launceston, PL15 8UP I am writing to thank you for welcoming us into your school when we visited you recently and to explain what we found out. We had an enjoyable day and were very pleased to see your work, to be in your lessons and to talk with your teachers, governors and some of you. We found some good things about your school and a few things that will help make your learning better. Your school is satisfactory. You are all making good progress in English now that the teachers are giving you work that adds to what you have already learned. Your attitudes and behaviour are good and you obviously enjoy your lessons and other activities because you have good attendance and take part in the many clubs. Most of you learn well because the teachers do a good job. You all know your 'targets' and the youngest children told us how they like the 'teddy bear targets'. You said how you find these targets useful, and they help teachers keep a good track of how you are improving. The staff care a lot about your well-being. They provide a lot of extra activities to ensure you enjoy your learning. Things we have asked staff to improve are:
 - Make sure that some pupils in classes 2 and 3 make better progress in their mathematics.
 - Make sure they ask some of you harder questions in lessons.
 - Be more thorough when planning to improve aspects of your school so they can keep a better track of how well the school is doing.
 - Make sure you have more opportunities to learn about how different people live in other parts of this country. Well done on taking part in the Cornwall County Show this year. Thank you again for your welcome. Jonathan Palk Lead inspector