

Cury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112001
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289142
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Malcolm Greenhalgh

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	29
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Williamson
Headteacher	Jean Whetham
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2002
School address	Churchtown Cury Helston TR12 7BW
Telephone number	01326 240549
Fax number	01326 240549

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Inspection number	289142

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is a very small rural school on the Lizard Peninsular. The social context of the school is a little below the national average. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is above the national average as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The vast majority of pupils at the school are White British.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is satisfactory with some good features. It is at the centre of the local community and parents are extremely supportive of what the school does for their children. One parent was typical in her views saying that 'there is a definite community/family atmosphere throughout; the children care for each other and help each other through any difficulties'.

In the Foundation Stage, children, from a broadly average attainment on entry, make a sound start to their time in school. By the end of their first year their attainment is broadly in line with the national expectations across all areas of learning. Between Years 1 and 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science and by the end of Year 6 attainment remains broadly in line with the national average.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good and are a result of the good care, support and guidance provided by the school. The local church is central to school life and the pupils make sound contributions through the Church, to the local community. Assemblies reinforce Christian ethics which effectively support the general family atmosphere around the school. The pupils get on very well with each other and have positive attitudes to their work. They feel safe, are keen to come to school, enjoy their work and are very happy. They have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives and participate in a good range of sporting activities. They make satisfactory contributions to school life by helping to manage the classrooms and voice their views regularly. However, this process is not formalised and not all pupils feel that they always have the opportunity to make suggestions.

Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, and teaching assistants make effective contributions within small group work. However, the pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their skills of independence, self-management and decision making, which slows down the acquisition of key life skills. The curriculum is satisfactory with some very good features. It is well planned to meet the range of ages and abilities. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory but planning does not ensure children have enough time to explore and investigate for themselves.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors are determined that the school does well. They have made significant improvements in tracking how well pupils make progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups and have recently updated the school improvement plan well to address all key areas for improvement. These improvements have made a significant improvement in the progress pupils make overall and, particularly, in Years 3 and 4.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their independence, self-management and decision making skills.
- Ensure the Foundation Stage curriculum is planned to enable children to explore and investigate for themselves on a daily basis.
- Create more formal processes for pupils to take on greater responsibility for school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain standards in line with the national averages in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school. A few pupils have made outstanding progress in the last 12 months. However, there is no consistent pattern to this across year groups and subjects. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but on average is a little below the national expectation. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children have made sound progress in each of the areas of learning and by the end of the Reception Year are attaining standards in line with the national expectations. Satisfactory progress is made in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and again in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They have a good understanding of Christian beliefs and they use this well to demonstrate a good caring and supportive attitude towards each other. Relationships in school are good and you often see older pupils supporting younger pupils with their work within a family type environment. Pupils believe that bullying is rare and is dealt with quickly by the children themselves or an adult. They feel safe and very much enjoy coming to school. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to have a healthy, well balanced diet and regular exercise. Many of the children are involved in extra sporting activities and are keen to take part in the two hours of physical education they have each week. The pupils make a sound contribution to the general day-to-day running of the school and voice their views and opinions during discussion times. However, the pupils say that they do not always feel that they can ask to improve things like the toilet facilities and therefore a more formal process of gathering pupils' views and acting on them would enable them to feel more involved. The pupils perform for the local community during festival times and make contributions to charities to support the wider community. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their literacy and numeracy skills but do not have enough opportunity to take responsibility for their own work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with good features. Teachers plan work for the wide age ranges in each group and match the work to the needs of the pupils effectively. This ensures that most pupils make satisfactory progress whilst a few pupils have made excellent progress over the last year. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good support to the small groups but this support is often too intensive and does not give the pupils sufficient opportunity to make their own decisions. This dampens the progress they make in developing their skills of independence and self-management. All members of staff have very good relationships with the children and this effectively enhances the family approach to supporting the pupils when they need help with their work. Good questioning techniques challenge the pupils' thinking in whole group and small group activities and the pupils respond well to this.

The pupils have good attitudes to their work and are keen to settle quickly to the tasks they are given working with good levels of concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides pupils with a broad curriculum and ensures that the local environment is used as a stimulus for learning. The school arranges visits to local areas of interest. There is also a very good range of clubs available for the pupils such as sailing and a design and technology club which was very popular with pupils and parents who worked together effectively to provide resources for a 'story sack'. The school puts a good level of emphasis on personal, social and health education and this enables pupils to make good progress in this aspect of the curriculum. The Foundation Stage areas of learning are covered sufficiently to ensure children make satisfactory progress but there are not enough opportunities for the children to explore and investigate for themselves on a regular basis.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good care, support and guidance lead to good personal development and satisfactory academic progress. The school ensures that all child protection procedures are met. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of health and safety issues. Assessment procedures are in place for the pupils' academic and personal development and recent improvements enable staff to be more rigorous in their tracking of the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, staff and governors are very committed to improving the school. They have put into place good pupil tracking systems that clearly identify how well the pupils are doing in each year group and have produced a new school development plan that is well focused on key areas for improvement, including the Foundation Stage curriculum. The school has gradually increased its pupil numbers since the headteacher's arrival five years ago. It has excellent support from the parents and is always willing to accept and welcome pupils coming into school at all times of the year. The school has created a communal spirit that is very much valued by the local church and community and, as a result, plays a central and very important role in local life. The headteacher accepts the need to delegate greater responsibility to staff and pupils and plans are in place to do this. The school knows itself well and has embraced the support of the new school improvement partner. This, together with desire to work effectively together as a team, ensures that the school will build effectively for the future. Resource management is very good and the school is very proud of its new hall which will be a great additional asset. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection but good progress over the last academic year and has good capacity to improve.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	3
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?	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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cury C of E Primary School, Churchtown, Cury, Helston, Cornwall TR12 7BW

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and contributing to the inspection through our individual and group discussions.

The school is providing you with a satisfactory start to your school life and is doing many good things to prepare you for later life. The main strength of the school is the support and guidance you are given so that you make good progress in your personal development. You seem very happy in school, get on very well with each other and have good attitudes to your work. You have a good understanding of how to live healthy lives. In the whole school discussion we had together, you came up with some very good ideas on how you wanted the school to improve and said that you felt you did not always feel that you had the chance to tell the school what you think. Although the school has regular discussion times with you, I have asked the school to give you more formal opportunities to make a contribution to how the school improves in the future.

You are making satisfactory progress in your reading, writing, mathematics and science skills. Some of you have made excellent progress. In the Reception Year, you make sound progress in all the areas of learning. For you to make even better progress, I have asked the school to give you more opportunity to work on your own and in small groups from the Reception Year through to Year 6. This will help to improve your skills of independence, self-management and decision making. The school does, however, provide you with some good opportunities to learn across a wide range of areas and adds to this with activities and visits outside normal lessons.

The headteacher and governors have produced effective new plans for what they want to do to improve. They also manage the school well and have worked very hard to improve the facilities that you have, including the new hall.

I wish you every success in the future.

- Yours sincerely
- Malcolm Greenhalgh Lead inspector