

Duloe CofE VA Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112024
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289152
Inspection date	6 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Toms
Headteacher	Ann Carter
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2002
School address	The Green Duloe Liskeard PL14 4PW
Telephone number	01503 262059
Fax number	01503 262059

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school in the heart of the Cornish countryside. Pupils are drawn from the immediate and nearby village communities. They are nearly all White British, with a few coming from other ethnic backgrounds. There is a significant level of social deprivation in this region of Cornwall. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is currently lower than that found in most schools, although this varies from year to year and sometimes is above the national average. Similarly, the attainment of children when starting school varies, but is often well below the expected levels, with most not having attended pre-school facilities. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the expected times is much higher than in most schools nationally. The number of pupils on roll has been rising in recent years.

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 provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. There is good care, support and guidance provision that includes excellent pastoral care, and a good imaginative curriculum. These strengths ensure that pupils reach outstanding levels with their personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has a happy, vibrant and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils enjoy their time here a great deal and say things like: 'We have lots of fun activities ... My teacher rocks! ... We have some really interesting discussions in lessons'. They regard staff as their friends and feel totally safe and secure. They have no qualms about approaching an adult if a concern arises. The school has worked successfully over recent years to align the curriculum as closely as possible with pupils' interests and to boost their creativity. The intention to use this approach as a means of enhancing pupils' learning and improving standards is already showing success with very good progress apparent in pupils' speaking and listening skills, helping them reach above average levels in these areas. Many children start school with particularly weak language skills, but by the end of Year 6 most are confident and articulate.

As part of its curriculum innovations the school makes excellent use of partner organisations and specialists to come in and work with the pupils. Work seen indicates that pupils do well, as a result, in art, music and drama. Sound teaching ensures that achievement is satisfactory across the school. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage from a low starting point, due to the well organised provision. However, the standards they reach are below the expected levels by the start of Year 1 and below average by the end of Year 6. In particular, pupils are weak at writing at length in different subjects. They also show weaknesses in their ability to use their mathematical skills in different ways to solve problems in different subjects.

Teachers check pupils' progress regularly. However, the whole school system for recording and collating information on how well pupils are achieving does not provide sufficiently comprehensive and accurate detail to show their progress clearly. As a result, targets set to help pupils make progress are not always as precise as they could be.

Pupils develop a high level of understanding about how to maintain fit and healthy lifestyles. They have an excellent awareness of the value of making a contribution to the world around them. This is gained from their very close working involvement with the local community and church and their extensive involvement in charity fund raising activities.

Sound leadership and management have helped the school move ahead at a satisfactory pace in recent years. The headteacher has done a good job of creating a strong team atmosphere in which staff and governors work enthusiastically together. They have a sound awareness of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie. Good quality action plans and the strong commitment of the staff and governors mean that there is good capacity for the school to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing by developing pupils' skills to complete extended pieces of writing in different subject areas.
- Raise mathematics standards by increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to investigate and use and apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum.

- Create a whole school system for recording assessment information in a comprehensive and accurate way to enable teachers to increase the precision of targets set for pupils' performance. A small proportion of schools where 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: 3

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Their communication, language and literacy skills and knowledge and understanding of the world are especially weak when they start school, but they progress rapidly in these areas. However, despite this good progress, attainment is still below the nationally expected levels by the start of Year 1 because of the low starting point when they enter school. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and make sound progress in Years 1 and 2. However, national test results show that they reach below the expected levels. Sound progress and achievement are sustained throughout Years 3 to 6, with 2006 national tests showing pupils reaching below average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Across the school, pupils show particular weaknesses in their ability to produce extended pieces of writing. They also show weaknesses in their ability to investigate, solve problems and use and apply their mathematical skills in different ways. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make sound progress as they move through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Through the strong encouragement they are given from the moment they start in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school they become very confident and mature individuals. Pupils develop very strong relationships with each other and with the staff. This results in a supportive family atmosphere throughout the school. Older pupils remark on this being a special feature of their school. Pupil's behaviour is excellent and they show a very friendly approach and strong mutual respect towards each other and the adults with whom they work. The wide range of experiences provided for adults to come and talk about their jobs and for specialists to come and work with them on different projects helps pupils gain good skills to ensure their future success. Different projects, for example with the parish council and the fund raising work carried out also help pupils develop the skills to cope well with life in the future. Nonetheless, their below average skills in English and mathematics also impose limitations on their overall ability in this respect. Attendance is good and has improved further this year because of good systems to encourage it.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Sound teaching across the school is helping pupils to achieve satisfactorily. However, good teaching for children in the Foundation Stage ensures that children progress well in all areas of learning. The teacher and teaching assistant ensure that resources are well organised to support a good range of practical activities both indoors and outdoors. Strong relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school ensure that all individuals become confident learners. The school is particularly good at combining the talents of existing staff with those

of visiting specialists to boost pupils' learning in creative arts work. However, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing. Also, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in problem solving situations.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school does a great deal to enrich the curriculum. A particular strength is the way in which it focuses on boosting pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Extensive links with partner organisations, the use of visiting specialist teachers, the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided and the wealth of trips and visits, do a lot to inspire and motivate pupils. The strong focus on providing a lively curriculum has already begun to impact strongly on areas such as raising the standard of pupils' speaking and listening skills and their skills in creative arts to a good level. The school is now in a strong position to build on this successful approach to help boost English and mathematics standards in the future. In particular, staff are acutely aware of the need to develop more opportunities for pupils to extend their writing and mathematics skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is vigilant in ensuring that pupils' safety is ensured. All procedures, including those for child protection are fully in place. Staff know their pupils very well and cater sensitively for their needs. Parents rightly express much praise for the way in which staff encourage and help their children enjoy school so much and become confident. They give particularly strong accolades to the excellent way in which staff help new pupils who arrive at the school settle in quickly and happily. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are given a full range of support including that of external support agencies when required. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. Lack of comprehensive detail and accuracy in the school's assessment recording systems means that targets set for pupils' performance are not always accurate enough. Also, the marking of pupils' work although sometimes good, does not consistently give pupils a clear idea of how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Sound leadership and management have helped the school progress at a satisfactory rate since it was last inspected. Good improvements have been made to the building and its facilities. The improvement programme is aided by strong governance and the good teamwork instigated by the headteacher. Governors provide good support for the headteacher and staff because they are well informed and involved. The school's self-evaluation provides a reasonably accurate view of how well the school is doing. However, occasional inconsistencies in the analysis of performance sometimes make the overall evaluation unclear. The school has rightly recognised the need to upgrade its whole-school system to record pupils' progress. The current system does not provide a full and accurate picture of the progress pupils make. This limits the school's ability to make the targets for pupils' performance as precise as they could be.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
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	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?	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	2

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?	2
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	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

Dear Children

Duloe C of E VA Junior and Infant School, The Green, Duloe, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 4PW

- Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us during the school's inspection. We enjoyed talking to many of you and I particularly appreciated the very helpful discussion with some of you in Year 6 in the sunshine outside on the picnic bench. What a bunch of chatterboxes! The school is doing a satisfactory job. In particular, the staff are especially good at making sure you enjoy your time in school. Here are some other things I noticed:
- Sound teaching helps you make satisfactory progress as you move through the school although standards of work are below average in English and mathematics.
- You do lots of good work with creative arts and your speaking and listening skills are good.
- Your personal development is outstanding. You work with lots of enthusiasm and get on really well with staff and with each other.
- I was very impressed by how much those of you I spoke to know about the need to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe.
- You have a good curriculum and you get lots of very interesting project work to do. The staff work very hard to make the work as interesting as possible for you and those of you I spoke to clearly appreciate this.
- The school does an excellent job of looking after you and encouraging you.
- The satisfactory leadership and management of your school have helped things improve at a satisfactory rate since the last inspection.
- The things your school now needs to do to help it become even better are:
- Help you improve your work in writing by increasing the range of opportunities for you to write at length in different subjects.
- Help you improve in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to carry out investigations and use and apply your mathematical skills in different subjects.
- Improve the way that the information about how well you progress is recorded so that teachers can be sure that the targets they set to help you improve are as precise as possible.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Best wishes for the future

Laurie Lewin Lead inspector