



St Rumon's Church of England Infants School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113420
Local Authority Devon
Inspection number 295385
Inspection date 14 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Townsend HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Dolvin Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Tavistock
Age range of pupils	4-7		PL19 9EA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01822 612085
Number on roll (school)	78	Fax number	01822 612085
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	James McQueen
		Headteacher	Clare Wesson
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2000		

Age group 4-7	Inspection date 14 February 2007	Inspection number 295385
-------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© 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 of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average infant school. It is situated close to the centre of Tavistock. Most families are of White British heritage. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of children who are identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is average. However, the intake of the school has changed in recent years and children now enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those expected or usually found 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: 2

This is a good school that provides children with a secure start to their education. The headteacher has provided outstanding leadership to bring about rapid improvement in a short period. She is well supported by a committed staff team and an effective governing body. Good teaching and the high level of care result in the children making good progress, both personally and academically. Parents overwhelmingly agree, believing the school has 'the best interests of each child at heart'.

The headteacher has developed a culture of shared learning among staff, who coach and mentor each other as teachers. She has led the team in developing effective processes for monitoring children's progress. As a result, although children start school with below-average standards, they achieve well and reach at least average standards by the time they leave. More-able learners make good strides forward and reach levels which are above average. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Children enjoy coming to school and relate well to each other and to adults. Their personal development is good. Attendance is above average.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum for all year groups is relevant and interesting. However, planning is not consistently tailored to each child's needs. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, although learning targets are not always shared with children. As a result, they are not always sure what they should do to improve their own work. The school has successfully tackled all the issues identified at the last inspection and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine medium- and short-term plans to ensure children of all abilities make the best possible progress with their knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject.
- Make explicit to children, through target setting, what they need to achieve next in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are average.

Whilst standards dropped markedly in 2005, they are now rising again. Year 2 pupils achieved above-average standards in 2006, which represents good progress given their average starting points. Whilst results were similar for each subject, girls scored higher for reading and writing, although boys' results were above average. More recently, children have been entering the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below average. However, systems brought in to set clear expectations of what children might achieve and improved teaching have led to better progress for all

learners. Consequently, children in each year group are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and are making up ground lost in the past. Standards in each class are now in line with national averages. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Higher-attaining learners are set and are reaching challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is good. They display good attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They feel safe in school and are confident that adults caring for them will follow up any concerns they may have. Each child is mindful of how to act safely and of the importance of acting sensibly. They appreciate the range of activities on offer, including the many educational visits and visitors to the school.

Attendance is above average. Children behave well and relate well to each other and to adults. They work hard and this helps them to make good progress. The children have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and know the benefits of a balanced diet and of leading an active life. The school's gymnastics and dance clubs are well attended and all staff encourage active play at break and lunch times. Children take a keen part in wider school life and in activities in the community. For example, Year 2 voted for which extra-curricular clubs they would attend and contributed enthusiastically to the creation of a 'town mosaic' for Tavistock.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children reflect on their own and others' lives. For instance, in an assembly about personal goals, they considered past achievements and set themselves new challenges. The school has developed close links with the church and regularly hosts well-attended assemblies for families or for the local community. The children have a growing awareness of world cultures, promoted through a range of arts events and local celebrations, including the 'Moving the Stone' project and the Tavistock Carnival. Children relish the opportunity to help create the float for this event each year. They are acquiring basic skills and personal competencies, such as decision-making abilities, at a good rate and this contributes well to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school, which means that children make good progress.

In the Reception classes, learning is highly exploratory in nature and is multi-sensory. In these classes and in Years 1 and 2, teachers are using a range of engaging strategies to make learning practical and fun for children. The learning objectives of each session are made clear and teachers use their technical knowledge well in developing children's

skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Lessons are well managed and children's progress is continually assessed. Activities are well resourced and computers used well to enhance learning. Relationships between children and with adults are very good. This is in no small part because of the effective contribution of teaching assistants to individuals and groups.

In one outstanding lesson, the teacher had very high expectations and ensured all children participated throughout. She gave very clear explanations and instructions at the start and asked learners to assess themselves against agreed criteria at the end of the session. In less effective sessions, group work and independent work were less focused.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and places due emphasis on children's personal development as well as on their academic progress. Children are given many opportunities to see the links in their learning across subjects and to engage in project work with a local flavour. Work on themes such as 'The Spanish Armada' and 'Tavistock' make learning relevant, as do local visits and visitors to the school, such as an African dance troupe and a theatre group. Children are given a good grounding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They also regularly apply skills learnt in other subjects. For instance, they made audio-visual recordings of their investigations in science. Children are given many opportunities to write at length in most subjects and teachers ensure this work is of the same standard achieved in English!

Planning in the Foundation Stage does not always show how independent structured play might be developed or modified to meet individuals' needs and medium-term planning does not always ensure a clear progression in knowledge, skills and understanding.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a school which places the well-being of each individual at the heart of its thinking. Parents agree with this wholeheartedly. The staff team diligently ensure that children are safe. Clear policies are understood and implemented well. The arrangements for child protection are robust and the school carefully attends to risk assessments of activities both in school and on visits.

Teachers are committed to helping children settle well and feel confident. This starts when children are about to join the school. Links with pre-school providers are developing well and the school has plans for greater shared working. The school liaises well with the local junior school to ensure that, throughout their time in Year 2, children are given regular experience of junior school life before they transfer.

Teachers and teaching assistants assess children's personal and academic progress systematically. Each child is encouraged to assess all their own work in lesson reviews. Parents are offered comprehensive advice and support about how their children are

progressing. However, children are not systematically informed about their work targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has clarity of vision and has united the school with a common sense of purpose. By building teamwork, she has promoted a shared approach to leadership and management and secured the full support of parents, who note how well the school provides the care and advice each child needs.

Coordinators have good expertise in their areas of responsibility. Their evaluations of children's progress are used well to determine how teaching and assessment practices need to evolve. They then devise and lead improvements and monitor the effects of these on children's subsequent learning.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. It uses assessment data well to determine the standards children are reaching at each point in their time in school and the progress they are making. The school's rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation has ensured a good rate of improvement. The school has ambitious intentions for the future, underpinned by a comprehensive, well-thought-out improvement plan. Governance has improved markedly since the last inspection. Led ably by its chair, the governing body is efficient, with a good committee structure enabling it to support staff in their improvement work. It also holds the school to account well by asking searching questions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	2
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	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?	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	2
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	2

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?	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.

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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for the wonderful welcome you gave me when I came to visit your school. I enjoyed finding out about all the interesting things you do. I think that yours is a good school. I really liked:

- how much you enjoy school and learning
- how well you play together and care for everyone
- how well you listen and work in your interesting lessons
- how much your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

To make your school even better, I have asked your teachers to plan for all lessons to build on what you have learnt before. I have also asked them to talk to you about what your own learning goals should be.

Thank you again for talking to me and answering my questions. Good luck in the future.