

Roche Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111887
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	298543
Inspection dates	12–13 September 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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mel Hussey
Headteacher	Jacque Long
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2006
School address	Fore Street Roche St Austell PL26 8EP
Telephone number	01726 890323
Fax number	01726 890323

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a below average size school with pupils mostly drawn from the immediate village area. A significant proportion of pupils comes from backgrounds with few social advantages. The attainment of children starting school varies markedly from year to year but is mainly well below the expected levels. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that in most other schools. Most pupils come from White British cultural backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the education act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

As a result of good leadership and management, the school is now providing a satisfactory quality of education. Many aspects of its work have improved markedly since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are now good and pupils' achievement has now improved to a satisfactory level. Indications of good progress are becoming increasingly apparent in lessons and in the work in pupils' books. In all classrooms there is a purposeful buzz of activity, with pupils working in a well motivated way. Whilst standards in English, mathematics and science remain well below average, an increasing proportion of pupils are beginning to reach average levels. However, the school's results in national tests are depressed because too few pupils reach the upper levels. This is linked to the fact that higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently extended by the work they are given. The quality of pupils' writing remains the weakest facet of their work.

Good provision for care, guidance and support results in pupils showing good personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour has improved significantly in recent times. Pupils behave well, are polite, and show a considerate attitude towards each other. They say they have no worries about bullying and like the fact that individuals of all ages play happily together. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They enjoy coming to school, feel safe, and get on well with all of the staff. Teachers have made much improvement with systems to check how well pupils progress. They use the information gained well to help support and guide academic development. The curriculum is satisfactory and makes good provision for promoting pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Staff have identified that pupils have not been getting enough opportunities to practise and extend their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. Clear plans are in place to improve this area.

The staff have worked very effectively as a strong team since the school's inspection last year. Good quality monitoring and accurate evaluation of all aspects of the school's work mean that staff have a very clear understanding of what is working well and what needs improvement. The headteacher has worked very well to set the direction and vision. Staff have made substantial changes to improve practically all areas of their work and have fully embraced the good quality support and training provided by the local authority. They are acutely aware that much remains to be done, particularly to keep standards improving. The good quality systems established mean that the school is well placed to forge on with its improvement plans in the future.

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.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage are helping children make a good start at school. Much recent improvement has occurred in this part of the school to ensure that children have a wide range of interesting activities to promote their learning. Well organised lessons help children learn to work effectively together as well as promoting their ability to

become independent learners. All of this means that children now progress well from attaining well below the expected levels when they start, to achieving just below the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on current work to improve standards in English, mathematics and science across the school and, in particular, improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are fully extended by the work they are given to do.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils show satisfactory achievement and make sound progress. This marks a significant turnaround to the picture reflected in recent years. Children's good progress in the Foundation Stage prepares them well for working in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been reaching well below average levels. However, work in their books and in lessons shows that their progress is strengthening. Good teaching is enabling the pupils to gain a confident approach to learning. Year 6 national tests show pupils have been reaching well below average levels. The quality of pupils' writing is a particular weakness. Although there has been a shift upwards with the proportion reaching average levels in English, mathematics and science, not enough pupils reach the upper levels. Higher attaining pupils do not always progress as well as they could do. As at Key Stage 1, work in pupils' books and in lessons at Key Stage 2 shows improving progress as a result of good teaching. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make sound progress as they move through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

'Behaviour is way better now there's no bullying any more ...there's been lots of improvements ...we have got more facilities now – like outside with the school grounds.'

These comments were just a few of the positive perceptions of the pupils who clearly register a changing climate for the better in their school. They recognise that all staff are working hard to improve things and they feel very much 'part of the team'. For example, they feel their school council has played an effective role in bringing about improvements. In this way, and through regular opportunities for them to link with the local community, pupils learn to make a good level of contribution. Throughout the school, pupils behave well in lessons and at break times. Their attendance is satisfactory. Pupils show positive attitudes towards their work and towards looking after each other. Although pupils gain a good spiritual, moral and social understanding, their awareness of living in a multicultural society is not as well developed. Through fund raising projects, pupils develop a sound awareness of how budgets are managed. However, the current low standards in English, mathematics and science mean the skills pupils need to ensure their future economic well-being are not as good as they could be.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are undoubtedly the most significant areas of improvement in the school over the last year. Through training programmes with the local authority's intensive support programme, teachers have improved their skills to a good level and revitalised their work in the classroom. Pupils' performances are now accurately and regularly monitored and evaluated and lesson plans refined accordingly. These plans are detailed and generally focus well on the needs of different groups of pupils. However, higher attaining pupils are not always extended sufficiently and staff recognise that tackling this area is an important next step. From the Foundation Stage upwards, the improvements in teaching are making very clear inroads into ratcheting up pupils' progress and providing the potential for progress and achievement to become consistently good in the future.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage, with children experiencing a wide range of activities appropriately tailored to their needs. Throughout the rest of the school it is satisfactory, covering all of the required areas. The school has a good range of resources for ICT and makes good use of its computer suite and the laptop computers available for classroom use. An appropriate range of visits and visitors to the school suitably enlivens pupils' learning. A good emphasis on promoting pupils' health and fitness, for example through the daily 'wake and shake' movement sessions, makes a strong contribution to promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils do not currently have enough chances to practise and advance their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects, although plans are well advanced to ensure that this happens in the future. Also, links between subjects are not sufficiently developed so that learning opportunities are not always fully maximised. The school makes good use of links with other schools to help promote learning, for example with links to secondary school provision widening pupils' opportunities in sports.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is rigorous about ensuring pupils' safety. All procedures are fully in place including those to ensure child protection. Staff know all individuals well and cater sensitively for their needs. Pupils are confident that if any problems arise there are staff on hand to help them. As a result, there is a friendly atmosphere throughout the school and pupils develop confidently. Comprehensive assessment information is used well by staff to enable them to provide clear academic support for all pupils including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Clear targets are generally set and pupils are fully involved in the process of assessing their own work. However, targets for higher attaining pupils are not always set high enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The clear vision and drive of the headteacher have been central to the school accomplishing its core actions for improvement across the year. She has ensured that high expectations have been set in terms of pupils' behaviour and academic performance. A climate has been established in which staff work together as a strong team. There is strong commitment to get the school operating at an increasingly successful level. All of the important systems and procedures, including good assessment, rigorous self-evaluation and clear action plans for improvement, are fully established to ensure the school maintains its current momentum of improvement. These systems are used well to ensure that the school sets itself good quality targets to improve standards. Although most parents are happy with the school, a significant proportion of them express concerns about pupils' progress, behaviour and the leadership and management. However, this inspection shows that the wide ranging improvements made this year mean that the concerns registered are now unfounded. Governors do a satisfactory job and, working closely with the headteacher, ensure the school's budget is kept on track. However, the school recognises the need for them to develop their roles further. Similarly, the school rightly identifies that the roles of coordinators in subjects other than English, mathematics and science need further development.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

14 September 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Roche Community Primary School, Fore Street, Roche, St Austell PL26 8LP

- It was good fun coming to see you at your school last week! Thank you for making us so welcome, talking to us and helping us during the school's inspection. I especially enjoyed the good discussion I had with some of you from Year 6 outside on a picnic bench in the sunshine. I learned a lot ...I think you would all make very good future inspectors! The school is now doing a satisfactory job. You need to give a big round of applause to your headteacher and staff for all that they have done to improve things for you (if this is being read out to you in assembly – give them all a big clap now). You will be pleased to hear that the school has got a better inspection report this time than it did just over a year ago. Here are some of some of the most important bits of the report that we thought you might like to know about.
- You work hard in lessons and your achievement as you move through the school is satisfactory.
- Your personal development is good and you told us that you feel safe and secure at school.
- You have a satisfactory curriculum and your teachers work hard to make it interesting for you.
- Your teachers have been busy working hard to improve things and they do a good job of teaching you. You told us, 'Our teachers are kind, fair and try hard to help us when we get stuck.'
- The school does a good job of making sure you are safe and that there is always someone available to help with any problems.
- To improve further the school should now:
 - keep going with all of the good things that are currently happening to make your work better in English, maths and science and, in particular, build on the work done to improve the quality of your writing
 - make sure there are plenty of opportunities, for those of you who find some areas of work easy, to have challenging activities that push you on even faster
 - provide more opportunities for you to practise and improve your writing and maths skills when you are doing work in other subjects such as science, history and geography.

I hope you all really enjoy the rest of the school year and help the staff as much as you can to keep the improvements going. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Laurie Lewin Lead Inspector



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