

Truro Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111790
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310683
Inspection date	4 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3-4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Pearne
Headteacher	Pamela Lees / Carol Kimberley
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2005
School address	Higher Trehaverne Truro TR1 3RJ
Telephone number	01872 274693
Fax number	01803 762 526

Age group	3-4
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the children's overall achievement, the systems for assessing children's progress and the effectiveness of the development plan. The inspector gathered evidence from discussions with staff, lesson observations, samples of children's work and a review of areas of the school's documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is designated a rural Early Excellence Centre. It provides 30 places in the morning session and a further 30 places in the afternoon session. The school provides wraparound care from 08:00 to 17:30, a weekly toy library and baby club, child minder 'drop-in' sessions and practitioner training sessions. In addition, the school provides offsite family support services in the form of 'stay and play together' sessions for parents or carers and their 0–3 year old children at 15 different bases in Truro and the surrounding area. Children attending the schools are from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, with a below average profile overall and attainment on entry that is usually below the expected levels. Only a very few children are currently categorised as having learning difficulties. Nearly all of the children are White British, with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number of children speak English as an additional language. During the inspection, the school was being led by one of the existing teachers in the role of acting headteacher, due to the secondment of the headteacher to work for the local authority for one term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Truro Nursery School provides exemplary practice that enables the children to make excellent progress. As a result of the strong vision, imagination and sheer hard work of the headteacher, staff and governors, the provision, facilities and resources have gone from strength to strength since the school was last inspected. All parents rightly have a very high regard for the work of the staff. They often comment on how happy their children are to attend and some refer to the fact that their children are sometimes upset that they cannot attend during holiday periods. Staff are highly skilled in cascading their expertise out into the wider community through the family support services sessions they provide in Truro and the local area. Through these sessions, parents gain a strong awareness of how best to play a part in their children's learning, and children are well prepared for eventually attending primary school.

Teaching is excellent. Staff show a high level of expertise both in family support services work and in main school activities. The preparation and execution of lessons are first rate. They ensure that the good level of staffing at the school is used to maximum effect to boost children's learning through working together intensively in small group activities. Staff plan very effectively on the basis of providing an exciting and interesting curriculum for children. For example, work in the 'sensory room', equipped with ultraviolet and special effects lighting, instilled a magical feel to the session that captivated all of those involved as they traced the story of Jack and the Beanstalk through a series of brightly shining pictures on the wall. Another example of the school's high quality curriculum provision is the outdoor learning area, opened this year. The grounds are very attractively and imaginatively laid out. A central, cascading water feature, with the children able to control the flow into a large sand garden, gives top-class opportunities for all individuals to experiment, explore, collaborate and learn to develop their skills in using equipment together. The fully waterproofed clothing they use, complete with dungarees and 'wellies', means that children can go out in nearly all weathers and enjoy getting delightfully messy with the sand and water play. The well-constructed tree house (built around the 'Jack and the Beanstalk' tree), woodland areas and pathways also provide enormous scope for children to enjoy a wide range of physical, creative and social outdoor experiences. The construction and great success of these outdoor facilities have rightly been the subject of recent regional school conferences.

The children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning, with a good proportion of them reaching above the expected goals by the time they leave. A significant proportion achieve well above these goals. The school rightly focuses on boosting children's personal, social and emotional development and this results in the vast majority attaining levels that are well above those expected for their age in this area. This means children become very confident learners, with a good range of skills to help them progress in the future.

The school has established high quality care, guidance and support systems that ensure all children feel safe and happy at all times. Staff have a very clear view about children's individual needs and cater very precisely and sensitively for these. In addition, the staff have outstanding relationships with all of the parents and carers and often extend their support to them where appropriate. The school has an excellent system to involve parents or carers in evaluating and recording their views about activities in school. This gets parents and carers fully involved, and is typical of the school's innovative approach to enhancing provision. As a result of the high quality care and guidance, children show excellent behaviour and their attendance at school is good. Their overall personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural

awareness, is exceptionally good. The children's involvement in learning about both national and international annual festivities gives them a particularly strong feel for how other people from different nationalities live their lives. The school provides an extensive range of opportunities to boost children's social abilities, involve them in fundraising and to interact with a wide range of adults. As a result, they gain a really good understanding of how to help each other and contribute to the immediate and wider community. Through all of the great outdoor activities and healthy snack breaks, children do very well in keeping themselves fit and healthy.

Staff are very adept at monitoring and evaluating all lesson activities. They make very good use of their recorded observations to refine and adjust their planning to make sure that future activities match children's needs as precisely as possible. The school has also recently implemented a useful system to record the progress that children make. Whilst this system provides clear information about regular assessment, it is not yet sufficiently accurate in recording some areas to show a complete picture of the progress made by individuals.

The school is fortunate to have a headteacher who has a very clear view of what is needed to provide top quality provision, and a staff team and governing body that show much skill, energy and strong commitment to keep things improving. Any visitor to the school is immediately struck by the friendliness, strong sense of teamwork and enthusiasm of all of the staff. The depth, accuracy and high quality of the annual review conducted by the headteacher and staff reflect a rigorous and conscientious approach towards evaluating ongoing performance. No stone is left unturned by the school in invoking the support of all partner organisations to help boost the quality of provision. The current acting headteacher is doing a very good job of leading and managing the school during the headteacher's secondment to the local authority. The school has an excellent capacity to sustain improvements in the future and thereby rightly sustain its presence as a centre of excellence.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

As the school only has children aged between three and four attending, there is no requirement to complete this section. The report covers, in full, the Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accuracy of the assessment information in developing the school's new system to track children's attainment and progress.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

5 June 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Truro Nursery School, Truro TR1 3RJ

- It was really good fun coming to see you. Thank you for making me so welcome and helping me during the school's inspection. I especially enjoyed watching your activities in the super outside areas that the school has made for you. You will be pleased to know that the school is doing an outstanding job. Here are some of the most important parts of the report that I thought you might like to know about.
- You do very well in all activities and make outstanding progress.
- Your personal development is top class. You behave really well and do particularly well in learning to work together, sharing things and taking turns.
- All of the adults who work with you do a great job and make sure you have many exciting and interesting activities.
- All of the staff do an excellent job of making sure you are safe, happy and well looked after at all times.
- Everything runs exceptionally smoothly and efficiently in your school. All of the adults work together as an excellent team and make sure everything keeps on improving.

To improve further, I have asked staff to:

- Improve the way they record information about the progress that you make.

I am sure you will all want to keep doing your best to keep improving all of the things that you do as well. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when I came to see you. I hope that the rest of the term is as exciting and interesting as it has been so far.

Yours sincerely Laurie Lewin Lead inspector

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Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin

Lead inspector

