

Halwin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111828
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310697
Inspection date	5 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Stephen Dennett

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	82
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	15
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Ashburn
Headteacher	Stephanie Haskins
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Porkellis Helston TR13 0EG
Telephone number	01209 860329
Fax number	01209 860329

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Halwin Primary School serves the local communities surrounding Halwin in rural Cornwall. There are four classes, including a Reception class for children in the early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); six children in this class attend the school for the morning only. Most children entering Reception come from the privately run on-site pre-school. All pupils are of a White ethnic background, nearly all British, and none speaks English as an additional language. The number of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average and one pupil has a statement of special education needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Halwin Primary School provides a good education for its pupils. Many parents have positive views of the school and think that its partnership with parents is good. One parent typically commented, 'Staff have high expectations and have kept us well informed about progress and events.' Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Standards are above average at age seven and 11 because pupils make good progress from Year 1 to Year 6. However, in the EYFS, progress is satisfactory in relation to children's starting points with most reaching the levels expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Progress is slower because activities do not fully develop the children's range of skills. Pupils evidently enjoy their education and are enthusiastic about taking part in lessons. There was, for example, a real 'buzz' as pupils excitedly worked out their roles as they created a radio interview. Pupils on the school council take their roles seriously and the contribution they have made to school improvements, for example in redesigning the toilets and the playground shelter. All pupils are supported well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Behaviour is good throughout the school and this has a positive effect on the progress pupils make in lessons.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers provide a stimulating environment and work is appropriately challenging. Planning ensures that the work given to pupils is appropriate and builds on what has gone before. Good use is made of assessment information to identify weaknesses in pupils' performance and to set challenging targets for improvement. Individual pupils' progress is monitored carefully. The good curriculum offers a broad range of stimulating activities which pupils clearly enjoy. They particularly appreciate the large number of clubs and extra-curricular activities. One pupil in Year 6 said, 'I especially enjoyed the dance club, but sometimes it is hard to choose what to do because there are so many clubs to choose from.' Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is good throughout the school.

The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The school has established a clear set of priorities, which are firmly rooted in the robust self-evaluation and analysis of assessment information. For example, the steps taken to improve pupils' writing by providing more opportunities to write for different purposes has led to improved standards. The governing body is effective and fully involved in setting the educational direction of the school. The partnership the school has with parents, the local authority and other schools in the area effectively promotes pupils' well-being. For example, pupils in Year 6 say they feel very confident about their transfer to Helston School next September. The successful way in which the issues raised by the last inspection have been tackled, together with the rapid improvements made in writing, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in the Reception class and by the time they enter Year 1 reach the levels expected for their age. They settle quickly and happily into school as a result of effective links with the pre-school and the 'learning together' sessions that form part of their induction. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that care and welfare are given high priority and as a result, children approach staff with confidence. Children make good progress when staff involve them in first-hand experiences, but they sometimes lose enthusiasm and concentration when they are expected to sit and listen for too long. Indoor resources are organised well, so that children can access things for themselves and begin to develop

independent learning skills. The outdoor learning area is underutilised and as a result, children do not develop their skills across the full range. Information on how well children are doing is not used with enough precision to set tasks which ensure they make good progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but adults are not always given sufficient direction to engage all children effectively in learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make more use of the Reception class outdoor area so that children develop their skills across all areas of learning.
- Use information on how well children in the EYFS are doing to set tasks which build on their prior learning and ensure they make more rapid progress

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 attain standards which are above average in reading, mathematics and science, and broadly average in writing. Pupils continue to make good progress overall in Key Stage 2 and reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the time they reach Year 6. Standards in science are well above average. Pupils' writing skills remain a relatively weaker area, although they are improving as a result of teachers providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in different subjects. These standards are confirmed by the results of national assessments and tests. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress in their learning because of well-targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and behaviour is consistently good. They take seriously the many opportunities to take responsibility, which shows their social and moral development is good. However, conversations with pupils show that their appreciation of spiritual issues is less well developed. Pupils relish opportunities to make a difference to school life through membership of the school council. The playground 'Buddies' also say they enjoy helping other pupils find friends. Pupils say that they feel safe and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and keep fit. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community and attendance is above average. They also have a good understanding of world cultures through, for example, their study of Uganda. The improvement in writing, good numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, together with their high self-esteem and confidence, help prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress because of good teaching that excites and motivates them. Teachers plan work that encourages active learning and pupils respond positively to this approach. They ensure that pupils know clearly what they must do to make their work even better, through good marking and oral feedback. Pupils respond by putting their own comments and assessing their own work, using 'smiley faces'. Teachers ask probing questions that help pupils to focus

their thinking and they make good use of discussions between pupils to enhance their learning. Teaching assistants are used well, particularly in support of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned so that skills are built securely on previous work. It is well matched to the needs and interests of pupils and is constantly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant. There are many visits, visitors and after-school clubs that help to enrich the curriculum. For example, a visit from a local Cornish author greatly increased pupils' desire to write their own poems and novels. This makes learning exciting so that pupils want to learn. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are developed well across all subjects, so that learning is more relevant. The curriculum is flexibly organised in order to respond to pupils' needs and interests.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a caring school with a strong family atmosphere. The school does all that it can to ensure that all learners, including those in the EYFS, are safeguarded effectively. Teachers know their pupils well and there are strong links with families who appreciate the care provided by the school. There are good relationships with outside agencies which help to ensure that vulnerable pupils are supported well. The school makes good use of its rigorous assessment and tracking systems to check the progress of each pupil and ensure that challenging targets are set for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides a clear educational direction to the work of the school. Her consistent monitoring of teaching, learning and standards has led to a detailed analysis of the school's performance. The school's improvement plan has a well-founded set of goals and the school has a good track record of achieving its targets. Standards in writing have improved rapidly. This follows a rigorous analysis of the 2007 test results in which the school identified the need to improve spelling and increase the amount of time given to writing at length. The promotion of community cohesion is good and the school is an important part of village life. Staff form a strong team and are committed to raising standards further. They are well supported by governors who know the school well and provide both support and challenge to ensure the best for each pupil.

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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

6 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Halwin Primary School, Porkellis, TR13 0EG

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when we came to inspect your school. Your school is good. We were pleased to see that you know how to keep fit by getting lots of exercise and eating healthily. It was also good to hear that you feel safe and well looked after. The school council does a good job in helping to make the school a better place. We were both impressed by your courtesy, enthusiasm and good manners.

These are some of the things your school does well.

- You achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science because good teaching enables you to make good progress.
- Your behaviour is good and you enjoy learning.
- The school keeps a good check on how well you are doing.
- There are lots of interesting after-school clubs and this helps you to learn.
- Your headteacher and senior staff are working hard to make your school even better.

These are some of the things we have suggested to help the school to get better.

- We have asked the school to make sure that the children in Reception are helped to make better use of their outdoor area.
- We have also asked the school to make better use of information about how well children in Reception are doing to plan activities which are suited to their needs.

Thank you again for your help and kindness.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Dennett Lead inspector