

Fowey Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111881
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310712
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayne Williams
Headteacher	Andrew Earnshaw
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Windmill Fowey PL23 1HH
Telephone number	01726 832542
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is an average-sized primary school. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to the national average. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Basic Skills and Activemark awards.

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, where pupils achieve well. Pupils are well behaved, and they are also polite, courteous and welcoming. Pupils are well cared for, with their safety being a priority. Children get off to a good start in Reception and by the end of the year, they usually reach average standards, and occasionally exceed them. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 6, with the result that standards are above average by the end of Year 6. However, pupils do slightly less well in writing than in other subjects.

Relationships are a strength of teaching, with teaching assistants being well deployed and teachers making good use of a variety of strategies to make the lessons interesting. Lessons are thoroughly planned, with careful provision made for the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision is also made for more able pupils. However, on occasions this work is not challenging enough to suit their particular needs.

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and their learning. In particular, good and effective use is made of the school grounds, for example in science. The curriculum also helps to make pupils aware of the need to follow a healthy lifestyle. The school routinely reviews its curriculum, with a current emphasis being placed on increasing cross-curricular links to make it even more interesting and engaging. The increased use of literacy in subjects other than English is also seen as a way of improving writing skills. The curriculum is enriched by an outstanding range of visits and musical and sporting activities.

The headteacher and other members of staff are committed to improving the provision they make for their pupils. Self-evaluation is effective in identifying where improvement is needed; for example, remedial action has been successful in improving the performance of boys in Year 6. Governors support the school well and they are fully involved in budgeting and school development planning. The improvements that have been made both recently and since the previous inspection, and the good quality of the current provision, show that the school has a good capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception Year because they are taught well. The children are happy in school and they enjoy themselves. The staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment, and the children also benefit from the good links that are established with parents. Adults provide the children with a good balance between teacher-led activities and chances for them to choose for themselves, and they take every opportunity to talk to them to help develop their speaking skills. A good range of resources is provided, with the outdoor area being used routinely. The children behave well, although a small number sometimes find it difficult to maintain concentration on the tasks they have chosen.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects of the curriculum other than English.
- Ensure that teachers consistently provide challenging activities for pupils, especially for the more able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards overall are above average, and pupils' achievement is good. When children start in Reception, their knowledge and skills are broadly as expected, although some have weaknesses in their language skills. By the end of the year, they reach the expected levels and, on occasions, exceed them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well, and by the end of Year 2, standards are above average. However, pupils do slightly less well in writing than in other subjects.

By the end of Year 6, although the pupils' performance in writing remains a little lower than in other subjects, overall standards are also above average. This represents good achievement from these pupils' particular starting point. In 2007, boys in Year 6 did not perform quite as well overall as the girls. The school recognised this, and the strategies introduced to address the issue have been successful, with boys and girls now performing similarly well. The school makes good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and this is helping them to achieve well also.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say that they like school very much, and this is reflected in their good attendance, their good behaviour and their evident enjoyment. Pupils are well mannered and enjoy talking about school life to visitors. A few parents expressed some concern about pupils' behaviour. However, during the inspection, only good behaviour was observed, and pupils said they had no concern in this direction. They say that whilst bullying happens occasionally, it is not a problem, as they have complete confidence in the school's ability to sort out any issues that do arise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their understanding of the multicultural society in which we live is less strong. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to live healthy lives, and they readily make healthy choices in what they eat, for example by growing their own crops in the school garden. Pupils benefit from the good opportunities provided by the school for exercise, especially the daily 'Wake and Shake' sessions, which they tackle with great enthusiasm. Pupils adopt safe practices, such as when using computers.

Pupils take the responsibilities that they have in school very seriously. The school council enjoys its involvement in the development of the school; members feel their ideas are listened to and that they are making a difference. Pupils are also involved in the wider community through such things as fundraising and taking part in musical activities in the local church. In their personal development, and in their learning, pupils are acquiring the skills that will serve them well as they go through life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers provide interesting lessons for pupils, using a wide range of resources and strategies. For example, good use was made of practical activities in a mathematics lesson on measuring in Year 2. Classes are well managed and relationships are a strength. As a result, pupils are well behaved, keen to learn and ready to work hard. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to motivate pupils and to develop their understanding. Teaching assistants are well deployed to promote learning, especially that of pupils with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities. This ensures they are able to join in all class activities and make good progress. Teachers make good use of questioning to help pupils clarify their ideas. This develops pupils' understanding of the work and also helps promote their language skills.

Teachers plan carefully for different groups of pupils, and provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. However, although planning also takes account of the needs of more able pupils, it lacks consistency. On occasions, the work provided for these pupils is not challenging enough, so that their knowledge and skills are not fully extended during the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad and interesting range of subjects, and this contributes to their good progress. There is a good emphasis across the school on the use of its attractive grounds. For example, the study of a badgers' sett, using a video link camera, inspires pupils' love of nature as they witness young badgers playing, and the digging of a potato crop formed the basis of an exciting science investigation in Year 3. The provision of French also benefits pupils' learning. However, the school believes that aspects of the curriculum would benefit from even more variety and interest and, as a result, further links are being made between subjects to produce topics that will motivate pupils even more. A particular emphasis is also being placed on the greater application of literacy, as the school recognises that some pupils have weaknesses in their writing skills. The introduction of resources and activities of special interest to older boys has led to the improvement in their performance that is evident in their class work. Learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified, and pupils are provided with a good range of tasks and activities.

There is a good emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is an exceptional range of outings, visitors and after-school clubs, which pupils much appreciate and support with enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Adults ensure that there is effective pastoral care for the pupils. Child protection and safe-guarding procedures are robust. Pupils, in turn, are confident that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried. Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe and secure environment. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living, and they are reminded of the need to take care, for instance when carrying out games activities. Regular use of support services also ensures good provision for pupils, such as for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The close links forged with pre-school providers successfully prepare children for joining Reception.

Pupils have targets for improving their work, and discussions with pupils suggest that whilst some are a little unsure of them, most have a suitable understanding about what they need to do to make their work better. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they often add words of praise and encouragement. A number of teachers also add advice about improving pupils' work, although this does not happen enough in every class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school with dedication and enthusiasm. He is supported well by the assistant headteacher and other staff members. There is a strong sense of teamwork, and the sharing of roles and responsibilities within the staff team is done well. There is a clear sense of purpose to continue to improve the provision for pupils, and especially to help them achieve as well as they can. The school has good systems for finding out how well it is doing, including seeking the views of parents. Most parents, in turn, speak well of the school, although a very small minority feel that communication with the school could be better. The self-review has accurately identified the school's overall effectiveness, as well as strengths and areas for development. Good use is made of the much improved assessment procedures in this process. As a result of this self-review, actions to improve the performance of boys show clear signs of having been successful, and the current focus on extending cross-curricular links to benefit pupils' writing skills in particular is an appropriate priority for the school.

Subject leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the strengths in their various subjects, and they have actively initiated and supported strategies for making improvements. Governance is good, with the governors supporting the school at every opportunity. A number of them are new, and they are currently developing their role through a programme of school and classrooms visits, to improve further their overall awareness of the school's provision.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 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 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	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 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.

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	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

4 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Fowey Primary School, Fowey PL23 1HH

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to the school council, and we really enjoyed joining you in assembly and in lessons. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good, and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in a good school where you are doing well with your work. Your headteacher and other staff know what they need to do to make the school even better.

These things are some of the strengths of the school:

- Teachers provide you with interesting lessons, including those where you use the school grounds.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You really enjoy the excellent range of activities that the school provides, such as visits and different clubs.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food and take exercise.
- The staff know you well and take good care of you.

These are things the school has been asked to improve:

- Provide you with more opportunities to develop your writing skills through the work you are given in subjects other than English.
- Make sure that you all get work that suits you and is hard enough for you.

You can help too, by telling your teacher if you think you would be able to do more difficult work.

We wish you all good luck for the future, and we hope you enjoy your summer holiday.

Best wishes

Martin James Lead Inspector