

Nanpean Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111899
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310719
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denis Mitchell
Headteacher	Joanna Harvey
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	St George's Road Nanpean St Austell PL26 7YH
Telephone number	01726 822447
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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

This is a smaller-than-average school situated in an area of social deprivation. Most pupils are of White British heritage and are taught in three mixed-age classes with year groups as small as five pupils. There is significant movement of pupils in and out of the school other than at the usual times of joining and leaving. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and of those qualifying for free school meals is well above average. The school had been without a substantive headteacher for one term before the current headteacher was appointed one year ago.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Nanpean is a satisfactory and improving school. The school has an accurate view of its current strengths and weaknesses and realises that it could improve further on the satisfactory education it currently offers. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has introduced a number of initiatives with considerable energy and enthusiasm. As a result, subject leaders are beginning to develop a better understanding of their role, although there is still a need to strengthen their understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects across the school. Governors are beginning to gain a better understanding of their role as 'critical friend'. It is too early in some cases to evaluate the full impact of these changes but one of the most significant changes is the improvement to how the school keeps a check on individual pupils' academic progress. This results in those who make less than expected progress having support more quickly. However, there is a need to make the tracking system more 'user friendly' and accessible to all staff. As a result of new class targets to help pupils improve, they are successfully beginning to develop an understanding of their own learning which is improving their progress.

The school works well in partnership with others to promote pupils' progress and well-being. Parents are very supportive of the school, one writing, 'We have nothing but praise for this hard-working school and its team.' Levels of attainment on entry are typically below those typical for their age and children make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. Standards throughout Years 1 to 6 are steadily improving so that by the time pupils leave the school at age 11, they achieve satisfactorily and reach the standards expected nationally. Historically, weaknesses in teaching resulted in pupils not always being sufficiently challenged. This, combined with many pupils moving into and out of the school, and the increase in the number of pupils who find learning more difficult, had resulted in overall standards in Year 6 declining. The school's own checks of progress indicate that pupils develop satisfactory skills that will contribute to their future well-being.

Pupils' personal development, along with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils learn how to be safe and healthy and take responsibility for themselves and others. They enjoy coming to school, as shown by the improving levels of attendance and their good behaviour, and they make a satisfactory contribution to the local community. However, pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society is not well developed. The curriculum is satisfactory and is currently undergoing some changes, the impact of which is not yet apparent. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Staff care for the pupils well and there is a strong ethos of inclusion. As a result, their care, guidance and support are good. Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection and the school has a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The majority of children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment that are below those typical for their age. Although they make satisfactory progress, standards remain below average by the start of Year 1. This is because the provision made for them, including the quality of teaching and systems for assessing children's progress, is satisfactory. Relationships between staff and children, and provision for children's care, well-being and safety, are good. Children clearly enjoy learning and make good progress in developing their personal and social

skills. However, the lack of planning for and resourcing of an outdoor Early Years curriculum appropriate for these children continues to restrict opportunities for independent learning. As a result, children's independent learning skills are not being developed to their best advantage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the youngest children's independent learning skills by improving planning and provision for the outdoor curriculum in the Foundation Stage.
- Improve the role of subject leaders to help them identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects more quickly.
- Improve provision for pupils' multicultural education so they have a greater understanding of those from differing backgrounds.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

While pupils enter the school with below-average levels of attainment, they make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress towards their targets. In 2006, standards were significantly below average at the end of Year 6. To a great extent this was due to the very high level of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the significant mobility of pupils in this year group. Only three of the 13 Year 6 pupils had started their education in the school and a very high proportion of those pupils joining the school after the Reception year had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards in the current Year 6 demonstrate considerable improvements on the previous year and are in line with national averages, partly because of better use of data to set targets and more careful monitoring of individual pupils. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels remains below the national average, however, and the school recognises the need to provide more consistent challenge for these pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The strong, caring relationships in the school underpin a supportive environment in which pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour is now good because successful whole-school approaches to managing behaviour ensure that pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils are articulate, friendly and polite and show respect for their peers and environment. They understand the factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, especially the need to eat healthy foods. Attendance is steadily improving and is now in line with national averages. This is due to stringent procedures and pupils' improved understanding of the importance of regular attendance. Pupils say they enjoy school and that isolated incidents of bullying are quickly dealt with, so that they feel safe at school. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall. Pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society and of the diversity and interdependence of cultures, however, is under-developed. Pupils have sound opportunities to contribute to the life of the school through the school council. As a result of their satisfactory personal development and improving standards in key skills, pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In most cases, classroom organisation is good and pupils are managed well. Classroom routines are made clear and regularly reinforced, which ensures learning takes place in a well-structured environment in which all pupils can contribute. As a result, relationships and behaviour are much improved and pupils behave well in lessons and listen carefully to teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils who need extra help are given it. In spite of recent improvements in the overall quality of teaching, it still remains satisfactory overall. This is because work planned in the mixed-age classes does not always ensure that more-able pupils are challenged as well as they could be. Pupils are now encouraged to evaluate their own progress against clear criteria and, as a result, are beginning to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and national strategies and guidelines are used appropriately. There is an appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science, and a determination to improve standards in these areas. The Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of children satisfactorily, although there is insufficient use of the outdoor area to provide an appropriate Early Years curriculum. Recent changes to planning have gone some way to ensuring that appropriate work is now provided for pupils of different abilities within the mixed-age classes, although more-able pupils are not always given suitably challenging work. Changes to activities are helping raise standards, although this has not resulted in more-able pupils reaching higher standards. The school is aware of the need to strengthen the use of ICT across the curriculum. Pupils take part enthusiastically in a good range of after-school clubs and activities, including cooking for boys and line dancing. These help extend their classroom experiences well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Procedures to protect children are clear and secure. Care for vulnerable pupils is good. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and good links have been established with outside agencies to provide additional support for pupils. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving as a result of better understanding by staff of whole-school information on the progress individual pupils make and the standards they achieve. However, the system is new and the headteacher is aware of the need to ensure that teachers have ready access to the information in order to enable them to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Newly introduced group targets for English and mathematics go some way to helping pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Books are marked up to date, although teachers miss opportunities when marking to explain how pupils could improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher, with the effective support of the local authority, has improved the quality of the school's self-analysis and has rapidly introduced a series of initiatives designed to improve the progress of pupils across the school. However, the changes have been made so recently that their success, or not, has yet to be confirmed by improvements in achievement in national tests. The recently introduced termly checks on pupils' progress are providing the school with secure, accurate data in their reading, writing and mathematics work. As a result, those needing help are spotted quickly. Although subject leaders are beginning to understand how to use assessment information to check on the school's performance, there is still too much reliance on the headteacher to provide this analysis. After undergoing what one governor described as 'a sharp learning curve', the governing body is now better informed about the school's achievements and is beginning to develop its role in holding the school to account. Although the new headteacher has had a positive impact on the school in a very short time, given the weaknesses in the role of subject leaders in monitoring standards and progress, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

2 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nanpean Community Primary School, Nanpean, St Austell PL26 7YH

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit.

Nanpean is a satisfactory school. Your headteacher and staff are leading the school satisfactorily. They care for you well and give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe, and you do this well. You told us that you like school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. We agree with you. Your behaviour is good and you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do.

I have asked your school to do a few things to make it even better:

- Ensure that the youngest children have regular opportunities to explore and investigate in the outdoor classroom areas.
- Ensure that teachers in charge of different subjects know how well you are all doing and make sure that you are doing as well as you possibly can.
- Provide you with more chances to develop an understanding of other cultures.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome in your school.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis Lead Inspector

Annex B

2 February 2008

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Clive Lewis
Lead Inspector