

Luxulyan School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111917
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310727
Inspection date	1 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Satterthwaite
Headteacher	Brian Mccaldin
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Luxulyan Bodmin PL30 5EE
Telephone number	01726 850397
Fax number	01726 850397

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: • the effectiveness of actions taken to improve provision for children in Reception, and the impact these have had on the progress they make • how successful the school has been in raising standards in English and mathematics • how well pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve • the usefulness of the school development plan in bringing about improvement and the contribution of all staff and governors in raising standards and driving the school forward. Evidence was gathered from an examination of the school's documentation, parents' questionnaires and pupils' work, observations of pupils in classes, around the school and in the playground, as well as interviews with members of staff, pupils, governors and parents. 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

Most pupils attend this very small school from the local village and surrounding area. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of pupils from Polish and Portuguese families that have moved into the area. A high percentage of pupils move into and out of the school during the school year, including many for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It provides a sound education for its pupils and over the last eighteen months there has been significant improvement in the progress they have made, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The key to rising standards and pupils' greatly improved achievement is the effective leadership of the headteacher. He has instilled a sense of urgency about the need to drive up standards, and the quality of teaching and learning has been considerably enhanced as a result of the actions he has taken. This means that underachievement has been successfully tackled. Parents appreciate the changes being made, particularly that of reverting to three classes for the morning session, and wholeheartedly support the school. As one commented, 'The headteacher has identified and dealt with the weaknesses, and has improved teaching standards and team spirit amongst staff.'

Standards are a little below average and pupils achieve satisfactorily against their starting points. The school has introduced systems to enable staff to analyse how well pupils are doing and take action to improve. This has been particularly successful in identifying pupils who have not been doing as well as they should and enabling them to have specific support in order to catch up. Robust actions taken to ensure that older pupils made up lost ground have been decisive and successful. Materials to inspire and motivate pupils to write at length have been used successfully, with the result that pupils' writing has improved considerably. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although they are now good in most lessons and pupils are now more confident in the basic skills, pupils' work shows that they have not been learning sufficient problem-solving and investigation skills in numeracy lessons, and this means that whilst mathematics overall has shown substantial improvement, standards in this key skill area are not yet as high as they should be.

The school has acted swiftly and effectively to meet the needs of the growing number of pupils for whom English is not their home language. Teachers work hard to ensure they receive appropriate support, with the result that they make good progress in their acquisition of English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good, well-focused support, enabling them to make effective progress against their targets.

There is a great strength in the personal development of the pupils, which is outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy school. They respond enthusiastically in lessons and are thoughtful and reflective in assembly. Despite the high number of pupils joining and leaving during the school, attendance remains average overall, and the attendance of most pupils is good. Pupils are highly considerate in their dealings with each other. The playground is lively and happy; a friendship stop ensures that pupils always have someone to play with. They have an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise. The Viking wake 'n' shake observed during the inspection, which was devised by pupils and incorporated appropriately war-like movements, was great fun and extremely energetic. Pupils have a voice and the school council was consulted as to the success of fruity break times, which are eagerly supported by all, as well as such issues as new playground equipment. They recognise that they have a responsibility to others and proudly relate their involvement in becoming a 'Fair Trade school'. Their developing skills in collaborative working, coupled with their improving skills in numeracy and literacy, provide a sound preparation for their future lives.

Pupils are now learning more effectively because they are interested and motivated by the activities provided by their teachers. One pupil commented that 'the teachers are passionate

about us learning'. There is a good emphasis on practical and investigative activities, which stimulate pupils' imaginations. In these mixed age group classes, teachers are generally successful at planning a wide range of tasks which are carefully devised to meet the learning needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards skilfully to make explanations clearer and lessons more exciting. This means that teachers can successfully inject humour into lessons, knowing that this will not cause disruption. Older pupils say marking helps them to understand how well they have done and, sometimes, what they need to do to improve their work. However, pupils are not involved sufficiently in assessing for themselves how well they are learning.

The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum. It celebrates pupils' achievements well. This is evident from the good quality work displayed around the school such as that from a recent Arts Week, which illustrates how the school seeks to enrich the learning experiences of the pupils through themed days or weeks and visits and visitors. There is a good range of after-school activities in which a high percentage of pupils participate. The very good programme for pupils' personal development makes a major contribution to their excellent personal development, and curricular planning now provides teachers with sufficient guidance on investigational work in mathematics. The school is a highly caring community and the relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Consequently, pupils feel valued and secure. Pupils are extremely well looked after and all procedures for child protection and safeguarding, including those for ensuring they are safe when using the Internet, are firmly established. The weaker element in the care, guidance and support given to pupils is academic guidance. Systems for checking pupils' academic progress are rigorous. However, this information is not used effectively enough to set pupils individual targets; as a result, these are rather generalised and pupils themselves have insufficient input into the process.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Morale has improved. The headteacher has a very clear vision, and knows what the school needs to do to improve further. Actions to bring this about have been successful, particularly with regard to the provision in the Foundation Stage and in writing. Management of the budget has been particularly good and this has enabled the school to revert to three classes in the morning in order to provide more focused teaching in literacy and numeracy. Although there is more to do in mathematics, the school's track record shows that there is a good capacity for further improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the school development plan is a useful document. However, it is very ambitious for such a small school. At present, it does not differentiate sufficiently between the longer-term strategic elements and the shorter-term items requiring more immediate action, and success criteria are not always sufficiently clear. As a result, there is a danger of the school trying to do too much at any one time. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Their monitoring role is improving and they are beginning to challenge the school more effectively with regard to its performance.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The attainment of children on entry to the Reception classes varies greatly from year to year because their numbers are small. However, in recent years this has generally been below average, with speech and communication skills a particular weakness. Children quickly develop good learning habits, such as independence, and make appropriate gains in all areas of learning. They are adequately prepared for Year 1, and achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory. Work set in lessons for the younger children in the class is suitably different from that set for

the older Year 1 pupils, although the actual learning objectives for the lesson are not always made clear. Good support is provided by the teaching assistants and other adults. Children's progress is carefully monitored and recorded, and this ensures appropriate coverage of the required areas of learning.

Although overall provision is currently satisfactory, it has improved considerably over the last year and is now set to provide a more stimulating and exciting learning environment for the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills through investigation and problem solving.
- Review the school development plan so that the most urgent priorities and their success criteria are more clearly identified.
- Involve pupils more in the assessment of how well they are doing in their learning and in the target-setting process so that they fully understand what they need to do to improve.

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.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	2

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	3
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	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?	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?	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	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	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 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Luxulyan Primary School, Bodmin PL30 5EE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. You certainly seem to be very happy and it was good to hear how you enjoy your work and all the extra activities in which you are involved. We think your school gives you a satisfactory education and is working hard to make it better.

These are the things I liked best.

- You really enjoy school and are keen to learn.
- Your writing has greatly improved during this year.
- You clearly understand the importance of eating healthily at school and taking physical exercise. I enjoyed the Viking 'wake 'n' shake' first thing in the morning!
- The curriculum covers all the subjects you are supposed to learn and you have a good range of themed weeks and choice of after-school clubs.
- Teachers help you to make satisfactory progress and you say learning is often made fun.
- The teachers and staff take very good care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteacher understands very well what must be done to make your school even better.

There are some things that can be improved.

- Your numeracy skills have improved a lot during this year. I would now like you to have more opportunities to use them to solve problems in mathematics.
- I would like you to have more opportunities to judge for yourselves how well you are doing, and to play a greater part in the setting of your targets.
- Your headteacher has a very ambitious programme to make things better for you at school. I would like this to be broken down into more manageable chunks.

I am glad you enjoy your school and hope you will continue to work hard.

Very best wishes

Mrs Christine Huard Lead inspector