

Appledore Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113125
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311116
Inspection date	21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	David Shears

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anna Flaxman
Headteacher	Susan Freeman
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2003
School address	Richmond Road Appledore Bideford EX39 1PF
Telephone number	01237 474365
Fax number	01237 424325

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

The impact of leaders on areas for development, including boys' writing and mathematics for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6.

The accuracy of assessment and targets and their effectiveness in supporting pupils' progress.

The impact of curriculum, guidance and support in helping pupils to improve their work, particularly in English and mathematics.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and documents, and by speaking with staff and pupils. 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

This is an average sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity and speak English at home. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties is higher than the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Pupils arrive with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those expected of children of their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 having attained standards that are broadly average. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 build on this effective start, making outstanding progress throughout the school so that they leave with standards that are above the national average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make excellent progress.

Leaders and managers put the pupils firmly at the heart of this totally inclusive school. The pastoral care and support they receive is outstanding, ensuring that individual needs are catered for. All procedures to ensure their health and safety are robust and carefully managed, including risk assessments for activities both in and out of school. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is well managed, with many outside agencies such as medical and educational services giving of their expertise to enhance provision. These pupils have clear individual plans to support their learning, which are regularly reviewed. All pupils are given targets to reach in literacy and numeracy although these are not used sufficiently in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their own progress although the school recognises that the use of this technique is not yet consistent in all classes.

The excellent care that pupils receive means that their personal development is also outstanding. Pupils know how to stay safe both in and outside of school and can give many examples of how to keep healthy including the importance of sleep and regular exercise. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school and feel safe, knowing that adults look after them well. Attendance is above the national average with effective procedures in place to support the few that need it. The vast majority of pupils behave exceptionally well and where a few find this difficult, efficient and effective procedures are in place and used well to support them. Pupils are also active in supporting others both in the school and the wider community, such as the local lifeboat and fire stations. They often suggest ways of raising money to support specific charities and the school welcomes the opportunity to endorse their work. The above average standards reached ensure that pupils are well prepared to move to the next stage of their education.

The obvious enjoyment of pupils is partly due to the excellent curriculum they receive. They learn through many first-hand experiences and these, together with the excellent guidance and support, promote the development of their reading, writing and mathematical skills. The curriculum is enriched with a number of exciting initiatives such as the forest school and many visits and visitors. The outdoor environment is superbly used as a learning opportunity as well as a recreational area which contributes well to their spiritual, moral and social development. This is underpinned by a good focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning, an initiative that is widely acknowledged as an area of excellence in the school. Opportunities for spiritual development are identified through assemblies as well as through the curriculum such as in religious education, art and science. There are many experiences through local artists and visitors from abroad that support both the global and British aspects of culture diversity. Pupils are recognised by the school as being individuals who have different gifts and abilities to share with others. Gifted and talented pupils are given extra opportunities to enhance their areas of expertise, whether these are academic or practical, and success is celebrated. A good range of extra-curricular activities such as sports, gardening, French and music give pupils an even wider experience and the take-up of these is high.

The senior management team, led by an equally dedicated headteacher, have an excellent understanding of their strengths and a clear vision to know where they want to improve. This strong leadership has meant that the school has improved considerably since the last inspection in many ways, giving it an outstanding capacity to improve further. Leaders and managers set themselves challenging targets that are reached by pupils, having successfully raised standards of boys' writing and of mathematics among more able pupils. Good use is being made of assessment to individually track pupils' progress and clearly identify those who need further support. Governors are very supportive of the school although they do not yet offer sufficient challenge for improvement. Parents give high praise to the headteacher and staff for their commitment to, and care of pupils. They feel able to approach staff with any concerns, knowing that their views are considered important.

The clear vision of the school inspires teachers to make their lessons interesting and exciting for the pupils. Lessons are planned in detail and work is well matched to their abilities. The school has identified the need to ensure that questioning skills also support the needs of all. The relationships between staff and pupils are excellent resulting in the pupils having a very positive attitude to their work and school in general. The outstanding teaching means that pupils make excellent progress overall, particularly in numeracy and science. New initiatives also support the improved progress made in reading and writing.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children begin school with levels of skills and knowledge that are broadly below those expected of children of their age, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. There are good induction procedures to ensure that children feel safe and cared for, right from the start of their education. Pupils with particular difficulties are identified early and good support is given. There is a good partnership with parents who appreciate the support they are given, including how to help their own children to practise their reading and writing skills. The excellent curriculum ensures that the children make good progress although the outdoor area is not used as well as it could be. In particular, pupils make very good progress in their personal and social development. The provision is managed well although the assessment of children is not consistent enough to ensure that judgements are secure.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress of pupils' skills further, through maximising the use of targets across the curriculum, supported by consistent pupils' self-assessment.

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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	2
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	1

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	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

22 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Appledore Community Primary and Nursery School, Appledore EX39 1PF

Thank you for your warm welcome when I visited your school recently. It was good to talk with you and find out about your school, which is an outstanding one.

You told me that you really enjoy coming to school and I can easily see why. Your teachers work very hard to make your lessons exciting and fun and you are making excellent progress in your learning and reach above average standards. You were able to tell me about all the new experiences that you have, such as the forest school.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and healthy. Your teachers take great care of you whether you are in school or out on a trip and that helps you to feel safe. Thank you for all the ways that you help other people such as finding interesting ways to raise money for charities. It is good to know that you care for others as much as they care for you. The headteacher and staff run the school very well.

I have asked your school to make sure that you are reminded of your literacy and numeracy targets in every subject so that you can practise and improve your skills even more. You could help by telling teachers how well you think you are doing in lessons.

Thank you for a very special day. It was lovely to meet you. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Shears Lead inspector

Annex B



22 May 2008

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Lead inspector