

# Oreston Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113314
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	311203
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rowena Onions

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	315
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann James
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Ackers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 October 2004
<b>School address</b>	Oreston Road Plymstock Plymouth PL9 7JY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 402050
<b>Fax number</b>	01752 482986

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the pupils' achievement in mathematics; the combined effect of teaching and the curriculum on pupils' learning and attitudes; and the quality and impact of school self-evaluation and development. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons; scrutiny of pupils' work; discussions with them, the staff and two governors; and a scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. 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 form, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

In this above-average size school, almost all pupils are of White British origin. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children enter the school with wide-ranging attainments but their skills in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development are below those expected.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Oreston is an outstanding school. The strong combination of a dynamic and exciting curriculum and consistently effective teaching ensures that pupils make outstanding progress throughout the school. Over the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, pupils make very strong progress in reading and writing and good progress in mathematics. By Year 6, pupils are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science, demonstrating excellent achievement over their time in the school. There is good emphasis throughout the school on helping pupils to develop mathematical skills that they can use in a variety of contexts. The school has, however, correctly identified a need to further strengthen the younger pupils' ability to calculate.

The outstanding curriculum provides pupils, from those in the Reception class onwards, with a wide range of motivating and meaningful activities. As the pupils say, 'We do something different every day.' As a result, pupils are interested and engaged and work really hard. The flexible approach taken to the grouping of pupils, means that they sometimes work in groups organised by age, sometimes by attainment and sometimes by a particular assessed need. Very good use is made of the high quality skills of teaching assistants to give pupils opportunities to work in smaller groups. This flexibility of grouping enables targeted teaching and supports rapid progress. Pupils report liking this approach, as it means they develop wide-ranging friendships as well as being known by a large number of adults. This organisation also promotes a strong sense of 'team' amongst the pupils. Parents often comment on the family feel of the school that enables pupils to feel very safe and to gain confidence that underpins their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in other situations.

The school takes a cross-curricular approach to teaching pupils, so skills learned in one lesson and in one context are very frequently applied and practised in others. Older pupils, for example, used their knowledge of problem-solving in mathematics to cost, for sale at the school fair, scarves they had made in art and design. This approach not only means that pupils understand the relevance of their learning but gives them opportunity to consolidate and extend their skills. Work displayed around the school, much of which is of high quality, shows pupils gain a breadth of experience and achievement across different subjects. The school has a number of external accreditations such as ArtsMark and Healthy School status that demonstrate the breadth of the curriculum. Pupils are excited by what they do in school, giving them a love of learning to promote success and economic well-being in their later lives. In the words of a parent, 'The school covers the academic content, but ensures that children also learn vital life skills.'

Pupils are delightful! They take a confident and thoughtful approach to their lives and work. An emphasis on healthy lifestyles, recently given extra status in a healthy living focus week, ensures their excellent understanding of how to keep themselves well through diet and exercise. The notion of a 'school team' is promoted through giving pupils responsibility for helping each other, through schemes such as pupil mediators who are trained to help sort out any difficulties between pupils. Pupils are also involved with school improvement, for example through the working of the school council. They gain a deep feeling of responsibility for others in the wider community through extensive fundraising. The school actively promotes knowledge of worldwide communities, for example through links with a school in Africa, through the teaching of Spanish and through work in religious education. However, the pupils are not all sure about how this knowledge relates to the way of life of different groups living in Great Britain.

The school is a self-evaluative community at all levels. Pupils are helped to understand their own achievements through high quality marking, through regular opportunities to talk about their work with their teachers and through ongoing target setting. Pupils are clear that this helps them improve because 'you know what to do next'. Teachers constantly review the work of pupils and this ongoing assessment underpins the selection of groups, which change according to purpose and need. This ensures the best progress is promoted in all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those that are more able. Strengths and weaknesses at class or school level are identified and addressed by staff. Recent improvement work has looked at some areas of relative weakness in the Reception class underpinning writing and at the promoting of writing skills throughout the school. This has been very effective and has resulted in a significant rise in standards in writing this year.

The sense of team is strong at leadership level. The headteacher has been very successful in developing a team of senior leaders who work together with all staff to check, analyse and improve the quality of education provided. Governors are very well informed and proactive in supporting the school's work and in holding it to account for outcomes in both standards and in pupils' personal development. The school is outward-looking, making exceptionally strong partnerships with others, both in undertaking research work that makes it forward-thinking and in helping to train a future generation of teachers. Parents are very complimentary about the education provided.

The leadership style, described by one senior teacher as, 'Moving forward together', underpins the outstanding leadership and management of the school. This approach, together with the success of recent developments and the very strong partnerships with others, means that the school has outstanding capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children in the Reception Year are given a very secure and stimulating start that has enabled the vast majority to reach the expected goals by the end of the year. The excellent curriculum, linked with the very strong teaching, allows children to develop through working indoors and out, on their own, with other children and with adults. Themed work and flexible groupings are successful in promoting the individual progress of each child. Strong leadership means that relative weaknesses in progress, for example in early calculation, are rapidly identified. Past action to improve has been very successful.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Strengthen younger pupils' ability to calculate in mathematics.

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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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
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	1
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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

3 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oreston Community Primary School, Plymouth PL9 7JY

I really enjoyed my day at your school and would like to thank you for your help and very friendly conversations. I know you will be pleased to know that I think yours is an outstanding school.

This is what I liked most about your school:

- The rapid progress you make in learning to read, write and do maths.
- That you enjoy school and try so hard to learn.
- The way you are helped to know how to improve your work.
- The range of exciting activities provided for you by your teachers and helpers.
- The way teachers plan for you to practise what you have learned in lots of different ways.
- That teachers put you in different groups for different activities, which allows you to work with lots of different children and adults.
- The good care adults take to make sure you are happy, safe and well.
- That everyone in your school, including you, are working together to make it even better.

To make things even better, this is what I have asked your school to do now:

- Help the younger children to improve their ability to calculate.

Through your school council, you can help the teachers to keep your school an outstanding one that continues to get even better.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions Lead Inspector