

Pyworthy Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113383
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	311242
Inspection date	1 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	42
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glenn Alvsaker
Headteacher	T Woodward
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pyworthy Holsworthy EX22 6ST
Telephone number	01409 253681
Fax number	01409 254348

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	1 October 2008
Inspection number	311242

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average with two classes. The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in the other class. All the pupils are White British. They come from the small village and outlying farms and hamlets in a very rural area. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and with statements of special educational needs are above the national averages. The school is on a very small site with little outdoor space. A new headteacher, the only full-time teacher, took up post in 2007.

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. It has many good features, having improved significantly over the last year. The headteacher is raising the expectations of pupils and staff and as a result, the progress made by pupils is accelerating. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and the school provides good care, guidance and support, with every pupil being particularly well known as an individual. The welfare of the children in the EYFS is exceptionally well promoted. The pupils love their time in school and appreciate the many special events and activities. Parents value its many qualities, with unanimous support from those replying to the inspectors' survey for almost all aspects of its work. One reflected similar comments received, by writing, 'My children love going to school and say it couldn't be better.' Another described the headteacher as 'a breath of fresh air' whilst others commented on how things have 'improved greatly over the last year and a half'. The school has an accurate view of how well it is doing. It has demonstrated significant progress in addressing previously identified weaknesses, such as the use of computers and pupils' overall achievement, and is well placed to improve further. The attainment of children on entry to the EYFS is below national expectations. Children make good progress in the EYFS. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are also making good progress and standards are rising, particularly by the end of Year 2. Although older pupils are also making good progress, standards at the end of Year 6 have been slower to rise as some are still catching up from previous periods when their progress was not as strong. Improved progress is a direct consequence of the good teaching. Teachers provide stimulating activities which motivate the pupils, and they strive to reflect the exceptionally wide range of abilities in their classes. Most of the time they are successful in this but occasionally the work set does not take sufficient account of pupils' different learning needs and so learning is slower, particularly for older and more able pupils, who are not fully extended. The curriculum is good and there are many enriching activities beyond the classroom and the routine school day. In the EYFS, although children respond well to the activities, they do not have sufficient opportunities to learn independently through play in and out of doors.

The headteacher and governors provide good leadership and management. The headteacher, who has a substantial teaching commitment, leads most of the formal and informal checks on the school's performance. He has established systematic ways of checking pupils' progress, helping to raise standards. The school is clear about its priorities for improvement and is working purposefully to address them.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision is good within the class shared with older pupils. The very sensitive and careful induction procedures help to establish a close partnership between parents and school staff, and this contributes to the outstanding promotion of the children's welfare. The school works very diligently to enable those who are more vulnerable than most to be fully integrated into the life of the school. The attainment of children on entry is unusually varied and fluctuates considerably from year to year, given the very small cohorts. Overall it is below national expectations, particularly in personal and social development and communication and language skills. Children are taught well and make good progress in all areas of learning, including their personal development and language skills. Nevertheless, whilst a few exceed the learning goals expected by the end of the year, standards overall are still marginally below average. The staff

team are well led and work effectively together to plan experiences based on careful observations of the children's individual responses. The school has recently adopted improved systems for recording assessments and plotting the progress of each pupil, enabling leaders to consider how to adapt and further improve the provision. Opportunities for free movement in and out of doors are limited by the cramped nature of the site, restricting times for learning through independent play. Curriculum planning, which is satisfactory, does not make best use of the additional indoor accommodation to compensate for this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teachers consistently plan activities that fully reflect the exceptionally wide range of abilities, so that all pupils are engaged and extended, including those who are older and more able.
- Strengthen the planning for children to learn independently through play in the EYFS, making best use of the additional room in order to compensate for limited access outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Their progress has accelerated recently in reading, writing and mathematics, but particularly in writing, following a whole school focus on this key skill along with generally higher expectations of pupils. Standards are rising and are average. There are several reasons why, despite this good progress, standards are average rather than above average. The first is that a significant proportion of the older pupils are catching up after making, at best, satisfactory progress in some of the previous years. The second is that standards on entry to the school and into Year 1 are below average and so pupils have further to go. The above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties receive good individual support from teachers and teaching assistants and make good progress given their starting points, but do not reach standards expected for their age by the time they leave. Pupils' skills in using computers have improved rapidly and are now above national expectations. This is a significant factor in the pupils' good level of skills needed for secondary education and adult life. The school makes good use of the performance information to set challenging targets for the end of each year. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are on track to meet their targets, which, if attained, would maintain the upward trend in achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

There is a strong 'family atmosphere' throughout the school and pupils feel valued and at the same time go out of their way to care for one another. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the importance of healthy lifestyles. The school has received a healthy school and physical activity award in recognition of its good work in this area. The family ethos is strengthened by the outstanding experience of having a freshly cooked lunch in a restaurant environment across the road from the school. All four aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils' cultural development has been strengthened by links with a school in Slovakia, although they have relatively less awareness of Britain's urban communities and cultural diversity. The school is aware of this and is taking steps to increase awareness. Behaviour is good and pupils are lively but sensible in the very small playground. They contribute by taking on responsibilities well around the school and get involved in the local community, writing features for the press and collecting money for local

charities, such as the hospice. Attendance is above average and most pupils arrive punctually despite some having lengthy journeys to school, reflecting their very positive attitude to learning and school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan interesting and stimulating experiences, often making good links between subjects, such as scientific investigations on rocks following a geography trip to Dartmoor. Pupils are in the same class for three or four years, enabling teachers to get to know them all extremely well, even though most of the teachers are in school part-time. Teachers use this knowledge when planning work and group pupils well, especially in English and mathematics, in order to provide work matched to pupils' levels of understanding. This group work is supported well by the use of the skilled teaching assistants, who confidently lead sessions with specific groups. In a few lessons teachers do not think enough about the exceptionally wide ability range, giving all the pupils the same activity with the same amount of guidance and time. In these lessons more able pupils are not being fully extended and do not have to decide independently how best to approach the task or set down their results. This slows their rate of learning. Teachers use computers well in their lessons. This helps to motivate pupils and supports those who respond best to visual images. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, frequently providing them with clear guidance about how to improve and encouraging them to reflect on their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a broad curriculum enhanced well by visits and special events, including a recent visit by four pupils to Slovakia. The school, in partnership with other local schools, has developed a four-year rolling programme that helps ensure progression as well as balance. In addition to the substantial time spent on English and mathematics, strengths include the use of computers, personal and social education, geography and outdoor physical activities. The school works effectively to overcome most of the limitations on the curriculum imposed by the small site and accommodation. There is no hall, a tiny playground and no field and yet the school has a physical activity award in recognition of its work. This is because it makes good use of the village hall, park and activity area. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and there are occasional special events for those who are gifted and talented.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care and support for pupils is very strong throughout the day and their time in the school. In the EYFS it is outstanding. All the staff know all the pupils and their families. Pupils with particular needs are identified early and the school works closely with parents and external professionals to ensure their needs can be met. Effective deployment of well-trained teaching assistants enables those with learning difficulties to receive good levels of support and guidance. Procedures designed to safeguard pupils are rigorously implemented, with regular training up-dates for staff. Systems for providing academic guidance are improving, with pupils

involved and clear about the challenging targets set and what they need to do to improve. These systems are comparatively new so have not yet had a full impact.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is encouraging pupils to raise their aspirations and the headteacher has involved staff and governors in setting a clear sense of direction. The headteacher's commitment, energy and enthusiasm are major factors in the school's recent improvement and the good leadership and management. One parent wrote of the 'whole school community being really motivated since his arrival'. Community cohesion has been enhanced by this and members of the community go out of their way to support the school. The headteacher has strengthened procedures to record and track pupils' progress, which are now good, and uses the information well to set targets. He carries out frequent checks on the school's work, including monitoring lessons and children's work, and has used the findings to establish clear priorities. Some of the monitoring undertaken, especially that which appears informal, although perceptive, is not always systematically scheduled or recorded. Nevertheless, governors, together with the headteacher, have developed some exceptionally effective ways to keep tabs on progress in implementing development plan priorities. Governance is good and governors have a clear understanding of their roles and fulfil them well.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

3 October 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Pyworthy Primary School, Holsworthy EX22 6ST

- Thank you for the way you made us feel very welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our day in Pyworthy. We were particularly impressed by all the interesting things that are going on in such a small school and the way you care for one another. We are pleased that you like your school so much. Pyworthy is a good school. Here are some more of the highlights we found during our visit:
- You work hard in lessons and are making good progress. Your writing is much better than it used to be, although some of you need to take a bit more care with your handwriting. You are good at using computers.
- Everyone who works in the school knows each of you very well and makes sure you are cared for. The youngest children are looked after exceptionally well and all of you make them feel safe and welcome.
- The teachers set your work carefully so that most of it is not too hard or easy for you. This is very difficult for them because some of you are so much older than others in the same class.
- Although the school buildings and site are very small, the headteacher and governors are good at ensuring you can use the village hall, park and MUGA.
- The arrangements for you to have lunch in the pub restaurant are brilliant. You obviously enjoy the occasion and the freshly cooked food.
- Your headteacher has lots of ideas about how to improve the school and all the staff help him to provide many special events and interesting activities.
- Your parents are glad that you go to this school and told us how much they think it has improved.
- We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on two things to make the school even better:
- Help the teachers to be even better at giving you work that is always not too hard or too easy.
- Plan more ways for the children in the Reception year to be able to choose what they wish to do, for example when they can play with equipment in the extension room.

We know you will want to help and will have your own ideas about how to make the school even better.

Yours sincerely, Martin Kerly Lead Inspector