

# Mousehole Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111796
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	322739
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Redpath HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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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	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Byrne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tamsin Dyer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Foxes Lane Mousehole Penzance TR19 6QQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01736 731427
<b>Fax number</b>	01736 733029

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mousehole Community Primary School is a small school located in a fishing village near Penzance. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their home language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average, although a small number with complex needs have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion entitled to free school meals is lower than average. The school was deemed to require special measures in June 2007 and has since been subject to regular monitoring visits. The headteacher joined the school in an acting capacity in September 2007 and was appointed to the substantive post in April 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Since the last inspection, significant improvements have been made and Mousehole Community Primary now provides a good quality of education. Strong leadership by the headteacher and the shared commitment of staff to raising standards have been the key reasons for the school's marked improvement. The school has also benefited from very good external support and the governing body's greater ability to provide oversight of the school's work.

Mousehole Primary is a very happy school where pupils benefit from a high quality of care. In the words of one pupil, 'It is a really happy, friendly school. You get a cosy, warm feeling.' Pupils enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is excellent. They are polite, courteous and keen to learn. Pupils' good personal development is supported by the school's close links with parents and other agencies.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. This is because of the good quality of teaching provided by a committed staff team. Pupils achieve particularly well between Years 3 and 6 and a large proportion gain the highest levels in English and mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6. Across the school, standards in writing have not been as strong as in other subjects and the school has introduced strategies which are raising pupils' attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because targets are successfully linked to small steps in their learning.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school is successful in involving pupils in local festivals and projects which enrich the curriculum. Planning for some subjects is not complete, for example in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and information and communication technology (ICT). The school is very successful in promoting pupils' knowledge of their own Cornish culture. There is less emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures in modern Britain.

The headteacher provides purposeful leadership with a clear focus on raising standards. She has been successful in engaging staff in a shared vision for improving the school's performance. A number of parents wrote to the inspector expressing positive views about the school's recent development. In recognition of the hard work of the headteacher and staff, one parent wrote, 'The school is a completely different place to a year ago, the improvement has been immense.' The governing body provides a satisfactory level of support and is closely involved in the school's forward planning. Most governors are relatively new and are rightly seeking to strengthen their ability to challenge the work of the school. The school's greatly improved performance since the last inspection, and its established culture of high expectation, demonstrate it has a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher and teaching assistants work closely together to provide a welcoming atmosphere where children enjoy learning. Children learn to get along well together and make good progress. Currently, children are taught in a mixed age class of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Planning for this broad age range has been strengthened over the current year and is now meets all the pupils' needs. Activities

include a good balance between focused teaching and learning through play. Attractive displays create a stimulating environment for learning. Outside play is provided in the school playground. Whilst satisfactory, this arrangement does not provide easy access for the development of children's creative and physical skills. The school has good plans for improving provision in the Foundation Stage.

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

- Extend opportunities for pupils to learn about the different religions and cultures in modern Britain.
- Ensure curriculum planning is in place for all subjects.
- Strengthen the capacity of the governing body to challenge the school's performance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Year groups are relatively small and there are fluctuations in the profile of groups on entry, often due to changes in the abilities of one or two pupils. When they enter the school children are broadly in line with the expected starting point for their age. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading writing and mathematics are in line with or slightly above the national average. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and achieve standards which are above the national average. In English and mathematics, a large number of pupils gain the highest levels in national tests. Standards are high because staff use effective systems for checking pupils' progress and take steps to tackle underperformance. For example, standards in writing are not as strong as in other subjects and effective strategies have been introduced which are beginning to show improvement. These include increased opportunities for creative writing and a focus on developing literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Those who struggle with literacy receive small group support which enables many of them to catch up with their peers. More precise targets have been introduced for pupils who have a statement of special educational needs which are often shared with their parents. This is helping them to make better progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils thrive due to the caring ethos that pervades the school. In the words of one pupil, 'There are no bullies. We are all friends. You feel safe and well looked after.' Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, although there has been recent improvement due to the school's rigorous monitoring arrangements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development has been enhanced recently by the introduction of reflection time in assembly. Participation in stimulating events, such as arts projects and local festivals, raises pupils' self-esteem and fosters a sense of pride in the community. Pupils' efforts and achievements are recognised through the awarding of 'star awards', house points and certificates in assemblies. Pupils have a very good knowledge of Cornish culture and learn about different world cultures in geography projects. Their knowledge of the various faiths and cultures in modern Britain is more limited. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe and leading a healthy lifestyle. They use equipment responsibly in lessons and eat healthy food during 'snack times' and at lunch. Pupils play a full part in the life of the school and wider community when, for example, they run the school tuck shop, serve on the school council, or raise money

for charities. These activities, together with their above average skills in numeracy and literacy, give pupils a good preparation for future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching has improved since the last inspection because there is a clearer focus on what pupils are expected to learn. Pupils' progress is assessed more thoroughly and this information is used to plan lessons which take close account of different abilities in the class. A good variety of activities captures pupils' interest and promotes their positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally too much time is spent introducing the lesson and the pace of learning slows as a result. Teachers and support staff work hard to ensure pupils achieve their best. For example, Year 6 pupils were given extra activities to help them prepare for their end of year tests. These were described by one pupil as 'really helpful and fun'. Throughout the school, attractive displays of pupils' work create a positive learning environment. Teaching assistants are well trained and confidently take responsibility for working with small groups and individual pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and varied and has a strong emphasis on pupils' artistic development. The curriculum is enriched through regular music sessions, work with visiting artists, and involvement in local festivals. One recent project involved pupils making an animated DVD with help from visiting artists for which the school won an award. The school is particularly successful in developing skills across several subjects by studying topics based on local issues, such as wind farms or the proposed building of a marina. Several topics are covered which relate to pupils' staying safe and developing positive relationships, although these do not form part of a comprehensive PSHE programme. Pupils have regular access to the use of computers. The school is rightly seeking to extend planning so that the development of ICT skills is linked to subjects across the curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The high quality of care is underpinned by the trusting relationships that exist between adults and pupils. Pupils feel safe and know they can talk to an adult if they have any problems. As one pupil commented, 'The atmosphere is great here, everyone is nice and the adults are easy to talk to.' Robust procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all working within the school community and all legal safeguarding requirements are met. Good links with other agencies ensure pupils with a statement of special educational needs receive appropriate support. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Whilst pupils are aware of their targets for improvement, and marking is consistent, pupils are not always expected to make corrections to their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school has a very inclusive ethos built on strong links with the local community. The headteacher takes time to listen to staff, parents and pupils. All report they value the time she devotes to listening to any concerns or suggestions they might have. Involving staff at all levels in the process of change has been a significant factor in improving the school's performance. Staff responsible for areas of the curriculum have developed their roles and now play a full part in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for further development and responds quickly to tackle areas which need improvement. Good systems have been established recently for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Data is analysed thoroughly to provide an accurate picture of the school's performance. The use of targets is developing but is hampered by the lack of accurate assessment information from previous years. The governing body provides a satisfactory level of support and it has established committees to provide oversight of each aspect of the school's work. Most governors have joined the governing body recently and are working closely with staff to improve their knowledge of the school's performance.

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	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
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	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 the learners' needs?	2
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?	2

<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>	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	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

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mousehole Community Primary School, Mousehole TR19 6QQ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. Thanks to those of you who talked to me about your work and life in the school. You were very polite and very good ambassadors for your school. I also talked to your teachers and was given comments from some of your parents which tell me about the school. I am writing to let you know that your school has improved a lot over the past year.

Here are the main points.

- Mousehole Community Primary is a very happy place and gives you a good education.
- You enjoy your school very much and your behaviour is excellent.
- Your teachers teach you well and help you to make good progress.
- Those of you in the Reception class make a good start to school.
- You are encouraged to take responsibility and you grow into confident young people.
- Your new headteacher works hard to make sure that the school runs well and that everyone feels part of the school community.
- Adults look after you well, listen if you have a problem, and give you extra help if you fall behind with your work.
- You learn a lot about Cornwall and its culture.

I have asked the school to do three things to make it even better.

- Help you learn more about the different faiths and cultures in Britain. You can help by showing an interest in new topics.
- Improve planning in some subjects.
- Help the adults who are responsible for the school, known as governors, to make sure the school keeps doing well.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath Her Majesty's Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector