

Constantine Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111830
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	325472
Inspection date	3 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	116
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	Margaret Scott
Headteacher	Liz Brand
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Trebarvah Road Constantine Falmouth TR11 5AG
Telephone number	01326 340554
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Constantine Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school. Almost all pupils are from a White British background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly specific learning difficulties or physical disabilities, is about average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from the age of four. There is an on-site private nursery. Prior to the appointment of the current headteacher the school had nine temporary headteachers. The school works in partnership with several other local schools.

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 a number of outstanding features. Parents are rightly proud of their local village school, which provides a happy and caring ethos in which pupils thrive. 'The school has a fantastic family feel. It is open and welcoming at all times,' is a typical comment from a parent. In the relatively short time she has been in post, the headteacher has made significant improvements to all aspects of provision. Outstanding care, guidance and support are provided for pupils and, as a result, relationships are very strong. Pupils always have someone to talk to and they know that their worries will quickly be sorted out. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in and around the school. They support and help each other and older pupils take great care of younger ones. Playground monitors take their responsibilities seriously and the 'kids' council' has been instrumental in changing many aspects of school life, such as improving and organising playtime resources and activities. Constantine is a healthy school. Pupils know and understand the importance of eating fruit and vegetables and taking plenty of exercise. For example, they grow salads and herbs in the school garden and these are used to supplement school lunches. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. However, despite rigorous actions by leaders, attendance remains stubbornly just below average because too many pupils take holidays during term time.

Children enter school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. Because of good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children in the Reception class achieve well. Similarly through the rest of the school, pupils achieve well because of effective teaching and because their achievements are rigorously assessed and tracked. As a result, standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress across the school because of the effective support provided for them. Good teaching is evident in all areas of the school, with some outstanding teaching in Years 5 and 6, which accelerates learning. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils well but just occasionally the pace of learning in lessons drops because of a lack of challenge. As a consequence, a small minority of pupils do not always achieve their potential. Pupils benefit from an exciting curriculum which provides many rich and varied activities both during the day and after school. Pupils themselves are particularly keen on the after-school sailing and rowing club and on the wide range of sports activities which help them to keep fit and active. The extensive school grounds are very well used to improve learning.

The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future. She arrived following a period of turbulence for the school and in the past two years has developed a strong team of staff who are committed to improvement. Governors are supportive and challenging and are clear about their own responsibilities. As a result, leadership and management are good. Rigorous new procedures for monitoring pupils' achievements are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The school has worked closely with parents and support agencies to try to improve attendance. Procedures to keep pupils safe and secure are robust. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. As a result children achieve well during their time in the Reception class. When they enter school most children have skills that are as expected for their age. Because of effective teaching and some exciting activities,

children make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1, many have skills that are above average. The personal development of children is excellent. They behave very well and enjoy school. Their social skills are particularly good so that they work and play in a calm and happy manner. Children take part enthusiastically in all aspects of learning and play. This was evident when a group of boys were seen having lots of fun as they dressed up as spacemen. They were trying to answer questions about life in space. They thought it would be very difficult to eat lunch in space because the food might float away. Another group of boys and girls were busy programming a robot to move around the playground. They made accurate estimates of how far the robot had to travel so that they could tap in the right instructions.

The playground area is used appropriately to extend learning but the lack of a covered area or any shade restricts outdoor activities in wet weather and also when it is very hot. Leaders are working to improve this. Children are well looked after and are safe and secure in the Reception class. The provision is well led and managed and there is a very effective system for tracking achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that all lessons have sufficient pace and challenge to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- Work closely with parents and support agencies to ensure that all pupils come to school as often as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school has a good track record of above average standards. In 2008, standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2, and were above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. More pupils attain the higher levels in reading in Year 2 and in English in Year 6 than in most other schools nationally. Standards have risen since the last inspection. Pupils of all abilities achieve well from their starting points. Evidence from school tracking data and from lessons shows current standards are above average. This is because almost all pupils make good progress in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as other pupils. Occasionally the progress of a small minority of pupils is limited by a lack of challenge so that the amount and quality of work drops and pupils do not do quite as well as they could. Pupils across the school make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT), benefiting from the good resources in the new ICT suite. Progress in music, sport and French is excellent because of the specialist teaching and many additional activities provided.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' social and moral development is outstanding. This is evident in the care and kindness that all pupils show to each other. Older pupils regularly help younger ones and playground monitors make sure that they all have someone to play with. Pupils almost always behave excellently in and around the school. Behaviour only falters when the pace of work in lessons or the challenge contained in it drops. Pupils say that they enjoy school. They take part very enthusiastically in the exciting additional experiences that occur on a regular basis. Despite this, not all pupils come to school as regularly as they could. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and is effectively promoted through high quality local and world links.

Pupils' awareness of the different cultures that make up modern Britain is more limited. Pupils are very involved in community events and regularly raise funds for charity. They are aware of the importance of keeping fit, making healthy choices of food and taking plenty of exercise. This is reflected in the recently renewed Healthy School award. Many pupils eagerly take on a range of roles and responsibilities which help them to develop good leadership and organisational skills that will prepare them well for their futures. For example, play leaders from Year 6 run the daily 'huff and puff' sessions for younger pupils. The 'kids' council' has been instrumental in helping to develop the 'golden rules' that ensure the school is a calm and caring place in which pupils feel safe and secure.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding teaching at the upper end of the school where very good use of assessment information leads to work being very well matched to individual needs. Teachers plan many exciting activities to keep pupils interested and well focused, helping them to achieve well. Very good use is made of ICT. For example, the effective use of interactive whiteboards to teach phonics means that younger pupils are encouraged to visualise their letter sounds, and as a result, their writing improves. They have lots of fun as they practise their letter shapes, benefiting from good modelling by teachers. Relationships in lessons are very strong so that they are orderly and well organised. Teaching in a small minority of lessons does not challenge all pupils. This leads to some silly behaviour and a few pupils say that work is sometimes too easy. A very small minority of parents agree with this and think that homework does not always stretch their child's abilities. Specialist teaching in some subjects enhances pupils' skills very well. Marking of pupils' work is regular and helpful. It is exemplary in Years 5 and 6 and as a result pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides an exciting curriculum that meets the needs of pupils well. There is a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and ICT, which underpins pupils' good progress. Staff are currently in the process of linking subjects together in order to make learning even more purposeful. There is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, which pupils take up with relish. Good provision for PE as well as the popular morning exercise class ensures that pupils keep fit and healthy. Particular strengths of the curriculum are the provision for music and French. Pupils engage in them with high levels of enthusiasm. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed their good language skills as they named objects and sang number songs in French. The school is aware that the curriculum provides more limited opportunities for pupils to learn about the different cultures that make up modern Britain.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pastoral care provided by the school for all pupils is outstanding. High quality relationships between staff and pupils are evident all around the school. Procedures for safeguarding fully meet current government requirements. Early identification for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and the high quality of support that these pupils receive allows

them to make similar progress to other pupils. Assessment and tracking of pupils' achievements have improved and are now outstanding. These high quality procedures provide a platform for increasing the rate of progress of all groups. There are excellent links with outside agencies, which allows the school to safeguard the interests of vulnerable pupils. Challenging targets for improvement are set and pupils as well as parents are fully involved in the target- setting process.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. She is supported well by senior and middle managers and by governors. Together they have put many good new procedures in place and the impact of change is evident in the good improvement since the last inspection. Resources are used well to enhance provision and improve learning. Procedures to monitor the work of the school are rigorous and subject leaders are fully involved in monitoring outcomes and improving teaching. School self-evaluation is very effectively focused on raising standards and is beginning to work, showing that leaders know their school well and know what needs to be done next to improve. Governors are clear about the school's priorities and know that improving attendance is a matter for further attention. They carry out their strategic responsibilities well. The school is fully inclusive, welcoming pupils of all abilities. A good start has been made in developing the school's approach to community cohesion. Local links and understanding of local needs are excellent, providing many opportunities for pupils to develop their own Cornish culture. For example, pupils sang in Cornish to their French friends during a twinning visit. There are appropriate links with the wider world such as a visit by a Russian boys' choir recently and pen friends in New Zealand for pupils in Year 5. Links with schools in other areas to extend pupils' awareness of the range of different cultures that make up modern Britain have not yet been established.

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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 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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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	2
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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	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?	1

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	1
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**

4 June 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Constantine Primary School, Falmouth TR11 5AG

Thank you very much for your help on our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about the things you do at school. I particularly enjoyed having lunch with some of you. I was particularly pleased to see that many of you made healthy choices and that most of you brought some fruit in your packed lunch. Well done for that.

You told us that Constantine is a good school. We agree with you. This letter is to tell you some of the other things we found out about your school.

- You behave very well and are very kind and helpful to each other.
- You do well in your lessons so that you make good progress.
- Teachers give you lots of exciting things to do and mark your work every day.
- There are lots of good clubs and visits that many of you attend.
- Your progress is carefully checked to make sure you are doing well.
- Leaders look after you and keep you safe and secure at school.
- Children in the Reception class do well in their work and play.

We are asking the school to do two things to help you do even better in your work.

- To make sure that the work you are given is always challenging.
- To work with you and your parents to make sure that you all come to school as often as you can. You can help with this by coming to school on time every day.

Thank you again for your help and good luck for your futures.

Yours faithfully,

Denise Morris

Lead Inspector