

Weeth Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111852
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	325478
Inspection dates	18–19 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Pauline Robins HMI

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)	161
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	Trevor Rescorle
Headteacher	Martin Smith
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Holman Avenue Camborne TR14 7GA
Telephone number	01209 713934
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Weeth is a smaller-than-average primary school. In the Reception class and Years 1 and 2, there is one class per year group. In Years 3 to 6 there are three mixed-age classes. The school is situated in an area of high social deprivation and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below the level which would normally be expected for their age. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are no pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The percentages of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs are currently above the national average, but this figure varies from year to year.

At the time of the last inspection, the school was given a Notice to Improve. It received a monitoring visit by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors in October 2008 and was judged to be making satisfactory progress overall against the key areas for improvement identified at its last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school and its effectiveness is now satisfactory in all respects, and good in some areas, including leadership and management. As one parent wrote, 'Weeth school has improved markedly since the last inspection.' In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The previous inspection identified the need to improve pupils' progress in English and mathematics and raise standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are now close to, or in some areas slightly above, the national average. This is because the progress that pupils make has improved as the quality of teaching has got better. The quality of teaching in each class reflects the progress that pupils make, and is at least satisfactory and in some classes, good. The school recognises that its highest priority is to achieve consistency in both teaching and pupil progress in all classes. The school has in place secure systems to track the progress of pupils and these are being used to set more challenging targets. However, inconsistencies in teachers' marking and written explanations, which are not always sufficiently informative, mean that pupils are not always clear about how they should go about improving their work.

The personal development of pupils is good and their understanding of what it means to keep fit and healthy is outstanding. The school works closely with outside agencies, including the local authority, which has provided valuable support and advice. These links are helping to improve standards, teaching and aspects of leadership and management. Another outstanding feature of the school is the degree to which pupils are cared for and supported. This is a credit to all staff in the school but particularly the learning mentor and special educational needs coordinator, who provide a 'listening ear' and give invaluable support to the most vulnerable pupils and their families.

Provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage were judged to be good at the last inspection and this continues to be the case. However, there have been improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the use of assessment data and in the tracking of children's progress. There are clear developmental plans in place which demonstrate the good leadership and management in this area. These include extending the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum beyond the Reception class and the creation of an improved outdoor play area.

The school is improving because the headteacher and relatively new senior management team have a clear understanding of what needs to be achieved in order to bring about improvement. This has been made easier because all the staff are receptive to change and enthusiastic about the way forward. This is reflected in the pupils' view that the best thing about their school is the staff. Secure systems are now in place to monitor the work of the school. In those areas which were identified as of high priority from the last inspection, such as English and mathematics and the quality of teaching, this monitoring and evaluation has proved effective in bringing about improvement. The school recognises that the next step is to use these systems more widely to monitor more rigorously areas such as the foundation subjects and address weaknesses in the delivery of and provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Governors are supportive of the school but they are not sufficiently involved in the evaluation process to be fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is evidence

to show that school leaders and managers have been able to bring about sufficient improvement since the last inspection to demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below expectations for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. As a result of the good and sometimes outstanding teaching they receive and the well-planned and creative curriculum offered, the children make good progress, although they are still below expected levels when they enter Year 1. Some make very good progress, particularly in the way they learn to cooperate, become confident and develop their independence. The teacher is very well supported by knowledgeable and professional teaching assistants who contribute to careful, accurate and ongoing assessment of the children's progress. Children's welfare is exceptionally well promoted and parents value the support they receive. The coordinated support is particularly effective where children experience difficulties when starting school. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is at least good and the teacher has a clear vision for the future. Her knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage is comprehensive and, as a result, she has identified those areas for development which have the potential to make this provision outstanding. This includes bringing to fruition the construction of an extended outdoor play area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the percentage of good teaching and marking to make it consistent across the school, so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work, standards continue to rise and pupils' progress is accelerated.
- Consolidate the work of the leadership and management team so that they maintain the momentum for school improvement.
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of foundation subjects so that it is as rigorous as in other areas of the school's work.
- Address the issues raised in the previous report with regard to the provision for ICT.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is now satisfactory and the standards that pupils reach are at, or in some cases slightly above, those which would be expected nationally. The progress that pupils make has been accelerated since the last inspection; in some classes it is now good and for some individuals it is outstanding. However, progress is not yet consistently good throughout the school and in all subject elements. The tracking of pupils' achievement and progress is now accurate and information is used by teachers to tailor their planning to meet the pupils' learning needs. This accuracy lends confidence to the school's prediction that pupils are on track to increase rates of good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants and their progress is in line with that of their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

There are strengths in spiritual, social and moral development which are reflected in the pupils' strong sense of right and wrong and in their good relationships both between themselves and with staff. The cultural aspect remains underdeveloped and is one which the school has already identified. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and particularly enjoy the after-school activities. They told inspectors that the best thing about school is their teachers, and this contributes to them feeling safe, their good attitudes to learning and good attendance. They have an outstanding understanding of what it means to be healthy as a result of the good physical education programme that is in place and through the healthy eating focus at lunchtimes. They act sensibly and courteously around school and their behaviour is generally good. The school council are keen to make their voice felt and they are starting to be involved in school developments such as designing a school banner. Each class in turn comes up with an initiative to raise money to support a child in Africa as part of an ongoing charity project. There are close links with the nearby secondary school, which facilitates a smooth transition at the end of Year 6. Numerous opportunities for all pupils to experience the environment of work through enterprise days and visits to employers contribute effectively to the preparation for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There has been an intensive monitoring and support programme to improve teaching and learning. This has been effective and teaching in some classes is now consistently good, with the inadequate teaching seen at the previous inspection no longer evident. Where teaching is good, teachers plan and prepare well for themselves and their teaching assistants so that the needs of all pupils are considered. In these classes, teachers' questions challenge pupils to think carefully and then justify their responses. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils is not always consistently well managed and occasionally this disruptive behaviour impedes the progress of the class. Teaching assistants are used effectively and play a significant role in all classes. The comprehensive and helpful marking policy is not yet being consistently followed. Marking is more systematic in English and mathematics than in other subjects. In these two subjects, the marking tells pupils about the mistakes they have made and praises them for what they have done well. However, the guidance teachers give to pupils on how to improve is more variable in quality. There is some exemplary practice, such as when a pupil was told that he needed to use more connectives in his work. The teacher then gave him an example so that he was not in any doubt about how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and statutory requirements for the National Curriculum are met. However, some areas of the curriculum are good. The intensive programme for monitoring teaching has focused on work in mathematics and English and, as a result, provision for literacy and numeracy is now good, as is that for personal, social and health education. Physical education is a strength of the school and has been recognised as such through the Sportsmark award. In-school provision for physical education is well supported by

outside professionals when teachers are released for planning and preparation time. The range of extra-curricular activities is very wide, is well supported by pupils and enhances the taught curriculum. The monitoring of the delivery of subjects other than mathematics and English is underdeveloped and provision for information and communication technology remains an area for development, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The school has identified those pupils who are gifted and talented and has put in place some sessions to develop their particular skills. This provision and the degree to which teachers meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils are not yet sufficiently well monitored.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and support for pupils is exemplary; however, the academic guidance given to pupils is in the early stages of development and has yet to demonstrate a consistent impact on raising standards. The school complies fully with all the statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. The work of the learning mentor and special educational needs coordinator has been instrumental in ensuring that pupils feel safe and supported in the school. Their work with families and external agencies is a model of good practice in that it enables pupils to remain in school who might otherwise have been excluded. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and their individual needs are identified and swiftly addressed.

Target setting for English and mathematics is in place in all classes; pupils know what their targets are and what the next steps are in these subjects. However, they are not as clear about the National Curriculum levels at which they are working and so do not have a sufficiently clear picture of how they need to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are now good. The headteacher knows what needs to be achieved to move the school forward to the next stage of its development. The relatively new senior management team are supportive and have complementary skills which will enable them to play a strategic part in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. Their success is evident in the upward trend in standards and progress. The key systems for monitoring and evaluating are now in place and are effective, but are not sufficiently well developed to encompass all aspects of the school's work. With increased confidence in their assessment data, the school is able to set more challenging yet achievable targets. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies and prioritises appropriate areas for development. However, governors do not yet play a sufficiently proactive part in drawing up the self-evaluation documents, nor are they sufficiently aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses in order to hold senior leaders to account. The school has good links within the local community and wider links through the sponsorship of a child in Africa, and benefits from a teacher exchange with Australia. However, the school acknowledges that community cohesion is still underdeveloped.

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

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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

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	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

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

19 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weeth Community Primary School, Camborne TR14 7GA

Thank you all so much for the wonderful welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We were very pleased with the progress the school has made since the last inspection and we think that Weeth will continue to improve.

Lots of you came to talk to us when we were in lessons or the playground and your school council and the group who met Mrs Looney were a credit to you all, answering questions about your work and what goes on in school. You told us that you enjoy coming to school because the best thing about school is your teachers and all the staff who support you and make you feel safe. You also like the wide variety of after-school clubs and the opportunities to do sports activities.

We think that the teachers have worked hard to improve your lessons and you are certainly making better progress. Your headteacher and senior managers are clear about what needs to be done to improve the school still further, but they will need your help. We also think that the children in the Reception class get a really good start to school life.

In order to make Weeth an even better school we have asked your headteacher and the staff to do four things:

- Make sure that teaching continues to improve and teachers give you clear information about how to improve your work so that you make even better progress.
- Keep up the good work that senior managers are doing already.
- Improve the opportunities for you to use ICT.
- Monitor all subjects to make sure that the curriculum is providing you with everything you need.

Thank you once again for a really interesting and enjoyable two days, and best wishes for the future.

Pauline Robins

Her Majesty's Inspector