

# Polruan Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111883
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	325484
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alex Baxter

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.

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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 (total)	44
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anthea Hillman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heidi Hoskin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	St Saviour's Hill Polruan Fowey PL23 1PS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01726 870402
<b>Fax number</b>	01726 870161

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the consistency of provision in meeting the pupils' differing needs
- the degree to which pupils are encouraged to become independent learners
- the ability of leaders and managers to bring about improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, an assembly and pupils at lunch and play. Teachers' assessment records and pupils' work were scrutinised. Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors and parents. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire were analysed. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a very small village primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a combined Reception, Years 1 and 2 class. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average overall, but varies considerably across the year groups. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected. The school holds Healthy School and Activemark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Polruan is a good school. It is a very caring, inclusive community where all pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities, both academically and personally. Standards are above average overall. Under the well-considered leadership of a relatively new headteacher and with a strengthened, team approach to management, it is an improving school. The pastoral care provided by the staff and the stimulating range of extra-curricular clubs and events are outstanding features. As a result, pupils' behaviour and their adoption of healthy, safe lifestyles are excellent qualities and show good improvement since the last inspection. The school promotes good links with parents and outside agencies, such as educational psychologists, and has a strong sense of the closely knit village that it serves so well. These help to ensure that pupils sustain positive attitudes and feel confident and that those with learning difficulties are well supported. Pupils' full enjoyment of school is clearly evident in their good attendance and the very warm relationships between everyone in the school. Parents welcome these and typical written comments include, 'Polruan School is a small, very friendly and family orientated school where all the children know each other' and 'My child always enjoys school and has developed in confidence and ability.'

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, more able pupils and those new to the school are included and challenged to equally good effect. This is largely because teachers set work at the right level and provide high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Children are taught well and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception Year). Consistently good progress continues through Years 1 to 6 as pupils increasingly benefit from well-planned teaching and additional adult support for their individual needs. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in all aspects of English and in mathematics and science. All teachers, throughout the school, are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour and in promoting good attitudes to learning. Teachers also use questioning and information and communication technology (ICT) well to extend pupils' thinking and to develop their ideas. Often progress accelerates when pupils have more opportunities to develop and share their ideas and to contribute to their own and each other's learning, by using computers, for example. As a result, many pupils have good ICT skills. At times though, there is too much adult-led activity and, in mathematics, too much reliance on worksheets. These approaches limit the pupils' ability to follow their own lines of enquiry and to develop their independent learning skills.

Pupils' good personal development and well-being is seen in the way older pupils naturally look after younger pupils and in the way all pupils are so polite and helpful. They say, 'There is no bullying at this school because everyone is kind to each other.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy, participate and contribute well during inter-school and community events. For example, they regularly sing in the church, provide an Easter Tea Party for the elderly and support wider British charities such as 'Red Nose Day' exuberantly. The pupils' well-developed social skills and good achievement prepare them well for the future.

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enriched by a strong emphasis on topic studies that link subjects together. These include very good promotion of local Cornish culture. For example, in history they learn about seafaring and boat building in the village. Overall, the school promotes community cohesion well. The global community is promoted effectively through cross-curricular studies and charitable contributions. The school welcomes visitors

from ethnically diverse communities in Britain, but recognises that promoting the British dimension of community to a level that matches its emphasis on the local community is work in progress. The curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs and visits, including residential visits for the younger pupils. There are also very good sporting opportunities, with all pupils enjoying swimming lessons two terms out of three. These activities play a key role in developing the pupils' very healthy lifestyles.

The good care, support and guidance are underpinned by a very low adult-to-pupil ratio and by the staff's very good knowledge of each individual pupil. All adults work diligently to keep pupils safe. Pupils across the range of ability have their needs assessed accurately and met well. All pupils benefit from good oral guidance and year group targets. In addition, teachers' marking in English is consistently helpful in promoting improvement. However, marking in other subjects is not always as beneficial in showing them how to improve to reach their targets.

Good leadership and management ensure that the school has well-established procedures for evaluating its effectiveness. Leaders and managers know the school well and have identified the right priorities for improvement. By setting challenging targets the school has been successful in recent terms in increasing the proportion of pupils attaining above average standards. The headteacher has brought a fresh vision for future improvement and is well supported by good contributions from staff and governors. The monitoring roles and responsibilities for subject managers have been delegated to good effect. Strengthened assessment practices and earlier identification of pupils' individual needs are already enhancing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. Adaptations to the curriculum, where subjects are linked together as topics, have also raised pupils' interest levels. Together, they are having an increasingly beneficial effect on improving learning opportunities and pupils' progress.

At this stage, though, the school is good rather than outstanding because pupils' independent learning skills are not always promoted to best effect. Nevertheless, the school is strongly committed to enhancing pupils' involvement as independent learners. For example, a planned relocation of classes is set to take place during the summer break. This is intended to make more effective use of existing accommodation and to provide better freely chosen access to facilities, particularly to the outdoor areas for the younger pupils. The school's proven ability to sustain the pupils' good achievements and its well-considered plans show a good capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Good links with parents and the pre-school help children to make a positive start to full-time schooling. Children's skills on entry to the school vary widely from year to year. Current children in the Reception Year started with skills that matched those expected for their age. They benefit from a good curriculum that covers all the required areas of learning and promotes their personal needs well. In response to good teaching and effective leadership and management, most children make good progress in relation to their differing starting points. The majority are on course to reach above average standards in most areas of learning. Children enjoy coming to school, learn and play well together and show a good understanding of what is expected of them. This is because the staff sustain the children's welfare well, provide close personal care and work supportively with parents. The school has improved and now provides a satisfactory balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Occasionally, partially as a result of limited indoor and outdoor space, the children still do not have enough opportunity

to make choices about their learning for themselves and this constrains their independence. The school has advanced plans to re-locate this class later this year to address this issue.

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

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn and develop greater independence by choosing activities and setting up lines of enquiry for themselves.
- Strengthen the way that teachers use marking and individual targets to give pupils more detailed information about how to improve their work.

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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?	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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<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	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**

25 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Polruan Community Primary School, Polruan PL23 1PS

We have no hesitation in agreeing with you and with many of your parents, who feel that Polruan is a good school. Thank you very much for making us very welcome. You were all extremely polite and we would like to say special thanks to those of you on the school council who told my colleague all about life at your school. They said that you enjoy school, have lots of friends and have fun. Your parents told us all that too, and we agree.

These are the other main things we found:

- Your school provides you with a good education.
- You feel safe and cared for because everyone at the school looks after you extremely well.
- You make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, reach above average standards in your subjects.
- You behave extremely well and enjoy your learning because teaching is good and you have a very interesting range of activities.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and have formed a good partnership with your parents to help you to succeed.

To help the school to improve we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- Give you more opportunities to learn by choosing activities and setting up lines of enquiry for yourselves.
- Ensure that teachers give you more information about how to improve when they mark your work and give you targets.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with each other and the adults to make sure that your school continues to improve.

Best wishes for the future

Yours faithfully

Alex Baxter

Lead Inspector