

Boscastle Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111929
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	325496
Inspection date	9 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Goodchild

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)	59
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	Keirean Kehoe
Headteacher	Sarah Duffy
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Fore Street Boscastle PL35 0AU
Telephone number	01840 250329

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Boscastle is a school significantly smaller than the national average. It lies in an area dominated by tourism. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. There are no children with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average, with most having speech, language and communication or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The number and gender of children in each year group varies year on year. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are taught in a mixed-age class that includes pupils from Years 1 and 2. Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant decrease in the number of pupils on roll.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Boscastle is a satisfactory and improving school. Its strengths are the curricular provision that underpins the good personal development of pupils and the school's success in preparing pupils to become fully aware of their place and responsibilities in the global community. The values the school promotes are evident in the good behaviour of pupils, their self-confidence and the strong relationships between pupils and with teachers. Parents are supportive of the school and value the workshops to help them to understand what their child is learning and how to help them at home. One parent commented, 'There is a wonderful sense of making learning fun, lots of enrichment activities to enjoy and children are very happy.'

Children start school with standards that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. Linking letters and sounds and writing are commonly the lowest scoring strands. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this continues into Years 1 and 2 where standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 and achieve standards that are broadly in line with the national average. More able pupils make good progress. In 2008, such pupils achieved results above national expectations in English at Level 5. Evidence suggests that in 2009 there is likely to be an increase in the number of pupils achieving Level 5 in mathematics and science. Teaching across the school is satisfactory, though there is evidence of some good practice. Systems are in place to monitor the progress pupils make in their learning and use of this continues to develop. Work is well matched to the learning needs of more able pupils, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, planning to ensure lessons fully meet the needs of middle and low attaining pupils is inconsistent. This has been recognised by the school as an area for development.

The school works hard to ensure a high standard of care for its pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and receive additional support. However, insufficient use is made of specialist agencies to support this aspect of the school's work. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of their peers. Guidance to ensure they understand whether they have met their learning objectives is not always clear.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong and caring leadership and staff work well together as a cohesive team. The school has a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and areas for development and has a satisfactory capacity to improve. There is a real commitment and a clear understanding of what is required to promote community cohesion, and its provision is good. Since its previous inspection, the school has made satisfactory progress in improving standards in mathematics and science and the school's assessment data predicts this will be reflected in the 2009 SATs results where achievement and standards are likely to reflect that in English. The presentation of pupils' work is now of an acceptable standard.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The provision for meeting the needs of children in Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children are happy, feel safe and secure, and enjoy the range of activities throughout the day. The personal development of children is satisfactory and they are encouraged to become independent and take responsibility for themselves and their learning. However, the lack of an

outside play area restricts opportunities for children to make choices, limits the range of experiences and affects the overall quality of their learning. Relationships are good and staff are committed to ensuring the well-being of children. Children's progress against early learning goals is assessed regularly and, compared with their starting points, they make satisfactory progress. The progress and continuity in learning for some children is affected by absence. Teaching assistants are well trained and support learning effectively. The provision runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, and leadership and management is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop an outside play area to extend the range of learning opportunities for children in Early Years Foundation Stage
- Use assessment information more effectively to ensure that work is fully matched to the needs of middle and low attaining pupils
- Inform pupils about how they can meet their learning objectives by establishing success criteria against which they can monitor their work.

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 the next S8 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry to the school is in line with expectations for four-year-olds. Pupils make satisfactory progress relative to their various starting points. Pupils who are more able make good progress. This is a small school, with variability between year groups, and at times a gender imbalance, and this can affect results year on year. In 2008, standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who are more able did significantly better in English. Compared with their starting points, pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made satisfactory progress. However, there is an inconsistency in the progress these pupils and those of middle ability make, because assessment data is not always used effectively to fully identify their learning needs. The progress of some pupils is affected by intermittent attendance. Inspection evidence, including provisional test results and the school's assessment data, indicate that in 2009, standards and achievement will again be in line with national expectations, with an increase in the number of Level 5 grades in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and all the enrichment activities offered. They become increasingly self-confident as they mature through taking part in activities such as school plays. They attend residential courses where they have the opportunity to take part in 'outward bound' activities. Pupils take ownership of their learning by choosing which topic to study for the following term. These activities make a good contribution towards preparing pupils for their future lives. Of real significance in this school is the development of pupils' understanding of global citizenship. Through studying climate change, for example, they appreciate the impact of this and the social-economic factors at work in communities different from their own. Despite the school being a relatively isolated community, pupils are prepared well for life in a culturally diverse society. Older pupils take turns in running the weekly assembly, which is a forum for sharing

news and for looking at ways to improve the school. Healthy lifestyles are clearly understood, including the need for regular exercise and to develop a wide range of interests. Pupils are aware of the potential dangers of the internet. However, they are not as well informed about the misuse of drugs. Behaviour and relationships are good and pupils are happy to approach staff if they have any concerns. Though the majority of pupils attend school regularly, there are a few whose attendance is intermittent. Attendance overall is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers are particularly good at getting pupils to talk about and explain what they have learned, and this reflects in the progress pupils make. Relationships are strong and pupils are willing to ask for help if needed. Pupils are sufficiently confident to work independently. Lesson planning is satisfactory and reflects the learning needs of the mixed age classes. Work is well matched to the needs of more able pupils but assessment information is not always used effectively to ensure that work fully matches the needs of others. Learning objectives are shared with the class at the start of lessons. However, pupils do not always understand whether they have been successful in meeting these objectives by monitoring their work against success criteria. Teaching assistants support teaching and learning well and provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

- Since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in the provision for mathematics and science. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is now firmly embedded in daily practice. Pupils choose the topic they will study in history and geography each term and this ownership gives them the motivation to research and learn more about particular aspects that interest them. This also provides opportunities for writing for different audiences. Good use is made of the local community to extend pupils learning, for example by studying Cornish history and major tourist sites. The school has recognised the need to extend pupils' knowledge to the wider and global community. In subjects such as religious education and geography, there are planned opportunities for pupils to study different cultures and belief systems and compare them with their own. Recently they have been studying the environmental and socio-economic impact of climate change in both developed and developing countries. Current topical issues are used as opportunities for debate and, through discussion, pupils formulate their own views and challenge stereotypical attitudes. Curriculum workshops help parents and carers to understand and support their child's learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff work hard to ensure that pupils are safe and secure and their welfare needs are met. The induction processes for children coming into Early Years Foundation Stage are good and they settle quickly into school. Partnerships with parents are good. They report a high degree of satisfaction with what the school provides and are encouraged to work with the school to resolve any difficulties that might arise. Safeguarding arrangements meet the required standard.

Arrangements to monitor and promote good attendance are satisfactory, though intermittent attendance does remain an issue for a few pupils. Pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive satisfactory support. However, insufficient use is made of specialist agencies to support this aspect of the school's work. Pupils are increasingly taking responsibility for monitoring their progress through activities such as peer evaluation and editing. However, the lack of clear success criteria, understood by pupils, means that often they are unclear about whether they have succeeded in meeting their learning objectives and what they need to do to improve their work further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

In this small school, staff work together as a cohesive team. They are enthusiastic and share the same vision of improving the holistic development and learning experience of all pupils. The headteacher provides strong, caring leadership. The school's self-evaluation demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Standards have improved in mathematics and science since the previous inspection and work is now more closely matched to the needs of the more able pupils. The school is committed to promoting community cohesion and has a clear understanding of statutory requirements. As a result, provision in this area is good. The size and fluctuating ability of year groups provide a challenge for the school. It now has more data about pupils' progress, and is beginning to analyse it more effectively and set more challenging targets. Over the last two years, there has been a period of instability in staffing but this has now been resolved and the school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. The governing body visit the school regularly and are supportive of its work.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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?	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?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

10 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Boscastle Community Primary School, Boscastle PL35 0AU

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and telling us what you really enjoyed about your school. We feel that Boscastle is a satisfactory and improving school. Staff work hard to make sure you that you make progress in your learning and personal development. Listed below are some of the most important parts of the inspection report that we thought you might like to know about

- You all felt that you were making progress in your learning and we agree with you.
- Your personal development is good and this reflects in your good behaviour and relationships.
- You particularly enjoy all the extra activities, such as trips to the theatre and residential visits, and we think these help you to grow in confidence, as do opportunities to take part in school performances.
- There are good opportunities for you to develop your knowledge and understanding of different cultures and beliefs and the impact that things like climate change and flooding have on the global community.

To make the school even better we have asked the school to do the following:

- Develop outside play for children in Reception so they can benefit from a wider range of activities.
- Make sure that the work you do in lessons is more closely matched to what you have already learned.
- Make clear to you what you have to do to meet the learning objectives in lessons so you will know if you have achieved them.

Yours faithfully

Judith Goodchild

Lead Inspector