

Werrington School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111943
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	325502
Inspection date	5 February 2009
Reporting inspector	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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	31
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	Peter McAughey
Headteacher	Yvonne Carse
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Yeolmbridge Launceston PL15 8TN
Telephone number	01566 772943
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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

This is a very small rural 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 and is much higher in some 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. At the time of the inspection, in the absence of the substantive headteacher, an acting headteacher and an acting assistant headteacher fulfilled the duties of headteacher. An independent nursery operates on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The quality of education provided by Werrington School is satisfactory. Pupils across the range of abilities and those new to the school make satisfactory progress in relation to their differing starting points. Currently, standards in Year 6 are broadly average. The school sustains a beneficial partnership with parents and good pastoral care, and these help in continuing the pupils' good personal development and well-being. One parent reflected the views of most; 'My child describes the school as being like a big family where all the teachers and teaching assistants are friendly and committed.' Others welcomed the pupils' good behaviour, relationships and healthy lifestyles, qualities also identified by the inspection team.

This is a school where, for some time, instability in staffing and the governing body has constrained its ability to rectify inconsistencies in provision. This resulted in gaps in pupils' academic learning. However, leadership and management, and efforts to lift pupils' achievements, have been strengthened over the past twelve months by closer teamwork between senior staff and governors and guidance from the local authority. Although some instability in senior staffing remains, the purposeful guidance of the temporary leaders and sound governance have sustained the momentum for improvement this term.

Together, leaders, managers and teachers have introduced an efficient mechanism for keeping tracking of how well pupils are doing. This has provided a clear view of what needs to be done to accelerate pupils' progress, enabling staff to better meet pupils' individual needs. These include, for example, the focused teaching of letters and sounds, strengthened management of the pupils' behaviour and more encouragement given to pupils' sharing ideas with each other. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and is at least satisfactory. These developments are relatively new, however, and improvement still has some way to go before the good teaching and learning evident in the Years 5/6 class becomes a consistent feature across the school. For example, not all teachers give good guidance to pupils on how to improve, by using targets and when marking pupils' work. This slows progress. This type of uneven provision still leads to some pupils not developing their writing, especially boys, and investigative skills in science, as well as they should.

The curriculum, and care, support and guidance, are satisfactory overall, but provide good experiences for pupils to develop their personal qualities. However, the pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are not always used and extended sufficiently to enrich learning across the range of subjects. Nevertheless, the school has ensured that pupils' achievement is satisfactory, with an increasing number of pupils now making good progress. Provision and achievement for children in Early Years Foundation Stage have also been improved and are satisfactory. These accomplishments reflect the school's united determination to overcome its deficiencies and show that leadership and management, including self-evaluation and decision-making, are satisfactory. Such improvements, especially the increasing amount of good teaching, also show a sound capacity to improve, with promising signs of much further potential.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry to Reception varies considerably from year to year. In recent years, it has often been below average. This year, it is broadly average and in part reflects the good links

with the independent nursery which operates on site. Progress is satisfactory. At the start of Year 1, standards are broadly average. This is because children now receive specific teaching in recognising and using letters and words. In addition, they experience a suitable balance of learning led by adults and activities they can choose for themselves. As a result, children enjoy their work and develop good personal, social and emotional skills. Staff promote good links with parents and safeguard the children's welfare well, and these contribute to the children's good progress in developing self-confidence.

Staff work diligently to set up a good range of resources, both indoors and outdoors, and the curriculum is planned well to ensure that children experience all areas of learning. However, leadership and management and teaching and learning are satisfactory, rather than good. This is because, within this mixed year-group class, the quality of adult support given to the children as they undertake learning activities for themselves varies. At times, a lack of adult questioning to encourage children to justify their choices and explain what they are doing limits the extra benefits to children's development that this form of learning can bring. This constrains the children's progress, in, for example, their communication and creative skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement and standards, raising expectations of writing, especially by boys, and placing a greater emphasis on investigating in science.
- Ensure greater consistency in the quality of teaching, particularly the use of targets and marking, to give pupils more information about how to improve.
- Provide more opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the range of subjects.

A small proportion of 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

National test results have fluctuated considerably not only because of variations in the composition of year groups, which include pupils arriving from other schools, but also because of uneven progress in the past. In the current Year 2 and Year 6 groups, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. These standards are higher than in recent years and reflect improvements in the way teachers identify pupils' needs and engage them at the right level in their learning. As a result, teachers are more successful in tackling the legacy of gaps in pupils' skills. Overall, pupils are achieving satisfactorily now in relation to their capability and an increasing number of pupils are making good progress. This is especially so in speaking and listening and in reading, which are emphasised with better consistency across the school. Even so, writing skills, especially boys' writing, and investigative skills in science, are still not good enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils and parents praise the good behaviour and relationships evident throughout the school. In addition, they recognise the pupils' good enjoyment of school. Most pupils attend well and the rate of attendance matches the national average. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development is good overall, but within this area, the pupils' understanding of multi-cultural Britain is only satisfactory. Pupils have learned well how to be safe and remain healthy. They are at ease with adults and in each other's company. Pupils willingly share ideas in lessons, play happily together at break times and participate well in the clubs provided. They say, 'Our teachers are really nice to us. They always say, "come and speak to us".' Pupils accept responsibility and contribute well to school and local communities, for example through the work of the school council and by participating in local events. However, other than by raising money for charities such as Comic Relief and Sports Relief, pupils are not able to contribute as fully to wider communities. By the time pupils leave the school, their good social skills and satisfactory academic achievement prepare them soundly for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

More precise tracking of pupils' progress has given teachers and their assistants a clear picture of what pupils need to learn next and this is improving the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is good in the Years 5/6 class where pupils benefit from a lively challenge and where good advantage is taken of the pupils' increased maturity and willingness to offer and share their ideas with others. Teachers in other classes are also providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss and develop their ideas in pairs or small groups, a form of learning that pupils enjoy. For example, teachers are adopting this approach to develop the pupils' awareness of letter sounds and vocabulary. This is helping to bridge gaps in previous learning. These are relatively new developments, however, and have not been implemented for long enough or with equal success across the school. Typical strengths in all classes include warm relationships, the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills and good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to raise pupils' interest. Although improving, there is still inconsistency in the way teachers use assessment information, especially when setting targets and marking pupils' work to help them to improve. This means that pupils sometimes take too long to make the necessary adjustments, for example to construct accurate sentences when writing, and this slows their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop their healthy, safe lifestyles, through, for example, sports, healthy eating and gardening. In particular, the whole-school focus on social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) has had a positive influence upon pupils' behaviour and enjoyment of school. There is a satisfactory emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy, ICT and self-enquiry skills. The curriculum includes good opportunities for the discrete teaching of literacy, numeracy and ICT, which are steadily raising pupils' skills. At times, these skills are further developed and used well to enrich learning in other subjects, for example when writing 'French-Café-School Diaries'. However, this is not a consistent feature across all subjects, for example to record and evaluate the findings of investigations in science, and this constrains pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care, especially in safeguarding and promoting pupils' welfare, is good. The caring ethos means that pupils feel secure and valued. Pupils say, 'Everyone feels safe here.' There are good links with parents, which help to promote the pupils' positive attitudes to school. All staff also work closely with other agencies and this is particularly beneficial for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for new arrivals, especially in lifting their self-confidence. Academic support and guidance is satisfactory overall. Teachers give good oral guidance and some use targets well to raise expectations and present suitable challenges to the pupils. There is still inconsistency, however, in the use of targets and the way teachers show pupils how to improve when marking their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leaders and managers promote good links with parents, the community and outside agencies to safeguard the pupils' welfare and to promote the pupils' good personal development. Self-evaluation and improvement planning are satisfactory and are having an increasingly beneficial effect on improving learning opportunities and accelerating pupils' progress. This is because better monitoring of pupils' progress is enabling the school to meet pupils' individual learning needs more effectively. However, as with other initiatives, strengthened management structures have not been in place long enough to raise standards and achievements to the full. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. School, local and international dimensions of community are developed well through extra-curricular links with local organisations, and the teaching of French, for example. The school has begun links with schools in more ethnically diverse areas of Britain, but accepts that this national dimension is not as strong as other aspects of its contribution to community cohesion.

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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	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
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	2
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	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**

5 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Werrington School, Launceston PL15 8TN

- We enjoyed our visit and would like to thank those of you who took the time to talk to us. We were very interested to hear what you had to say and were impressed by the sensible and polite way you answered our questions, and by your good behaviour. We agree with your teachers and governors that Werrington is a satisfactory, improving school. These are the other main things we found.
- Senior staff and governors have strengthened how they work together and are helping you to make better progress.
- Staff work closely with your parents and other people and provide good care for you. You appreciate this and really enjoy school and are good at adopting healthy, safe lifestyles.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there is more good teaching now. As a result, you make steady progress. Many of you have good speaking and listening skills. An increasing number of you are making good progress.
- To help the school to improve further, we have asked senior managers, governors and teachers to do three things.
- Improve your achievement and standards, especially in writing by raising boys' expectations, in particular, and in science by undertaking more investigations in science.
- Ensure that when teachers are setting targets and marking your work, they give you more information about how to improve.
- Provide more opportunities for you to use and improve your writing, numeracy and computer skills when studying other subjects.

You can help by talking to your teachers about how to improve your work. With our very best wishes for your future
Yours faithfully
Alex Baxter

Lead Inspector