

Godolphin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111809
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337745
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Classey
Headteacher	Tony Phillips
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documents, including the school's records of pupils' progress and its monitoring activities, school policies and guidelines, teachers' plans and questionnaires received from pupils, staff and 65 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress by specific groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially in writing
- elements of outstanding personal development and care for the pupils
- the quality of provision in the mixed-age classes
- the use of monitoring to improve the school's performance.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than average, but numbers are rising steadily with a significant proportion of pupils coming from beyond the school's traditional catchment area, from scattered rural communities in west Cornwall. There are three classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage share a class with pupils in Year 1. Older pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has increased and is greater than is usually found, particularly those pupils with speech and language or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Almost all the pupils are White British and all speak English as their first language. The Little Dolphins Pre-school, which operates within the school, is managed independently and so is not reported upon here. The school has Investors in People, Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

This is a good school. It has several outstanding features but also a few aspects that need to improve. The school recognises its relative geographical isolation and is outstandingly successful in building and sustaining partnerships with parents, other schools and organisations in order to improve the provision and experiences for pupils. An exceptionally high proportion of parents replied to the inspectors' questionnaire with almost unanimous approval for each aspect of the school's work. One wrote, 'We drive ten miles to attend this school. It is brilliant.' Other comments received were summed up by one parent who wrote, 'This is a vibrant, happy school, where my child thoroughly enjoys learning.' Pupils' attendance is high and pupils particularly enjoy the wide range of special events, club activities and visits which are a feature of the good curriculum. A very high proportion of them participate enthusiastically in the many sports clubs. They frequently excel in local tournaments and have an exceptional level of commitment to becoming fit and healthy. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They feel safe and confident about approaching an adult if they have a problem.

Standards fluctuate from year to year. This is not uncommon in a small school with so few pupils, but over time standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a class they share with older pupils. Here, the range and quality of experiences are satisfactory rather than good with constraints being imposed, in part, by the poor access to the outdoor area and limited opportunities for children to learn through playing independently. The school is aware of the limited outdoor provision and has ambitious plans to address this. In the older classes pupils make good progress, with some making rapid progress. Teaching is good and strengthened by the use of external expertise brought in through partnership initiatives. Teachers usually meet the needs of the very wide ability range in their classes. They are undergoing training as they develop new ways to assess pupils' learning and collect all the information together in order to track pupils' progress over time. However, at present they are not making the best use of all the assessments and so the work set is not always finely tuned enough to match the precise needs of different groups. This tends to slow learning in a minority of lessons or for a particular group.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all pupils. The additional support for pupils considered to be vulnerable is outstanding and there is a tangible commitment to fully include all pupils. The required procedures designed to safeguard pupils are in place but governors do not have sufficiently rigorous strategies to check they are being implemented. The headteacher provides good leadership and involves other staff well in reviewing practice and planning further improvements. The school

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reflects thoughtfully on its performance and has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development based on formal and informal checks. Previously identified weaknesses have been remedied, for example giving pupils clear targets, and the school is well placed to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring the curriculum is carefully planned to provide a balance between activities selected by children and those led by adults in all areas of learning
 - implementing the school's plans to develop the outdoor area in order to provide frequent opportunities for children to move freely in and out of doors to explore the world around them.
- Ensure teachers are fully trained in the use of new assessment and tracking systems by the end of this school year, enabling them to use the information to
 - match work closely to the exceptionally wide range of abilities in their mixed-age classes.
- Ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are frequently and rigorously checked by governors.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The attainment of children on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage fluctuates. Historically it has been broadly as expected, but the most recent cohorts have included more pupils above expectations for their age. However, an increasing and significant proportion of older pupils are joining the school at a later stage, often from far afield, and many of these have special educational needs and/or disabilities, some with low starting points. Progress by pupils of all abilities, including this substantial group with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good, and analyses of pupils' work this term show good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils work enthusiastically in lessons, are keen to please and, when appropriate, to compete, for example when engaged on speed trials for the eight times table. They collaborate well, as when being 'reporters' interviewing characters from the first Christmas, and take a pride in their work which, in the main, is presented well. Pupils currently in Year 2 are making good, and in some cases excellent, progress. Standards by the end of Year 6, although above average, have fallen a little in recent years as more pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities join the school. Pupils currently in Year 6 are highly motivated and making good progress towards their challenging targets. Work in their books shows they are on track to reach challenging targets by the end of the year.

Pupils achieve well and almost all enjoy school. Their enthusiastic approach to the varied activities and good development of key literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for their next stage of education. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils are very

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sensitive and thoughtful in the way they help their peers who have problems from time to time, and with older ones caring well for younger ones. The school is planning a residential visit to London as part of its programme to help strengthen pupils' satisfactory awareness of modern Britain's cultural diversity. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities around school and would like to do even more. They take the lead in running mini-clubs at lunchtimes, serve as playground leaders, run the summer fair and participate in many community events in the area, such as beach cleaning projects.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

All the pupils are very well known by the entire staff team and there is a strong sense of care and togetherness. There are good induction procedures, including close links with the on-site pre-school, and careful preparation for transfer to secondary education. The staff work exceptionally well in partnership with parents and external professionals such as outreach workers to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those considered to be vulnerable. Staff undergo special training, and there is effective deployment of assistants to ensure care and support throughout the

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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school day. Supervision levels at breaks and lunchtimes are high, helping ensure pupils' safety.

Good teaching is enhanced by stimulating and imaginative experiences planned within the curriculum. Teachers frequently plan different activities for groups within their class. New ways of assessing pupils' progress are being introduced and pupils are being encouraged to reflect more on their own learning and personal targets. However, at times, even in classes with several year groups and a wide range of ability, information from previous assessments is not fully used, and all the pupils are set very similar tasks with little variation in the degree of support provided. This means, for example, that during lengthy whole-class explanations not all pupils are fully occupied or challenged. Teachers provide good, and in some cases excellent, feedback to pupils when marking their work, with detailed guidance about how to improve.

The school works well to overcome limitations on the curriculum imposed by the nature of the site. This was summed up by one parent who wrote, 'Sports activities for such a small school with limited resources are excellent and all children have the opportunity to participate in local and county events.' The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities with a comprehensive programme of additional help. The use of external expertise, for example as seen in a gymnastics session in the small hall, or master classes for gifted and talented pupils, enhances both the quality of teaching and the curriculum itself.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's good capacity to improve further is founded on a number of strengths in leadership and management. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction with a balanced focus on pupils' academic progress and their personal development. The united staff team are involved well in sharing responsibilities and working towards continuous improvement. Very good use is made of staff meetings and training days to improve practice in the agreed areas for priority. Recent examples include much improved opportunities to use computers, and a comprehensive system to track pupils' progress. The school sets, and achieves, challenging targets for pupils. At the same time pupils' self-esteem is seen as sacrosanct and an illustration of the strong commitment to equal opportunities for all. The school diligently and innovatively establishes partnerships around west Cornwall to support and share expertise.

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The relatively new governing body has already achieved recognition for its financial management against a national standard. It is working resolutely to strengthen its other practices including the satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding pupils. It has established a number of strategies for becoming informed about the work of the school, but does not have sufficiently robust systems for checking the detail or holding the school fully to account. One parent wrote to inspectors, 'The school is a very strong asset to the community ' there is a strong sense of community spirit which emanates from the school throughout the village.' While this is undoubtedly the case, the school is aware that it makes only a limited contribution at national and global levels and so its overall promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a class they share with Year 1 pupils. There are close links with the pre-school group on site, with regular visits and special events such as the Christmas lunch, and this helps ensure children settle happily. They make satisfactory progress from a wide range of starting points. The attainment of children on entry in the last year has been higher than previously and above national expectations for their age. These children are on track to attain the learning goals expected by the end of the year. Curriculum planning is satisfactory as are the arrangements for observing and recording children's responses. The teacher and teaching assistant provide a stimulating range of activities in the classroom, for example a treasure hunt in the sandpit, or treating patients in the surgery, although at times there is an overemphasis on activities directed by an adult or

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designed for older pupils, with few opportunities for children to play independently. Access to the outdoor areas is restricted with almost no opportunities for free-flow in and out of doors. The school is aware of this and has advanced plans to develop an early years shared provision with the pre-school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all the responses were positive, often with additional comments citing the many special events and activities, the way pupils new to the school had been made to feel welcome, and how well the school made best use of its limited accommodation. Parents were unanimous in their support for the school in two questions, about teaching being good and the school helping their children understand the importance of healthy lifestyles, with 97% support for almost all the other questions. This is a very clear message which is supported by inspection evidence. Although a very small minority expressed concerns about how the school responds to unacceptable behaviour, inspectors found this to be well managed and followed up carefully by the headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Godolphin Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspectors receive 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	69	17	26	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	74	15	23	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	60	23	35	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	66	20	31	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	74	17	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	62	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	62	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	49	75	14	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	57	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	45	30	46	1	2	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	48	28	43	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	69	18	28	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	66	20	31	2	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Godolphin Primary School, Helston TR13 9RB

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed meeting you, spending time in lessons and seeing some of your work. We are pleased you like your school. Godolphin is a good school. Here are some of the highlights we found.

- You are very thoughtful about one another, help to look after each other and behave very sensibly around the school.
- You work hard in lessons and make good progress during your time in the school. We are pleased so very few of you are absent each day.
- Your teachers plan a very interesting range of activities for you and help you to be clear about what it is you are learning and how to improve.
- You are especially lucky to have so many clubs and sporting activities, some in school and some when you join with other schools and organisations around west Cornwall. Your school has won several awards for these.
- Your parents are pleased you go to Godolphin Primary School. That is why some of them drive up to ten miles to school each day. They like the way the school works in partnership with them, especially to help those of you who have problems from time to time.
- Everyone who works in the school takes good care of you.
- The headteacher has good ideas about how to improve what is already a good school. The governors and other staff are keen to help him with this.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on three things to make it even better. They are:

- Ensure the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a wider range of carefully planned activities from which to choose and frequent opportunities to play in and out of doors.
- Help teachers, when setting you work, to make the best use of all the information they collect about the progress you are making, so that it is always neither too easy nor too hard.
- Ensure governors tighten up on the way they check how well some of the rules and regulations are carried out around school.

We are sure you will have your own ideas about how to improve the school and will want to talk about these with the headteacher and your class teachers.

Yours sincerely

Martin Kerly

Lead inspector

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