

Gwinear Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111846
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337753
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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	74
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hutchinson
Headteacher	Helen R Scholes
Date of previous school inspection	7 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven learning sessions and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including school plans and policies, assessments and tracking of pupils' progress, and provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, the team looked at the 37 parental questionnaires, and the views of staff and pupils through questionnaires submitted by them.

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

- the progress that children make in their learning and whether this is equally as good for all groups of pupils, in particular, the progress of boys and of able pupils
- how well teachers, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4, provide the right level of challenge to secure improvement for individuals and groups of children
- the degree to which leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, bring about continuous improvement, for example, in ensuring that pupils do as well in mathematics and science as they do in English.

Information about the school

This village school is smaller than the average primary school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but given wide variation across the year groups, at times it is much higher. An above average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational need. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school that has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils make excellent progress, especially in Years 1 to 6, due to excellent teaching which always challenges them to do better. Pupils' progress is assessed and tracked carefully, so that work is planned to meet the wide range of ages and abilities in each class. For example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 solved mathematical puzzles involving different shapes. Although the task was essentially the same for all pupils, the complexity of the puzzles had been subtly adapted so that all could make excellent progress. As a result of this approach, which was seen in all classes, achievement is outstanding. Standards attained in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 vary from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils involved and are currently above average. However, the school's excellent and detailed evidence shows that all make excellent progress from their starting points. This includes both boys and girls, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are very well supported by teaching assistants.

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both in the classroom and outside. A number of pupils with potentially difficult behaviour are managed extremely well by staff. Pupils and their parents rightly feel that they are very safe in school. For example, pupils have a detailed knowledge of the potential dangers in using the internet and other digital media. School leaders and governors give their responsibilities in this area a very high priority, as is shown by the superb quality of the documentation and procedures adopted to safeguard children. These, together with the excellent guidance pupils receive through marking and the use of targets, contribute to the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides. The school has taken an unusually proactive approach to the promotion of equality and diversity, having recently consulted parents and pupils over a new scheme in this area. As a result of these and other initiatives, pupils are tolerant, polite and confident. They demonstrate this through their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

Pupils are excited and motivated by the excellent curriculum. They speak with great enthusiasm of learning French, music and art, of trips and residential experiences, and of the many opportunities for sport and exercise, such as the street dance club. They have a detailed knowledge of eating healthily, including the dangers of eating disorders and excessive dieting. A strength of the staff is their willingness to tackle controversial topics in an appropriate way with relatively young pupils.

With the able leadership of the headteacher and governors, staff demonstrate the ambition and drive needed to improve the school further. They have an excellent

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knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and have rectified many of the latter, such as weaknesses in the teaching of mathematical investigation raised at the last inspection. Some relative weakness in progress in science is now being tackled with similar vigour. These actions show the school's excellent capacity for sustained further improvement. Provision and progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. While staff share the skills and enthusiasm of their colleagues, the facilities in the classroom and outdoor area do not enable children to make the range of choices and decisions required to promote excellent progress. The school has resources to address this and is drawing up plans for improvement.

The school has excellent partnerships with a range of agencies and other schools. Parents have a high degree of confidence in many aspects of the school, but a significant minority feel it does not communicate well, especially about their children's progress. While inspectors saw convincing evidence of several strategies to address this, there remains a degree of discontent which has yet to be successfully resolved.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by
- ensuring that the indoor and outdoor environments enable them to make a range of choices and develop their independence in all weathers.
- Improve parents' levels of satisfaction with the school's communication by:
- consulting them further about strategies to ensure that they feel well informed about their children's learning and progress
- ensuring that all parents have confidence in approaching staff with any questions or concerns.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children start school with a range of skills and abilities. Evidence shows that among younger pupils these were broadly as expected, but that when older pupils started school they were below these levels. Records show that pupils make excellent progress. In Years 1 and 2, pupils used storyboards to learn that stories have a beginning, middle and end. Higher attaining pupils produced detailed stories with text written in accurate sentences, but all showed understanding of the concept with some appropriate words. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 write accurate and lengthy pieces in a wide range of styles that are appropriate for the audience. Such examples of pupils' work are evident in the above average standards reached, including at higher levels, by more-able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress due to the strategies used by teaching assistants, such as modelling the correct way to write, and assessing and rewarding small steps in progress. Boys and girls make equally good progress.

Pupils are active in promoting tolerance and good behaviour, through the work of the school council and by modelling good behaviour and safe practices for younger pupils. They make an excellent contribution to the community, both in the school and more

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widely, for instance by supporting the charity 'Shelterbox', including a visit to its headquarters in Helston. Pupils' attendance is average currently, having been affected by the attendance of a few pupils with severe health issues, but the school has been successful in reducing the number of holidays taken in term-time. The development of the skills pupils will need in adult life is excellent as they develop high levels of independence, the ability to work in teams and outstanding skills in information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have excellent skills of questioning and draw on the outstanding relationships they have with pupils to use a range of interesting strategies with confidence. For instance, a teacher asked pupils in Years 4 to 6 to assess and comment on a piece of her own writing. This gave them the confidence to constructively assess their own and each others' work, and to identify how to improve it by matching it against the targets set. Pupils in Years 2 to 4 studied a poem about foggy weather. Then, as a group, they designed their own dance to demonstrate the poem. Not only was this work of very high

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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quality, but it enabled younger and lower attaining pupils to gain an insight into the poem's meaning, even when they may have struggled with the written words. Marking of work is detailed and includes supportive written comments to help the pupil to improve. The curriculum is exciting and makes full use of the rich local environment. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm of opportunities to, for example, visit tin-mining sites or to learn to surf. They enjoy themed events, such as 'French Day', 'Victorian Day', and 'Modern Britain Week', which raised challenging issues concerning diversity and lifestyle. For a small school, there is a very wide range of additional activities as diverse as sport, art and gardening. To quote a pupil, 'I loved camp because we got to make and ride in coracles.'

Pupils receive excellent care, support and guidance. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well and their parents and carers are kept well informed about their progress. Outside agencies are involved as appropriate in meeting pupils' needs. Teaching assistants play a big part in assessing progress and in ensuring progress is maintained and that individual needs are met. The school has productive relationships with local pre-schools and secondary schools, ensuring a smooth transition when pupils change school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The high quality of the documentation prepared by the school provides convincing evidence of outstanding leadership and management. Thorough and accurate monitoring and evaluation leads to effective plans for improvement that include further monitoring of progress. Governors are actively involved, for instance in driving forward the travel plan in an attempt to resolve issues associated with the remote location of the school. When necessary, they challenge staff, for example over the current organisation of classes by year group. Middle leaders are equally effective, for instance in improving achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in science. All required policies and procedures for safeguarding are in place and are regularly reviewed and the arrangements to keep children safe are of especially high quality. The school's work to promote equality and diversity has had an outstanding impact, both on the school's promotion of equality of opportunity and to develop community cohesion. Inspectors saw a wide range of examples of communication with parents, such as letters, questionnaires and news sheets, but this remains an area of concern to some, such as

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the timings of opportunities to meet with teachers.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in Reception, and almost all attain the expected standards in all areas of learning, although in 2009 relatively few exceeded these levels. This is because there are constraints on children's opportunities to learn independently, as the classroom is shared with pupils in Years 1 and 2 and the outdoor area has limited facilities and requires constant direct supervision. Resources have been identified to improve matters and detailed plans are being drawn up. Nevertheless, teaching is good and, as a result, children make good progress, for example in developing vocabulary associated with planting turnips or when playing with diggers in sand. Progress is assessed in detail by all staff and is recorded in children's learning journals. As in the rest of the school, the care and welfare of children are excellent, with good partnerships with parents, pre-schools and agencies. Good leadership and management are reflected in improvements in children's progress over the last three years, and in the drive and ambition of staff to make further improvements to the provision.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires were returned by parents or carers representing about two-thirds of the families in the school. They agreed almost unanimously that their children were happy and safe at school, and that teaching was good. A significant minority felt they were not kept well informed about their child's progress or how to help their learning, or raised more general concerns over leadership and management.

In general, inspectors' evidence did not support these views, but concerns from parents over the quality of the school's communication with them are supported by inspection evidence and addressed in the body of the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Gwinear Community 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 inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 74 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	51	17	46	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	73	9	24	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	30	18	49	7	19	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	49	15	41	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	54	16	43	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	51	12	32	5	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	51	17	46	0	0	1	3
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)	11	30	19	51	3	8	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	32	21	57	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	46	14	38	4	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	30	21	57	3	8	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	14	38	15	41	7	19	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	54	15	41	2	5	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.



1 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gwinear Community Primary School, Hayle, PR27 5LA

We enjoyed meeting you when we visited your school. We would like to thank those of you who gave up your time to talk to us. Yours is an outstanding school. What we liked most about it was your excellent behaviour, and the way you look after each other. We were especially impressed by the way everyone of all ages plays so well together and the way you involve children new to the school and make them welcome.

You make excellent progress in your work and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave Year 6. You told us you feel very safe and we agree that the adults do everything they can to keep you safe. You are taught very well. You have some very good discussions on difficult topics, and are helped to understand by, for example, using dance to express a poem. Although you are proud of your links with Cornwall, as you should be, you know lots about other sorts of people and how they live, which helps you to respect them. You know a lot about keeping healthy. You told us that lots of things you do at school are exciting, like learning to surf, or going on residential trips.

The headteacher, staff and governors run the school very well. They have lots of good links, especially with other schools, so you will feel confident when you go to secondary school. Most of your parents think highly of the school because the staff take excellent care of you and respect their views.

We have asked the staff and governors in your school to do two things. We have asked them to improve Class 1's classroom and the outdoor area where Reception learn. We are sure you will have some good ideas about this. We have asked them to find better ways to talk to your parents about how you are getting on. Again, I am sure you will have good ideas as you hear what is said about this both at home and at school.

Good luck in the future

Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler

Lead inspector

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