

Summercourt Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111906
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	337774
Inspection dates	30 September –1 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Jane HMI

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	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Abbott
Headteacher	Sally Olford
Date of previous school inspection	6 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including information about pupil performance, the school development plan, minutes of the governing body and school policies, curriculum planning documents and subject leaders' monitoring files. In addition, 74 parental, 18 staff and 50 pupil questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- the achievement of girls relative to that of boys at both key stages and the effectiveness of strategies to improve writing in Key Stage 1
- the quality of teaching, especially its consistency in mixed age groups and the extent to which it challenges all abilities and groups
- the quality of revised curriculum planning for progression in knowledge, skills and understanding
- planning, provision and evaluation of community cohesion
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The characteristics of the school have changed little since the time of the last inspection. It remains a smaller than average primary school serving a rural village and its surrounding area. Pupils are still organised into four mixed-age classes. There is a private nursery sited in the grounds which was also inspected around the same time as the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is low.

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

Significant improvement has taken place since the last inspection and Summercourt Primary is now securely a good school. Some aspects, such as the behaviour of the pupils, the role of the school in its community and the care, guidance and support of pupils, are outstanding. Other aspects of the school's provision, such as the quality of teaching, aspects of leadership and management, and the curriculum, are also improved and account for the good progress that pupils make by the end of Year 6. As a result of this, the school has a strong reputation in the community. Pupils enjoy their time at school and are rightly proud of it. Equally, the great majority of parents report that they are also very pleased with the school. Comments such as, 'My child loves going to school', 'The staff are so supportive, encouraging and make learning fun', 'I can't get my children home at the end of the day!' were typical of many parents that responded to the questionnaire.

Children start school with levels of attainment that are generally below age-related expectations in most areas of learning and leave with standards that are in line with or above the national averages in tests at age 11. This demonstrates that the pupils make good progress overall. Nevertheless, there is scope for improving standards in English and mathematics further by applying greater flexibility in the grouping arrangements in these subjects, and by deploying available staffing resources more precisely to ensure that learning is maximised for all year groups. The school is well placed to do this because the precision of monitoring and tracking of pupil progress based on teacher assessments and test results is more consistent and accurate. This helps with identifying where intervention is necessary to ensure all pupils make good rates of progress.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and is committed to continuous improvement. The headteacher is providing determined leadership and is fully supported by the staff, governors and the community. The sense of common purpose in the school, as reflected in the priorities for improvement in the school development plan and in the day-to-day running of the school, is tangible. The school has rightly maintained its focus on improving pupil standards and the track record of pupils' academic performance has been improving over recent years. This, together with robust systems for self-evaluation, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for further improvement. This bodes well because further work is required before the school's plan for promoting community cohesion beyond the school and local area is fully implemented and evaluated. The governors' public levels of challenge in holding the school to account for its performance are not as transparent as they should be in the notes of meetings.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to secure better academic achievement the school should:
- introduce greater flexibility in pupil grouping arrangements in English and mathematics lessons, taking into account discrete year groups, gender groups and ability groups
- ensure that teaching and support staff are more precisely deployed to the teaching groups.
- Fully implement the plan for promoting community cohesion by
- ensuring that governors and other school partners approve the intended actions
- monitoring and evaluating the impact of stated actions in order to help pupils achieve better understanding of national and international cultural diversity.
- Ensure that the meeting notes of governors are made publicly available and reflect more accurately the level of challenge to the school in holding it to account for its performance. In addition, ensure that the notes of meetings respect, appropriately, the confidential nature of agenda items related to personnel.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In the lessons observed, all pupils made good progress, there was good pace and activities were generally well matched to the needs of individuals. Where classes had mixed age groupings, care was taken to provide suitably challenging tasks. For example, in Years 2 and 3, pupils were challenged to use different sources to determine facts, causes and consequences of the Great Fire of London in a way that was challenging but fun. In a Year 3 and 4 class, groups were challenged to categorise quadrilaterals by various properties and use their mathematical knowledge to account for their solutions. In a Year 5 and 6 class, role play was used to good effect to stimulate the children's story-writing skills in their topic work on pirates. Focused and systematic teaching in a Year 1 mathematics lesson in their theme work on dragons helped pupils to add numbers together accurately. In these examples, pupils responded well and were highly involved in their learning. The pupils were confident in their response to the tasks and adults were focused on supporting and challenging all pupils to achieve well.

As a consequence of improved monitoring of pupils' academic performance since the last inspection, the school is able to identify where there is risk of underachievement for individuals and groups. This has resulted in greater numbers of older pupils attaining higher levels in test results than was the case in previous years, for example. In addition, the discrepancy of attainment of boys doing better than girls and low attainment in writing in Key Stage 1, as shown in national data, have largely been eradicated as a result of more rigorous and accurate assessment. However, in order to achieve greater impetus to the standards attained, the school is not yet applying maximum flexibility in the way pupil groupings and the use of available staffing resources are deployed.

Without doubt, pupils enjoy their learning. This is reflected in the very secure

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relationships between adults and pupils, in their excellent behaviour, above average rates of attendance and as a result of the interesting enrichment activities provided for the pupils. By the end of Year 6, most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, attain the required level in English, mathematics and science and this has been an improving pattern in recent years.

The school is particularly successful in striking a good balance between attending to academic attainment, progress and personal development. The social and moral development of pupils is particularly good. The pupils are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They also report feeling safe and are confident that adults will listen to them if they have personal problems and resolve them fairly and swiftly. The pupils appreciate the opportunity to make decisions, as those in the school council testify, and take pride in supporting their chosen charitable events. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their educational lives as a result of attention to basic skills, the many responsibilities they are given and the involvement they have in the development of their highly regarded school environment. The school's links with a school in Zambia and other schools in the UK also supports their cultural development.

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	3
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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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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How effective is the provision?

Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching in the school has improved and it is now good. Focused monitoring by senior leaders and subject leaders has resulted in greater consistency in the quality of lesson planning, and teachers take care to structure activities suitable for all the pupils' needs in their mixed age classes, so that they are interesting, and motivate and enthuse the pupils, which helps them to make good progress in their learning. The pace of lessons is typically brisk, and teachers' use of questioning and a high degree of consistency in marking work, together with clear individual targets, help pupils to know how well they are doing in their work and what they need to do next to improve. This, together with the good support for individuals and groups by other adults, accounts for the improved progress that pupils are making, particularly in their English and mathematics work.

The curriculum has recently been revised. Theme-based topics, organised in a two- year programme in Key Stage 1 and a four-year programme in Key Stage 2, combine subjects sensibly and effectively so that repetition is avoided in mixed-age group classes. Curriculum planning is comprehensive and ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum subjects and, importantly, plans well for progression in the knowledge, skills and understanding required. This revision has only been introduced and implemented since the start of the academic year. Nevertheless, the pupils already report that they enjoy the new-style curriculum as it makes their learning more interesting and less disjointed than was previously the case. This, together with a good range of clubs, educational visits and visitors in to school, enriches the experiences that pupils have. A significant strength of the school is its caring and supportive family atmosphere. It accounts for why pupils feel safe and happy in school. Pupils accept responsibilities willingly and take their roles seriously. The school knows its pupils extremely well as individuals, and the priority given to their care and support is outstanding. Those pupils who require additional support, in particular, are provided for very well, and work with external agencies and partners ensures that their needs are well met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

At the last inspection, the headteacher was very new to the school. Since then, determined and focused leadership in collaboration with the staff, governors and local

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community has led to significant progress. Leadership at all levels is now good. The school has redefined its ambition, aligned the outcomes of whole-school monitoring to priorities for improvement in the school development plan and is already well on the way to realising the new 'Aim high, smile and shine' slogan. Key improvements to the roles and expectations of those carrying responsibility for subjects has also led to the school being clear about standards and quality across the school and this has led to effective strategies for raising standards and improved progress for all pupils.

Governors are very active in the school and have played a key role in determining the strategic direction for improvement. They have also demonstrated their capacity to take difficult decisions such as the targeting of financial resources and in securing better stability in staffing issues. They also hold the school to account reasonably well for its academic performance and are kept well informed. However, the level and degree of challenge is not yet sufficiently transparent in the published minutes of governors' meetings.

The school strives, successfully, to be an inclusive one and care is taken to ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity to improve in their academic performance and personal development. The school places the safety of pupils as a high priority, and policies and procedures are in line with government requirements. Partnership work with outside agencies and other schools adds good value to both the academic performance of pupils and to their welfare and care. The school is fully committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and this is reflected in the very high degree of satisfaction, confidence and support that parents have in the school.

The strategy to promote community cohesion is at an early stage of development. The school has a good knowledge of the context of the school population and this has led to the identification of priorities for improvement. However, identified actions have not yet been implemented, nor has any concerted effort to evaluate their effectiveness been undertaken.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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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

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage when they start school is good and set to improve further with the imminent opening of the much improved outdoor space in order to promote a wider range of activities. The children arrive in the school with standards that are generally below those expected for their age but they make good progress across all areas of learning. This is based on astute observations, assessments and tracking of children's progress and in encouraging independence in their learning. The transition from home to school is well planned and managed. Good relationships with parents exist, including the opportunities for parents to share in the progress that their children make through their 'learning journey' books. Despite being taught in a mixed age class, the curriculum for the youngest children is suitably and appropriately planned and is balanced across the six areas of learning. Appropriate attention is given to helping the children with early literacy skills through a daily period of being taught letters and sounds in a systematic way. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, with good attention to securing the welfare and personal development of the children.

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

The great majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and the quality of education that their children receive. Most cite the welcoming ethos and hard work of the teachers as particular strengths. This accounts for the strong profile in how parents say their children enjoy school, feel safe and make good progress in their academic work and personal development. Inspectors agree with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Summercourt 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 97 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	62	28	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	66	24	32	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	50	35	47	0	0	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	54	28	38	1	1	5	7
The teaching is good at this school	44	59	25	34	0	0	5	7
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	57	29	39	2	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	62	26	35	0	0	2	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)	34	46	43	45	0	0	7	9
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	50	35	47	0	0	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	51	33	45	1	1	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	49	34	46	1	1	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	42	57	27	37	0	0	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	65	25	34	0	0	1	1

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.



2 October 2009.

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Summercourt Community Primary School, Newquay TR8 5EA

I would like to thank you for being so helpful to us when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking with you in lessons and around the school, and sharing some of the super opportunities you have for learning and hearing about how much you enjoy school. You told us how proud you are of your school and you are right to be so! Our inspection found that Summercourt is a good school and here are some of the things we were particularly impressed with:

- Your headteacher and the other adults are working hard to make sure that the school continuously improves. They seek your views and listen carefully to what you have to say about the school.
- Your behaviour and attitude towards each other are outstanding.
- You work hard in lessons and respond well to your teachers, who plan interesting activities so that you make good progress in your work.
- You have good opportunities outside the classroom to extend your knowledge and understanding of the world around you and help you develop as young people. You are clearly very proud of your school grounds and garden which I think are fantastic!
- Your teachers look after you very well, keep you safe and help you to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
- The school does all it can to work with others to make sure you have a good education.

Your headteacher and the other adults are working hard to make the school even better and we have asked them to improve three things:

- Make sure that when you are working in English and mathematics that the groups you work in are better suited to your needs and abilities. You can help here by working hard to achieve the special targets that you have.
- Help you to understand better how Britain has many different kinds of people living in it, how they believe in different things, so that you can appreciate what a rich and exciting place our country is.
- Making sure that the notes of governors meetings show how they challenge the

school to do even better.

Yours faithfully

Kevin Jane

Her Majesty's Inspector

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