

Callington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111950
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	310738
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin James

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Morris
Headteacher	Matthew Shirley
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2005
School address	24 Saltash Road Callington PL17 7EF
Telephone number	01579 382233
Fax number	01579 384647

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from a White British background. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. In recognition of its work, the school has received the Activemark Gold award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. It also has some significant strengths. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as are their attitudes and behaviour, and they show great enjoyment in coming to school. Whilst care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, pastoral care is good, with the care and safety of its pupils being a priority of the school. As a result, pupils are well looked after and they also look after each other well. Parents hold overwhelmingly positive views about the school. One said, typically, 'My children come home each day bursting to tell me what they have been doing!'

When children start in the Nursery their knowledge and skill levels are just below those expected, especially in relation to language and literacy. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage, and by the end of the Reception year most are working within the expected early learning goals. Pupils then make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6, and by the end of Year 6 they reach broadly average standards. The school recognises that more-able pupils do not always do as well as they might.

Teachers relate well to pupils and make good use of a variety of resources and teaching strategies to make lessons interesting. Teaching assistants are well deployed, particularly in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Lessons are generally well planned, but limited challenge is sometimes provided for more-able pupils in the work that is set. Helpful advice is given to pupils in class, but comments in books and the targets provided for pupils do not always give them a clear understanding of how to improve their work. Pupils enjoy the good range of visits and visitors that enriches their experience. The school routinely reviews its curriculum, with a current emphasis rightly being placed on the increased use of literacy and numeracy in other subjects.

The headteacher and other members of staff are keen to do the best they can for their pupils. Good use is made of outside bodies, such as sports teachers and special needs advisers, in supporting the work of the school. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and so areas for improvement are appropriately identified and tackled. For instance, the differences noted in the performance of boys and girls have been successfully addressed. All staff and governors show a clear commitment to improving the school, particularly the progress being made by the pupils. Current planning shows a clear awareness of the ways to take the school forward, and the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are happy in both Nursery and Reception, and the staff work hard to create a friendly and caring learning environment for them. The adults provide them with an appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for them to choose for themselves, and the various resources and the outdoor area are used well. The children behave well, although a very small number sometimes find it difficult to maintain concentration on the tasks they have chosen. As a result of good teaching, the children make good progress, and standards are average by the end of Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers consistently provide challenging work for pupils, especially the more able.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through the work provided in other subjects.
- Ensure that marking and target setting help pupils understand clearly how to improve their work.

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

Standards overall are broadly average, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They make up ground well and by the end of Reception most are working within the early learning goals, as is the picture nationally. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average.

By the end of Year 6, standards are also broadly average, and current standards represent satisfactory achievement from these pupils' starting points. In 2007, when standards were just below average, boys did not perform as well as girls at the end of Year 6. The school recognised this, and the strategies introduced to address the issue have been successful, with boys and girls now performing equally well. The school makes sound provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and this is helping them to make steady progress towards their targets. The school recognises that the progress made by more-able pupils, although satisfactory overall, is not always as consistent and that on occasions it could be better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils clearly like school very much, and this is reflected in their good behaviour and their evident enjoyment. They have very sensible attitudes to their work. Pupils are polite and courteous, and in most cases they move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils feel safe in school, and they express complete confidence in the school's ability to sort out any issues that do arise. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their understanding of the multicultural society in which we live is less strong. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to live healthy lives, although they do not always make healthy choices in the snacks that they eat. Pupils benefit from the good opportunities provided by the school for exercise, especially the daily 'Wake Up Shake Up' sessions, which they tackle with great enthusiasm.

Pupils readily and conscientiously take on the many responsibilities that the school offers them. The school councillors are proud of their role, and they recognise that they are working on behalf of other pupils. Pupils are also involved in the wider community through such things as fund raising and taking part in musical activities in the local church. Useful links are made with local businesses, and the standards being achieved in literacy and numeracy are preparing pupils adequately for their next stage of education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers relate well to pupils, and consequently pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They make pupils aware of what they are learning and why, and this contributes well towards their understanding of their work. Teachers' explanations are usually clear, and in most cases they successfully engage pupils' interest. Occasionally, however, introductions are too long, and this results in some loss of concentration by the pupils. Teachers provide a variety of teaching strategies and approaches, such as practical activities in mathematics, which pupils enjoy and which benefit their learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, because they are usefully deployed and provide them with good support and advice. Teachers usually involve pupils well in lessons, but on occasions pupils are provided with little opportunity to talk about their work in front of the class, which would allow them to clarify and develop their knowledge and skills. Most of the tasks that are planned and provided for the different groups of pupils set at least a satisfactory level of challenge. However, the work provided for the more able pupils does not always extend them adequately. This in turn slows their rate of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum enables pupils to study a broad range of subjects, and this contributes to their satisfactory progress. The school makes good provision for music, such as the Samba Band, which pupils really enjoy. The school recognises that the curriculum has lacked some variety and interest and, as a result, links are beginning to be made between subjects, where appropriate, to produce topics that will motivate pupils even more. A particular emphasis is rightly being placed on the greater use of literacy and numeracy. The introduction of resources and activities of particular interest to boys has led to the improvement in their performance that is evident in their class work. Learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully identified, and pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of tasks and activities. In the Foundation Stage, where the curriculum is good, teachers make good provision for both adult-directed activities and opportunities for children to choose themselves.

There is a good emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills. The curriculum makes a suitable contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is a good range of outings, visitors and after-school clubs, which pupils much appreciate and which they support with enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Adults ensure that there is good pastoral care for the pupils. Child protection procedures are securely in place, and staff are alert to signs that any pupil might be distressed or anxious. Pupils in turn are confident that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried. Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe and clean environment. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out, and safeguarding procedures are robust. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living, and they are regularly reminded of the need to take care, for instance, when undertaking physical education.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but while they often add words of praise, they rarely provide pupils with advice about improving their work. Pupils do have targets for improving their work. However, discussions with them show that they do not always have a clear understanding about what they need to do to make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher leads the school with dedication and a clear commitment to improvement, especially in relation to the progress pupils make. He is well supported by other senior leaders, and there is a strong sense of teamwork. Staff have been most successful in creating a safe and caring environment where the well-being of the pupils is seen as a priority. The school has satisfactory systems for finding out how well it is doing, and the self-review has accurately evaluated its overall effectiveness, and also identified strengths and areas for development. For example, actions to ensure that boys and girls perform equally well have been successful, and the current focus on developing cross-curricular links is an appropriate priority for the school.

Subject leaders demonstrate both enthusiasm and a sound understanding of their respective subjects. They are currently working to extend their monitoring of those subjects, especially through improving their understanding of pupil performance data. Governance is satisfactory, with a number of members being new to the governing body. They are fully involved, for example, in producing the school development plan, and they regularly visit and support the school. They recognise that they need to further develop their overall understanding of the provision being made by the school, in order to be able to hold it adequately to account for its performance. The school regularly obtains the views of both pupils and parents, and these are taken into account during policy reviews.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 April 2008

Dear Pupils,

Callington Primary School, Callington, Cornwall PL17 7EF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed our visit and it was a pleasure talking to you. My colleague especially liked talking to the school council, and we all really enjoyed joining you in assembly. I am writing to tell you what we found out about the school, what we think is good, and what we think could be made better. Overall, you are in a satisfactory school, where you are making steady progress with your work. The headteacher and other staff know what they need to do to make the school better.

These things are some of the strengths of the school:

- Children in Nursery and Reception make a good start in the school.
- Teachers provide you with lessons that you enjoy.
- Your behaviour and your attitudes to your work are good.
- You know about how important it is to eat healthy food, although some of you eat unhealthy snacks during the day.
- The staff know you well and take great care of you.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

These are things the school has been asked to improve:

- Make sure that you all get work in lessons that suits you and is hard enough for you.
- Provide you with more opportunities to develop your literacy and numeracy skills when you are doing work in other subjects.
- Provide you with clearer targets and comments in marking, to help you understand how to improve your work.

You can help, too, by making sure you know how to make your work better.

We wish you all good luck for the future.

Best wishes,

Martin James Lead Inspector

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