

Gorran School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	111882
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	378379
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2012
Lead 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	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Hawken
Headteacher	Jonathan Sleep
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Sadler

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector spent over four hours observing five teachers teach nine lessons. He also more briefly observed groups of pupils learning their letters and sounds (phonics). Meetings were held with staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a group of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, school development planning and ensuring the safety of pupils. The responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and by 91 parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves a coastal village and surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. These needs range from specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia to profound and multiple disabilities. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Pupils are taught in five classes which include a class for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school shares its site with a pre-school which also operates a breakfast club open to pupils from the school. As these provisions are not managed by the governing body they are subject to a separate inspection.

The majority of teaching staff, including the headteacher, are new to the school since the last inspection in 2007.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Excellent teaching and a rich and varied curriculum enable pupils to make sustained and rapid progress in their learning.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. All pupils make at least good and often outstanding progress in all their lessons. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress.
- Teaching is outstanding because teachers have high expectations of their pupils and plan interesting lessons that motivate them to learn quickly. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. Teachers are particularly adept at using the rich local environment to enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are outstanding. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary as pupils are polite and thoughtful. Pupils and their parents and carers agree that there is very little bullying. However, pupils have a limited understanding of different forms of bullying and of how they may be countered, and the school does not routinely record any incidents that occur.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. Teaching is monitored very effectively and suitable action is taken to remedy any weaknesses. There has been sustained and rapid improvement since the last inspection and the weaknesses identified at that time have been tackled successfully. The excellent curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in an outstanding manner. Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective and meet all statutory requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to maintain the current outstanding level of pupils' behaviour and safety:
 - ensure that pupils understand the different ways in which bullying may occur and that they are aware of appropriate strategies to deal with any bullying they may encounter
 - record any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying so that any emerging issues may be identified and tackled quickly.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills and knowledge that are broadly as expected, although their mathematical skills are somewhat weaker. Throughout the school, they make sustained and rapid progress so that by the end of Year 6 their attainment in English and mathematics is well-above the national average. These outcomes have improved steadily since the last inspection. Their progress in learning to read is especially impressive. Children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 were observed learning the sound of 'ie'. They read sentences such as, 'A thief cried and denied his crime', with fluency and expression, and could then explain the meaning of the sentence. All pupils in the current Year 2 are on course to attain at least the nationally expected standard of reading by the end of the school year, and by the end of Year 6 attainment in reading is well-above average. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with their classmates.

Pupils' ability to apply their growing knowledge and skills to a variety of situations is outstanding. Their ability to use mathematical skills was shown, for example, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 investigated lung capacity by displacing water from a large container. They had an excellent understanding of the concept of conservation of volume and could record their results in a variety of accurate ways. At the opposite end of the age spectrum, a Reception child used a metre stick to measure the height of a classmate; '95 centimetres', he said with confidence and accuracy. Many activities require pupils to work in pairs or teams and this makes an excellent contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as when children in Reception gave instructions to a blindfolded partner to guide them around the playground. In this lesson, children also tried spectacles that mimic forms of visual impairment which developed their understanding of disability.

Pupils and their parents and carers judge that pupils achieve very well. They especially appreciate the levels of independence that pupils acquire, in part through involvement in the many outdoor and adventurous activities that the school provides. Parents and carers also believe correctly that the school meets all pupils' individual needs, so that all make equal progress. Staff have in the recent past spotted issues such as slower progress by girls in mathematics, and have taken successful corrective action.

Quality of teaching

All lessons are planned so as to be challenging and motivating for pupils. The teaching of reading is outstanding as the approaches used are consistent and precise, with excellent monitoring and assessment enabling pupils to move quickly to the next stage. In Years 1 and 2, pupils investigated the mathematics involved in making and sharing pizzas. The teacher dressed as an Italian chef and all pupils wore chefs' hats. This caused great excitement as they distributed slices of pepperoni in a 'fair' way. In a particularly outstanding lesson, pupils in Year 3 watched a clip from the film *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and then wrote descriptive pieces

focusing on the use of similes and adjectives. The teacher and her assistant supported pupils exceptionally well, so that all, including those with special educational needs, produced high quality work. In this and other lessons the use of subtle enhancements, for example house plants and background music, created a calm and reflective climate for learning.

Teachers are very effective at encouraging pupils to apply their knowledge to solving problems. For example, again in Year 3, pupils were asked to find the time it would take a snail to climb out of a well 11 metres deep, if as a repeating pattern it climbed five metres in one hour, and then slipped back three metres in the next hour while resting. They worked in pairs using chalks on the playground to solve this challenging problem and came to the correct solution by various methods.

Analysis of pupils' work shows the care taken by staff to ensure that it is presented with pride. This is especially the case in Years 1 and 2. Marking and personal targets are used very effectively to show pupils how to improve and to celebrate success, as when a teacher said, 'Look, J has met his/her target to write neatly in joined-up writing. Let's give him/her a clap!' Parents, carers and pupils agree rightly that they receive excellent teaching. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very effective support from both teachers and their assistants. Many lessons make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example through music, art and the school's excellent partnership with a multi-ethnic inner-city school, with which exchange visits take place.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In a Year 3 lesson, pupils sat in silence and with respect as classmates eloquently read their work, applauding at the end. This was typical of the well-focused and industrious atmosphere found in all classrooms. This excellent behaviour continues when pupils are having lunch or are at play. Older pupils care for younger ones, including children from the adjacent pre-school who sometimes join them, and support disabled pupils. Parents, carers and pupils agree that behaviour is excellent and that bullying is very rare, any which occurs being dealt with effectively by staff. While pupils in Years 5 and 6 have some understanding of matters such as cyber-bullying, pupils have limited understanding of other forms of bullying and of how they might be appropriately challenged. Because of the low incidence of poor behaviour or bullying, when such incidents occur, they are not routinely recorded so that they might be monitored to identify and tackle any emerging pattern. However, evidence from pupils, parents, carers and the last inspection, together with the absence of exclusions over a long period, demonstrates that the excellent behaviour observed during the inspection was typical.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of personal safety and are able to sensibly identify risk. This includes when using the internet and when walking or cycling to school, as many do. The school gives training in safe cycling and walking, and helps pupils to explore their rural, coastal environment safely. For example, pupils undertake walking expeditions, finding their own way in small groups while being discreetly monitored by responsible adults.

Pupils' attendance has been above average for some years and continues to improve. Any low attendance is quickly identified and tackled. Pupils arrive at school and at their lessons promptly.

Leadership and management

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, all staff are focused on raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching in the school. The school identified and dealt with weaknesses in teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage and now has a new team in place. Recommendations from the last inspection, for example to provide more challenge for able pupils and improve subject leadership, have also been fully resolved. Any need for additional training, for example to ensure consistency in the teaching of letters and sounds, has been met. All staff have received up-to-date training in child protection from the headteacher who is a qualified trainer. Performance management and self-evaluation are robust and accurate, and are used very successfully to bring about improvement. The very effective and well-led governing body fully meets its responsibilities, for example to ensure pupils are safe, and challenges and supports school leaders in bringing about improvement. It is forward-looking, rightly investigating possible future models of collaboration between local schools.

The outstanding curriculum is a major strength of the school, as is recognised by pupils and their parents and carers. Full advantage is taken of the rich local environment and many lessons and other activities take place outdoors. Partnerships with other local schools are used very effectively to enhance pupils' cultural and physical development, for example through dance and competitive sport.

The equally outstanding achievement of all pupils demonstrates the school's excellent promotion of equality of opportunity. Links with a multi-ethnic school develop pupils' tolerance and understanding of others, demonstrating a strong willingness to tackle discrimination. The effective tackling of any shortcomings and the strong improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement that have taken place since the last inspection demonstrate the school's excellent capacity for further improvement. Levels of confidence in the school among parents and carers are rightly very high. A very large majority returned the inspector's questionnaire, of whom almost all said they would recommend the school to others.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gorran School, St Austell, PL26 6LH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school recently, and thank you to those who completed my questionnaire. I especially enjoyed talking with you, seeing your work and hearing your views. This letter is to tell you what I found.

- Yours is an outstanding school. You told me you were excited by all the opportunities the school gives you to learn outdoors and I agree that is a particular strength. Your parents and carers agree with you all and with me that Gorran School is an excellent place to learn.
- Your achievement is excellent. You learn quickly in your lessons, and by the time you leave at the end of Year 6 your attainment in English and mathematics is well-above average.
- The teaching is outstanding. Teachers make lessons exciting and challenging. They help you learn by giving advice and using your targets to show you what to learn next.
- Your behaviour is outstanding. You are polite and considerate towards others. You and your parents and carers told me there is almost no bullying. You know how to look after yourselves around the school and when exploring around Gorran.
- The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The school has improved a lot since the last inspection in 2007, when it was already good. All the adults involved work hard to keep you safe and to make sure the teaching is as good as possible.

To improve the school even more, I have asked the staff to make sure you know about different sorts of bullying so you know how to deal with it in the future, and to keep records of any bad behaviour or bullying that happens. You can help by telling an adult about these things if they happen.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler
Lead inspector

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