

INSPECTION REPORT

TORPOINT INFANT SCHOOL

Torpoint

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111968

Headteacher: Mrs D Snookes

Reporting inspector: Mr Graham R Sims
28899

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th March 2001

Inspection number: 187607

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr B Deacon
Date of previous inspection:	25 th March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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28899	Mr G R Sims	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. Teaching and learning. Leadership and management. Equal opportunities.
09079	Mrs A Moss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety. Partnership with parents and carers.
03942	Mr K Sanderson	Team inspector	English Geography History	
20326	Mr P Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	
14509	Mr P Mann	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education	Curricular and other opportunities for learning.
27219	Mrs G Evans	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage Curriculum	Special educational needs. The assessment and support unit.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Torpoint Infant School, on the western bank of the River Tamar, is one of the largest infant schools in the country. Currently, there are 359 boys and girls on roll between the ages of three and seven although, with the declining birth-rate, numbers are falling. In addition, the school has a Nursery, attended by 52 children on a part-time basis. The school also houses an assessment and support unit for pre-school children with particular learning needs or difficulties. The socio-economic background of the pupils is generally average. The area is very much dependent on activities in the surrounding dockyards, although many parents commute to Plymouth, and some are employed in businesses operating from the local business estate. No pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or from homes where English is not the main spoken language. Around ten per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. Ten per cent of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average, although ten of these pupils have statements of special educational need, a proportion well above the national average. Around half of the children have attended the school's own Nursery, and most others have attended privately run playgroups or nurseries before they join the Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, one third of the children in the Reception classes were attending part-time. Although there is wide variation, the attainment of children when they enter the Reception year is generally average. In its previous inspection, the school was recognised as a highly effective school and has been part of the School Centred Initial Teacher Training initiative operating in outstanding primary schools. The previous headteacher left after 26 years of service, and a new headteacher took up her post in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Torpoint Infant School is a good school with some very good features. The pupils achieve above average standards in many subjects and, overall, are making good progress. Standards in English are particularly good. The quality of the teaching is good, and there is a significant amount of very good teaching. Staff are responding positively and with commitment to a change in leadership and the new sense of direction which is bringing positive new features to the school. Although income is well above the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high standards in English, particularly in writing, which the school promotes very well through the topic work undertaken in other subjects.
- Standards in many other subjects, such as art, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and music, are above average.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, their behaviour is good, and they relate very well to each other and to the staff.
- The overall quality of the teaching is good and there is a significant amount of very good teaching.
- Particularly good work is undertaken in the Nursery and the school's assessment and support unit.
- The school's support staff provide very good assistance for pupils with special educational needs, and all staff and pupils are very good at including pupils with physical disabilities in all activities.
- The new headteacher has made a very good start and is providing the school with clear educational direction.

What could be improved

- Standards and the quality of teaching in mathematics.
- The teaching and use of information and communication technology.
- The role played by subject coordinators.
- Opportunities for pupils to become more independent learners.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has remained a successful school since the last inspection in March 1996, when it was rated very highly. Although there have been few areas in which there have been significant improvements, the school has maintained the same standards of academic achievement which received praise during the last inspection. Standards in English continue to be much better than in most schools. In mathematics, the school has not improved to the same extent as many other schools, and the comparison with other schools is not as favourable now as it was four years ago. The school tackled its previous key issues effectively. Learning support staff are well integrated and well informed; they contribute significantly to pupils' progress. Members of the governing body fulfil their roles very effectively and now have a clearer understanding of their responsibilities. The school now has a more structured and helpful scheme to help pupils with their personal, social and health education. Positive features of the teaching noted in the last inspection have been maintained, and staff are keen to develop further under the leadership of the new headteacher.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			similar schools	Key	
	all schools					
	1998	1999	2000	2000		
Reading	A	A	A	A	Very high	A*
Writing	A	A*	A	A	Well above average	A
Mathematics	A	A	C	C	Above average	B
					Average	C
					Below average	D
					Well below average	E
					Very low	E*

The school has maintained high standards in reading and writing since the last inspection. Results in mathematics improved in 1998 and 1999, but fell back in 2000 to the same standard that was being achieved at the time of the last inspection. Because standards nationally have risen in mathematics, the school's results no longer compare as favourably against other schools. Nearly all pupils achieve the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.

Although there is a wide range, the overall level of children's attainment when they start school is average. The children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, and most are set to achieve above the nationally expected standards by the time they start Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics, science and information and communication technology, very good progress in English, and good progress in most other subjects in Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. There are no subjects in which the pupils' achievements are below the nationally expected standards. In some classes, however, the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, and more could be done to help the pupils develop the ability to work independently.

A particularly good feature throughout the school is the high quality of the pupils' topic work which is very well planned, gives relevance to the work in many subjects, but particularly science, history, geography and art, and helps to develop very good standards of writing. The school sets itself appropriate targets and is on course to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The vast majority of pupils have very positive attitudes to their work, are keen to learn, and enjoy coming to school. They participate well in lessons, often with great enthusiasm, and are eager to please.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils' behaviour in most lessons is very good. Most pupils have an acute awareness of the school's expectations and are polite, friendly and respectful, and fully aware of how their behaviour affects others. At playtimes, there are occasional incidents of aggressive behaviour, although the school's efforts to get pupils to become more responsible for their own actions are counteracting these.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults are very good. Pupils are prepared to listen to what others have to say and respect the views of others. They undertake responsibilities willingly. They develop very good habits of working, but have not been encouraged in the past to show a great deal of independence.
Attendance	Good. The level of attendance is above the national average and there are few unauthorised absences. Pupils arrive punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The teaching was at least satisfactory in 99 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection. It was very good in 20 per cent of lessons and was good in a further 53 per cent. The teaching was unsatisfactory in one per cent of lessons. The overall quality of the teaching is good throughout the school. The school is particularly good at teaching the basic skills of reading and writing; teachers develop these skills well through work undertaken in other subjects. Since the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, the teaching of mathematics has not been as successful as it was. Pupils are still making satisfactory progress, but more training for staff needs to be provided for them to help pupils to develop their mental agility with numbers and understand different ways of solving mathematical problems. Factual knowledge and understanding in science is imparted well, but not enough emphasis is given to investigative work. Greater attention needs to be given to the planning, teaching and use of information and communication technology throughout the school. The teaching of most other subjects is good, and the topic-based approach enables teachers to deal with some subjects in greater depth than is normally found. Enthusiastic subject leadership has resulted in very good teaching in design and technology, and the specialist teaching of music is very good. Good quality help from learning support assistants ensures that help is available for any pupil who needs it, thus ensuring that all pupils are fully included in lessons. At times, however, this assistance stifles the more able pupils and discourages independence. The very good relationships between staff and pupils, the pupils' very positive attitudes to their work and the dedication of the teaching staff ensure that the quality of learning is good throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<p>The quality and range of the curriculum</p>	<p>Good. The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum and a good range of additional learning opportunities, such as visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. At present, the school offers few extra-curricular activities.</p>
<p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p>	<p>Good. Pupils are provided with appropriate work and given much additional help by learning support assistants. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage, and their progress is reviewed regularly. Pupils with physical disabilities are particularly well integrated into the life of the school.</p>
<p>Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development</p>	<p>Good overall. The school is very good at promoting pupils' moral and social development. There are clearly accepted school rules, and the pupils develop a good sense of what is right and wrong. Staff provide good role models. More could be done to ensure that there is an appropriate sense of occasion during the daily act of collective worship and to extend pupils' awareness of multi-cultural aspects of our society.</p>
<p>How well the school cares for its pupils</p>	<p>Good overall. The school manages child protection issues and all matters to do with pupils' health, welfare and safety very well. The staff provide a caring environment in which pupils feel secure. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, although the school does not make enough use of assessment information when planning future work.</p>
<p>How well the school works in partnership with parents</p>	<p>Good. Parents comment that they now feel much more welcome in the school. The school provides parents with very good information about what is happening and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. Parents are supportive, and a small number help in various ways within the school. Parents support their children's learning well at home.</p>

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher is providing very good leadership. She has a good understanding of the school's strengths and, through the introduction of new initiatives, is giving the school a new sense of direction. She has won the support of staff and governors, who are working well as a united team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is exercising its role effectively. Its recent major decision, the appointment of a new headteacher after 26 years of very strong leadership by the previous headteacher, has been highly successful. Governors are well informed. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the part they have to play in bringing about further improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has made a good analysis of most aspects of the school, but has not been in post long enough to see this translated into a formal development plan. Staff have not been used to assuming delegated responsibility in the past, with the result that subject coordinators have not been sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility.
The strategic use of resources	With the exception of its use of information and communication technology equipment, the school uses its resources well. Financial procedures are very good. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing resources and services and when comparing the school's performance with other schools.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and	The school is well staffed. It has a sufficient number of appropriately trained and experienced teachers and a very good team of learning

learning resources	support assistants who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school is well resourced, although some of its computers are unreliable. The school's accommodation is well maintained, bright and attractive, and classroom areas are well appointed.
The Assessment and Support Unit	The school's assessment and support unit provides very high standards of support and care for a small number of children who encounter a variety of developmental difficulties and require specialised assessment and help before they start mainstream schooling. The staff are well qualified and provide a rich range of activities within a very supporting, stimulating and caring environment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are very pleased with almost all aspects of the school. In particular, they are pleased that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • The teaching is good and their children achieve high standards. • The standards of behaviour are good and their children are becoming mature. • The new headteacher is very approachable and is helping to make the school a more child-friendly place. 	<p>Only a small number of parents commented on things they would like to see improved. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities • Behaviour in the playground • Reinstatement of the parents' forum.

The inspection findings corroborate all of the positive views expressed by parents.

The range of extra-curricular activities is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection. Some new activities have recently been introduced, and the school is planning to provide more activities in the near future. The school is also considering reinstating the parents' forum, although this was discontinued because very few parents attended. Until recently, pupils' behaviour was very tightly controlled at all times of the day. Playgrounds were divided so that separate year groups did not come into contact with each other. Parents have welcomed the fact that pupils from different year groups are now fully integrated at break times. The school is currently trying to teach pupils how to become more responsible for their own actions, without always being told what to do. This has led to some over-reaction from some pupils, but discussions during personal and social

education lessons are highlighting these problems and beginning to have a positive effect on behaviour at break times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, the school's results were well above the national average in reading and writing. In mathematics, they were in line with the national average. When compared to the results of schools in similar contexts¹, they were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Almost all pupils achieved the nationally expected standard of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. A third of the pupils exceeded the national expectation by achieving Level 3 in reading, and around a fifth achieved this level in writing and mathematics.
2. The standards achieved in 2000 were very similar to those pertaining at the time of the last inspection. The school has maintained its high standards in English and still compares very favourably with other schools. Although the school has maintained its standards in mathematics, standards nationally have improved in the intervening period. As a result, the comparison with other schools is not as favourable now as it has been in the past. In English, the school has continued to use some of its tried and tested methods of teaching reading and writing, as well as introducing the National Literacy Strategy. In mathematics, the move from the school's own well-tried scheme to the National Numeracy Strategy has not been managed as successfully, and the school acknowledges that improvements can be made in the way mathematics is taught. Although girls do slightly better than boys in reading, there is little difference in the performance of boys and girls in writing and mathematics.
3. The inspection findings for English and mathematics are very similar to the results of the National Curriculum tests. In most other subjects, standards are above those found in many schools. One of the key factors contributing to this healthy picture is the fact that very few pupils fail to reach the nationally expected standards. Even pupils who have difficulties with their learning are enabled to make good progress because of the very good support they receive from the favourable ratio of teachers, assistants and other helpers. At times, however, this help is over-directive, and does not give pupils sufficient skills to become independent learners. As a result, some of the more able pupils do not always achieve as highly as they could. A particularly good feature of the school is the way all pupils, and especially those with severe learning difficulties or physical handicap, are included in all learning activities. The assistance they receive enables them to make similar progress to their peers. Given the average level of attainment when they enter the school, pupils are achieving well and making good progress, particularly in English.

¹ The school's results are compared both to the national average (ie the average of the results of all schools in England, where pupils take National Curriculum assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 1) and to the average for similar schools (ie the average of the results for all schools whose pupils come from similar socio-economic backgrounds, determined by the eligibility of pupils within the school to receive free school meals).

4. Although there is a wide range of attainment when children enter the school, the overall level of attainment when they start the Reception year is average. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress in all aspects of their learning, but particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Most children are on course to achieve standards which are just above those outlined in the Early Learning Goals² in each area of learning by the time they start Key Stage 1.
5. There are sufficient places for only around half of the school's normal intake to attend the school's own Nursery. These children make good progress in all areas of their learning as a result of the well-structured range of learning opportunities and very good teaching provided. They learn how to relate to other adults and children, and become responsible members of their social group as they tidy away at the end of each session. They listen attentively to stories and are developing the confidence to contribute orally. Most children recognise their name in written form and are learning to trace over the letters of their name. They count and recognise numbers to 10. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well as they respond to stimulating activities, such as observing how frog-spawn develops or examining vegetables and fruit. The children make good progress in their physical and creative development, responding well to the wide variety of activities prepared for them.
6. The current admission arrangements to the Reception classes prove more beneficial for children whose birthdays fall between September and December, as they receive full-time education throughout the year. Staff work hard to ensure that the part-time pupils have every opportunity to make similar progress to their older peers in their linguistic and mathematical development, but these pupils inevitably have fewer opportunities to make progress in other areas of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all children know and abide by accepted codes of behaviour and relate well to each other and to adults. They show good listening skills. The school's successful strategies and close partnership with parents are helping the children to make very good progress in reading. Most children copy accurately under the teacher's writing. They count forward and backwards to 20, and some children recognise numbers to 100. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, they are developing an awareness of how things change over time and the fact that some places and people are special. The children continue to make good progress in their creative and physical development, especially during their more formal physical education lessons. A particularly good feature during these sessions is the way children with physical disabilities are fully included. Although children's attitudes to learning throughout the Reception classes are good, the children are particularly responsive to teaching which encourages a strong sense of fun.
7. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Many pupils are articulate, using well-formed sentences and an appropriate range of vocabulary. Their responses are considered and appropriate, reflecting the quality of their listening skills. Standards in reading are very good. Many pupils read accurately and confidently. Higher-attaining pupils are independent, fluent readers of both fiction and non-fiction and show a good understanding of the text. Lower-attaining pupils are more hesitant when reading a new text, but most have sound knowledge of strategies to use when tackling unfamiliar words.

Standards in writing are well above average. Many pupils make very good progress in their ability to write independently, and the quality of writing in their topic books is of a particularly high standard. The opportunities provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills in subjects, such as science,

² The Early Learning Goals are a set of standards which it is expected that most children will achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are set out into six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development.

geography and history, are crucial factors in helping pupils to develop their writing skills. By the time they move on to the next stage of their education, pupils' literacy skills are already very well developed.

8. After a period of improvement, standards in mathematics have fallen back to the level they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' performance in mathematics is currently weaker than in most other subjects, although most pupils achieve the nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 1. At present, higher-attaining pupils are not being sufficiently challenged and, therefore, do not make as much progress as they could. Lower-attaining pupils, however, receive much additional support and, as a result, make good progress. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have developed a sound understanding of number, basic addition and subtraction facts and concepts of shape, space and measure. There are, however, weaknesses in their ability to use more than one method to arrive at a given answer, to solve problems in real-life situations and in data handling. Teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills through other areas of the curriculum.
9. The pupils' overall level of attainment in science is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have a sound factual knowledge and understanding of life processes, materials and their properties, and physical processes. There are weaknesses, however, in their ability to conduct scientific investigations and their understanding of the concept of fair testing. The integration of pupils' science work into broader cross-curricular topics is having a significant positive impact on the development of pupils' literacy skills.
10. Although pupils achieve the nationally expected standards in most aspects of information and communication technology by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are not as high as they should be, given the knowledge of computers which pupils acquire at home and the high standards which have been achieved in the past. The departure of the school's experts in the subject has resulted in a lack of direction for staff, and pupils' opportunities to make progress are restricted by the limited opportunities provided for them to use computers. Nevertheless, the pupils have an appropriate understanding of how information and communication technology is used in everyday life and can use computers in a restricted range of contexts. They are not yet given sufficient encouragement to become independent users or to identify and pursue ways in which information and communication technology can help them in their learning of other subjects.
11. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education, and their attainment matches the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils develop a sound understanding of aspects of the Christian faith, although there are few opportunities for them to develop a deeper understanding of other faiths. Although pupils write well about what they have learnt in religious education, some of the tasks they are given do little to extend their ability to think or interpret.
12. Pupils make good progress in art and design, and achieve standards which are above those normally found. Pupils show enjoyment and motivation in their art activities. Good, well-informed teaching is helping pupils to develop a wide range of skills. Good quality displays of pupils' artwork enhance the learning environment throughout the school. Their work demonstrates good observational skills and control. In design and technology, pupils make very good progress and achieve standards which are well above those expected for their age. They use design plans well and show very good competence in using a range of techniques and materials. Enthusiastic and effective leadership has generated positive attitudes to the subject in both staff and pupils and has had a direct impact on maintaining standards in this subject at a high level.
13. The pupils make good progress in geography and history and achieve standards which are above those normally found at the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils have good mapping skills

and better awareness of the wider world than many pupils of their age. They develop a good understanding of how things change over time and are developing the skill to compare and contrast in both geography and history. The pupils show great interest in the past, particularly when they are given the opportunity to handle artefacts or are engaged in practical activities. The well-planned and well-integrated topic work, which also embraces subjects such as science and art, helps pupils to understand how different subjects relate to each other, enables teachers to pursue much of the work in greater depth than is normally found and provides a very good platform for the development of pupils' literacy skills.

14. The pupils make good progress in music and achieve above average standards. They sing well and show a good sense of rhythm and confidence when performing. Pupils' skills in creative composition are a relative weakness. Extra-curricular opportunities, such as the school choir and annual concerts, help those who participate to improve their musical abilities.
15. Standards in physical education are above average. Pupils show a good sense of responsibility when setting up apparatus and performing, and they know the benefits of regular exercise. By the end of the key stage, they have a good sense of spatial awareness and use their imagination well in dance. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to learn to swim, and pupils make very good progress in this aspect of physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and are very responsive and interested, taking part in all the activities provided for them. They are very keen and eager to learn, and work very well together. They readily share their knowledge and skills in lessons, and this raises the quality of learning of the whole class. In art and music lessons during the inspection, for example, they showed obvious commitment to their tasks and were delighted with their results.
17. Pupils settle happily and enjoy school. They establish very good relationships with their peers and with adults. They are encouraged to think of other people and to be polite. The quality of inter-personal relationships is very good, and pupils with learning or physical difficulties are readily included in all aspects of lessons. The pupils benefit from being encouraged to take responsibility by running class errands and helping with tidying up. The school now needs to increase the opportunities for pupils to take more initiative and responsibility for their own learning and personal development. When they are asked to do something, they willingly do it, but staff could involve pupils more by, for example, encouraging them to select and organise their own resources at the beginning of lessons. Pupils make a very positive response to the values and standards set by the school. They develop very good habits of working, settle down quickly to tasks, and sustained levels of concentration were observed in nearly every lesson during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are keen and eager to come to school. They are interested and take part in a wide range of activities within the school. They form constructive, close relationships with other pupils, most of whom are tolerant and understanding of their needs.
18. Standards of behaviour are good overall and, in many lessons, they are very good. The school is an orderly and happy community, providing a calm and secure place in which to learn. Pupils clearly understand what is expected and respect the rules and conventions that exist to safeguard them. They are trustworthy and show a respect for property. At playtime, however, there are occasional incidents of aggressive behaviour. The school is aware of them and is working to solve the problems.

In its attempts to integrate pupils from different year-groups and to make them more accountable for their own behaviour, some pupils find it difficult to change from being told exactly what to do all

the time, to becoming more responsible for their own actions. Such a fundamental change will take time to be effective, but a good start has been made. The subject of bullying is discussed in personal and social education lessons, and the system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood. This is helping the pupils to make good progress in their personal development, to have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.

19. Attendance levels are good, being higher than other schools, and there are few unauthorised absences. The children arrive at school promptly, and registration procedures are documented properly and implemented effectively. No pupils have been excluded from the school in recent years.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of the teaching is good. During the inspection, 53 per cent of the lessons were good, and a further 20 per cent were very good. One per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory and the remaining lessons were satisfactory. The quality of the teaching varies more in the Reception classes than in other year groups. In some lessons, the quality of learning is very good; some lessons, however, are rather lacklustre. The quality of the teaching in the Nursery is very good. In Key Stage 1, the most exciting lessons occur in Year 1. In these lessons, well-prepared resources, fast pace and excellent relationships between teacher and pupils ensure that the quality of learning is very good. The overall quality of the teaching is the most significant factor in ensuring that standards of attainment are high and that pupils are making good progress in their learning.
21. Positive features identified in the previous inspection have been maintained, although the teaching of mathematics and information and communication technology is not as good as it was. Further training is required in both of these subjects to ensure that staff are fully conversant with the teaching methods advocated in the National Numeracy Strategy and that better opportunities are planned for pupils to learn how and when to use new technology. In science, not enough emphasis is given to investigative work and, generally, more could be done to help pupils to become more independent learners. The teaching in most other subjects is good. It is very good in music, where most lessons are taught by a specialist teacher, and in design and technology, which has benefited from very good leadership by the subject coordinator.
22. The teachers are committed and very hard working, and parents have a high regard for the quality of the teaching which their children receive. Staff work hard to maintain a very attractive learning environment which stresses the importance and celebrates the joy of learning. They cooperate with each other in planning a rich variety of learning opportunities for the pupils. Although they have not always been given the necessary opportunities to develop their teaching skills, they respond positively to new initiatives and are willing to adapt their teaching practice. The quality of the teaching during English lessons is good, and the staff's commitment to developing pupils' literacy skills throughout the day is very good. The wide range of opportunities for pupils to write about their termly topics has had a significant impact on the development of their writing skills. Although the teaching of mathematics is sound, the teachers need to help pupils to develop their mental agility in mathematics and, in particular, to learn different ways to solve problems.
23. The school works very hard to ensure that all pupils are given the maximum opportunity for learning and that they are included in every learning opportunity. The large number of learning

support assistants and voluntary helpers ensures that there is plenty of additional assistance for the teacher within the classroom. When pupils are working in groups, there are sufficient adults to answer pupils' questions and to give support to those who need it. As a result, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers pay attention to the learning needs of these pupils when planning their lessons and are actively involved in the development and review of their individual education plans. The way that pupils with physical or other severe disabilities are included is excellent. Their assistants provide a very high degree of care and sensitivity, and the pupils respond with equal courtesy and consideration. The large amount of adult support does not, however, help to develop pupils' ability to work independently and, at times, contributes to a lack of challenge for the more able pupils. Because there is always somebody at hand to answer their questions or direct their learning, pupils frequently rely on adult assistance, rather than working things out for themselves.

24. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, and teachers show understanding of the needs and development of young children. The teaching in the Nursery and one of the Reception classes is very good but, elsewhere in the Foundation Stage, there is also a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers in the Reception classes share information and plan together so that all pupils enjoy similar experiences. Discussions between teachers and support staff usually take place before lessons to establish roles and responsibilities. As a result, support staff in most classes are well briefed and play an important role in ensuring that children have good learning opportunities during the day. Teachers know their children well and have developed a close relationship with them. They use this knowledge to encourage the children to take part in activities and develop their learning. Teachers use every opportunity to encourage children to express themselves fully and accurately. They keep ongoing records to inform them of the progress of individual children. In some of the less successful lessons, the teachers do not provide such stimulating, challenging activities to make learning exciting and relevant.
25. The quality of teachers' written planning is generally good. The termly topics have been well researched and provide pupils with a rich variety of learning opportunities. The way subjects are carefully integrated enables some of the work to be covered in greater depth than is frequently the case for pupils in Key Stage 1. In most lessons, tasks are suitably matched to the differing needs of the pupils, although the expectations of some teachers are not always as high as they could be. The more able pupils, for example, are not always challenged enough. In a mathematics lesson, for example, they were required to complete the same work as other pupils, even though it was quite clear that they had already mastered the concepts. Examples were also observed in their written work in which they had been given a large quantity of similar sums to complete. Although it was quickly apparent that pupils were getting all of their answers right, they were not provided with something to extend their learning.
26. The teaching methods employed by the teachers are generally good, as is their use of resources. In the best lessons, the teachers ensure that the pupils' learning is promoted by providing stimulating activities in which the pupils become involved practically. In a very good history lesson in Year 1, for example, the showing of a video on Victorian life whetted the pupils' interest, but the introduction of real artefacts, such as an old suitcase, camera and pre-decimal money and two pupils dressed in Victorian costumes, really stimulated their interest, gave them the opportunity to use their tactile senses and provoked some excellent discussion. Although they provide a good range of resources, some staff are reluctant to involve the pupils fully. Practical work in science is frequently a demonstration by the teacher, and pupils are not given enough opportunity to become fully involved in their own investigation.

The full involvement of pupils not only increases their enjoyment, but reinforces learning. In a design and technology lesson in Year 1, for example, the evaluation of hats which pupils had made was brought alive as the teacher organised some pupils into a line of fashion models and sprayed water

on some of the hats to show that they were waterproof. In some classes, particularly in mathematics, there is too much reliance on worksheets, and some tasks involving colouring in and cutting out offer little stimulus to learning. In most classes, teachers help pupils to develop a pride in their work. In some classes, for example, bound books of pupils' written work celebrate what has been achieved in a lesson or series of lessons. Similarly, some classroom displays, which feature work produced by the pupils and attractively displayed by the teacher, are stimulating. In contrast, and although they contain useful information, some classroom displays contain little of the pupils' own work and fail to engage the attention.

27. The very good relationships which exist between staff and pupils throughout the school help to ensure a well-disciplined learning environment and contribute significantly to the good quality of learning. The teachers value pupils' contributions to the lesson, and pupils are willing to participate as a result. Many teachers have the confidence to use humour and encourage a sense of fun, but still maintain firm boundaries which the pupils respect. In one lesson in a Reception class when pupils overstepped the mark, the teacher said calmly, but firmly, "Stop. Circle-time rules apply. We'll have to start again." There was an instant response, and the lesson proceeded well. The positive rapport and well-ordered classroom routines also help many teachers to make efficient use of teaching time. Lessons start promptly, little time is wasted in changing from one task to the next, and pupils settle quickly. In the best lessons, the teacher maintains a brisk pace. In some lessons, however, the pace is too slow and this has a negative impact on the pupils' motivation and interest in what is being taught.
28. The quality of the teachers' day-to-day assessment is satisfactory. The teachers' daily interaction with the pupils in lessons is a strong point, as most teachers are good at asking appropriate questions to ensure that pupils understand their work. Although teachers and assistants provide help for individual pupils when they are working on their own or in groups, they do not always challenge pupils enough and some easy answers inhibit the pupils' growth towards independence. The closing sessions of most lessons are used to review what pupils have learnt although, occasionally, the focus of these closing sessions is not sharp enough. Pupils' books are marked regularly and, occasionally, in some detail. However, the pupils are not always given a clear enough indication as to how they might improve their work.
29. The school has a sensibly formulated homework policy which recognises the importance and value of homework and the involvement of parents in their children's learning. Regular reading at home is the most important factor, but other tasks are given which help pupils to prepare effectively for future lessons through, for example, a simple piece of research. In one class, pupils who had computers at home were asked to practise the skills they had been taught during the computer lesson, whilst those who had no computer were offered the opportunity to do so in class. Parents are generally pleased with the quantity, regularity and consistency of the work their children are given to do at home. This work is helping them to make progress.
30. The pupils' positive attitudes towards school, their very good involvement in lessons and teaching which is consistently of good quality, ensure that the quality of learning throughout the school is good. Pupils have many opportunities to learn new skills and to consolidate those they have already acquired. The atmosphere in nearly all lessons is purposeful, and pupils are keen to please. As a result, pupils are making good progress in most subjects and achieve standards which are better than could be expected from the level of attainment demonstrated when they enter the school. In the case of their literacy skills, the quality of the teaching and the pupils' own efforts ensure that they make much better progress than that which is normally found.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

31. At the time of the previous inspection, a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities was provided by the school. This provision has been maintained effectively, and the breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum are satisfactory. The curriculum ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well prepared for the next stage of their education at junior school.
32. The quality and range of learning opportunities throughout the school is good. There are appropriate policies for each subject. The school has developed schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum and uses the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There are strengths in the curricular provision for music, design and technology, art and physical education. The school is very effective in the teaching of literacy skills. The literacy hour has been successfully implemented. In addition, the school uses a system of curricular topics to provide very good opportunities in science, history, geography and religious education for pupils to develop their literacy skills. However, the introduction of the numeracy hour has been less straightforward, and the manner of its implementation has been one of the factors adversely affecting standards in mathematics. Opportunities to develop investigative skills are underdeveloped in mathematics and science, and there is little use of information and communication technology to support learning in literacy, numeracy and science. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. There is a good policy for Early Years provision, and the national guidance on the curriculum for the Foundation Stage is incorporated fully into teachers' plans.
33. The termly topic plans provide a good focus for curricular activities but do not always relate sufficiently clearly to the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is no effective overall curricular framework providing a concise summary of the knowledge, skills and concepts pupils are to learn in each subject as they progress through the key stage. The school does not have a policy to guide the provision of learning opportunities or to indicate how staff can help pupils to use their own initiative. Teachers' termly planning provides brief details of the content to be covered but is not referenced to the National Curriculum to indicate the level of work expected. As a result, some of the work set lacks sufficient rigour and challenge for pupils of differing attainment, especially higher-attaining pupils, and there is no effective whole-school agreement regarding the amount of time to be spent on each subject.
34. The school is socially inclusive, ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into groups within the classroom and are included in any additional activities provided by the school.
35. Provision for extra-curricular activities at the time of the previous inspection was very good, but has declined in recent years. However, plans are in hand to increase the number of activities, and a newspaper club and orienteering club now run at lunchtimes. The school also uses visits to a farm and country park effectively to enrich and enhance the school's curriculum. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. It has donated a large amount of money to the school, and the Marine Band from HMS Raleigh has visited the school. They have had a visit by a folk singer, and the coastguard and community policeman come in to talk to the children. The school features regularly in the local press which celebrates the school's position and standing within Torpoint. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the relationship between the school and the junior school has improved and is now good. There is also very good liaison with the local playgroups. Consequently, the children make a smooth transition when they join the school and when they go to the junior school.

36. At present, the school remains involved in the School Centred Initial Teacher Training in Outstanding Primary Schools initiative, but future participation is to be discussed since commitment to the scheme and trained mentors are in short supply. The new headteacher is interested in joining a wider scheme run by the local education authority. The school also has long-standing links with the College of St Mark and St John and accepts students each year for teaching practice.
37. The school is developing an exciting programme for personal, social and health education. The coordinator is very enthusiastic and is introducing this programme through circle time and assemblies and is training all members of staff to use it effectively. Currently, it is being used in lessons to help eliminate any inappropriate behaviour in the playground. Sex education is taught effectively at an appropriate level. Pupils' self-esteem is regarded as important, and this has a positive impact on their learning. They collect money for charities, and parents and other members of the community generously give their time in supporting the school in a variety of activities, such as helping on school outings.
38. The school has maintained its good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, although there are regular assemblies, there is little sense of occasion, and the pupils are not given time for reflection. Nevertheless, children in lessons were seen to show surprise and delight at their achievements, and gasps of amazement were heard when they saw pictures of one of the great pyramids on video. They also show great enjoyment during singing lessons, and they are being taught to give care and attention to the environment. They value the school, which is made to look attractive with many plants and fresh flowers in the entrance hall.
39. Moral development is highly promoted. The school encourages self-awareness and attitudes of caring, sharing, respect, kindness and tolerance. These are very evident in the relationships that pupils have with their teachers and their peers, particularly with the children who have learning or physical difficulties. Moral values are evident in all aspects of the school's work. Pupils are helped to develop a sense of right and wrong through the school's code of behaviour and are beginning to understand why inappropriate behaviour, particularly bullying, is wrong. They are encouraged to share and take turns in all lessons. Opportunities to help others, for example through the collection of goods to help children in Eastern European countries, enable pupils to develop a greater understanding of those who are less fortunate than they.
40. Social development is a very strong feature of the school. Very good working relationships and keen social awareness are apparent, and pupils are beginning to be encouraged to take greater responsibility for themselves and others, although there is still a need to develop pupils' independence. The lunchtime organisation runs very smoothly, with children carrying their own lunch trays through the school. They have to eat their lunches in the classrooms as there are no collapsible tables for the hall. Social interaction would be enhanced if they could all eat their lunches together; the school is looking at ways in which such a system could be implemented. Despite this drawback, a sense of community is promoted very well in school. Teachers are very good role models. The inclusion of all children into lessons and playtime is very good. Personal and social education lessons are beginning to promote social skills successfully in a constructive and supportive way, and moral codes were heard discussed in class during the inspection.
41. Good provision extends pupils' knowledge of their own and other cultures. They learn about their own immediate culture, especially through visits to places of local interest, and they learn about different cultures, particularly in music, art, history and geography lessons. Four children from Chernobyl visited the school recently, and equipment from the school has been taken to Gambia. Pupils learn about different cultures and their beliefs and traditions in

religious education, but this is an area for development so that the children can be made more aware that they are growing up in a multi-faith and multi-ethnic society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school continues to have very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and has very high standards of pastoral care. With few exceptions, parents are very pleased with the support given to their children, and feel teachers do all they can to help them make good progress. The monitoring of attendance is effective, leading to low levels of absenteeism. The school follows up any unexplained absence or lateness rigorously. The monitoring and supporting of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. There are records of achievement, and the written reports to parents are good. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are now also good. A lot of work is going into restructuring the scheme of work for personal, social and health education. Specific sessions are now timetabled, and aspects of the programme are introduced into other lessons at appropriate times. The children fill in questionnaires, have monitoring sheets, records of achievement and a booklet entitled 'All About Me' in which they enter any relevant information about themselves. All these measures help the children to learn to understand themselves and others.
43. Staff have high expectations of good behaviour and, although there are occasional outbreaks of minor bullying, staff are taking effective action to eliminate these incidents. Some parents expressed concerns as to whether unacceptable, or potentially unacceptable behaviour, is always controlled, particularly at break time. The children are responding well to circle time, when these issues are discussed in class, and the inspectors found that there are effective measures in place for promoting discipline and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Teachers and support staff all make a very significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for learning for all pupils. They know the children well and respond sympathetically to individual children. There are very good procedures for child protection.
44. The staff put strong emphasis on raising the self-esteem of all pupils, and pupils are becoming confident in their dealings with each other and with all members of staff. All pupils have opportunities to visit places of interest, such as a farm and country park. These visits play an important part in strengthening pupils' personal and social development because they encourage self-reliance and mature behaviour.
45. Staff all receive appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of care and welfare, and risk assessments are carried out regularly. The school cares equally for all its pupils and makes sure that they have an appropriate and well-balanced education.
46. The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs. The attainment and progress of these pupils is monitored through regular reviews of their individual education plans. Other pupils are encouraged to care for the pupils with special educational needs, especially those with physical impairment. There is a well-established method for identifying pupils who may have special educational needs. The special needs coordinator has developed strong links with partner institutions, devising help-sheets for teachers involved at the next stage of education.
47. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their academic progress are satisfactory. The school's assessment policy gives clear guidance, which has assisted staff in developing a more consistent approach to assessment in English and mathematics. In English, staff gain a clear understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through systematic methods of recording what pupils have done and through their informal daily assessment. The standards achieved in writing are discussed at regular intervals in year-group meetings. Pupils are now set individual targets for achievement in

English and mathematics, and these help teachers to monitor pupils' progress more closely. The school is aware of the need to share these targets with parents in a more formalised manner.

48. The results of the national tests are analysed effectively in order to clarify trends between different year groups and genders. In the mathematics tests, however, the school has not analysed pupils' responses to specific questions, therefore failing to learn, from past performance, in which areas pupils' performance is strongest and which areas need to be developed. The headteacher is aware of the need to use screening tests as a benchmark to predict pupils' attainment and to monitor subsequent test results against these benchmarks. Samples of each pupil's work are gathered throughout the year and kept in an achievement folder. This gives an indication of pupils' learning through the school. Assessment of this work, using National Curriculum levels, would give a clearer indication of the progress pupils have made. In the past, the school has collected samples of work from across the school for each subject. However, many of these have not been updated for a number of years, and more work needs to be done to develop these subject portfolios in order to make them a useful aid to assessment. Annual reports to parents contain useful information regarding work covered. However, they do not consistently evaluate an individual's progress and effort, or feature explicit targets that parents could support. Very limited reference is made to pupils' progress in the foundation subjects.
49. Assessment procedures in many of the foundation subjects are not particularly useful, and teachers do not always identify assessment opportunities in their planning. As a result, the teachers' planning is not guided sufficiently by an accurate assessment of what pupils already know or the skills that they possess. Where the teaching is very good, the teachers use their professional judgement and knowledge of the pupils in their class well. Through good questioning and observational skills, they make good assessments of pupils' gains in lessons. They evaluate their lessons well and their informal assessments help to shape future lesson planning. This is not the case in many classes. Teachers keep records of what has been taught, but the records do not indicate sufficiently well what individual pupils have learnt or where they might have weaknesses. As a result, the work in some lessons does not always meet the needs of all pupils, especially those of the more able pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school continues to have good links with parents. Nearly all parents speak highly of the communication between themselves and the school, but a minority regret that the school no longer holds forum evenings to discuss the curriculum and topics that each class will be following in a particular term. The school found that these evenings were poorly attended, and so they are sending out 'topic webs' each term to give the parents appropriate information. They may re-introduce the forum meetings at a more convenient time in the future, so that more parents will be able to attend. All parents speak highly of the informal links with the headteacher and staff, and they feel welcome in the school. They appreciate the curricular information and the regular, informative newsletters. The school brochure is detailed and contains plenty of information on, for example, links between home, school and the community and pastoral care. This booklet is to be updated and modernised in the near future. The governors' annual report to parents also gives detailed information on, for example, the special educational needs policy and attendance.
51. A few parents expressed concern as to whether unacceptable behaviour is always controlled, but inspectors found that effective systems are in place, and all staff are aware of the need to have a structured approach to eliminating such behaviour. Within the short time she has been in the school, the new headteacher is ensuring that appropriate behaviour strategies are being implemented, and these initiatives are helping the pupils to understand that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

52. The partnership with parents is working effectively. A small group of dedicated parents come into the school to help, for example, with reading, and they make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. A very enthusiastic and energetic band of parents has formed a parent-teacher association which is arranging fundraising and social events in order to provide equipment for the school.
53. There is a well-established system for reading at home, and most parents are helping their children with this aspect of their education. They also appreciate the good communication afforded by the reading record books in which they can note any causes for concern. Written reports to parents are good, containing information on how their children are progressing. The format of the reports is also to be updated in the future. The children receive regular homework tasks, and parents feel involved in their children's learning. They are pleased with the way their children settle into and enjoy school, and are expected to work hard. They appreciate the procedures for induction which include a home visit from a member of staff prior to starting Nursery or Reception, and the processes for transfer to junior school. The new headteacher has ensured that the links with the junior school are now closer, and this will provide curricular continuity and promote easy transition from one stage of schooling to the next.
54. Good home-school links have been established for children in the Foundation Stage, and parents are fully involved in their children's learning through home visits and regular opportunities to talk to teachers and support staff. The information provided for parents contains very good guidelines for supporting children's learning.
55. Parents of children with special educational needs receive good support from the school. Good quality information is provided for parents, and they are encouraged to take a full part in their children's education. Parents are involved in the formulation of individual educational plans and subsequent reviews. The school operates an open-door policy, which facilitates liaison between parents and staff. Parents and grandparents provide valuable assistance within the classroom, and this is frequently used to support pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Until six months before the inspection, the school had received strong and decisive leadership for 26 years from a headteacher who had worked hard to provide high quality education and achieve high academic standards. The school's past successes have been recognised and are well documented. In facing the most significant change to the school for a quarter of a century, the governors opted to appoint a new headteacher who would provide a different leadership style and a new direction and focus for the school.
57. The governors' appointment has been very successful. Not only has the new headteacher settled in very well, but she has quickly gained the recognition and respect of governors, staff, pupils and parents and is providing the school with very good leadership. She has brought with her a very clear vision of the way she would like to see the school develop, has perceptively analysed aspects of the school which she would like to develop, and has given clear recognition to the school's many strengths. By taking opportunities to teach in each class and working alongside staff, she has established her own credentials as a good classroom practitioner. Staff and pupils are responding positively to her leadership and have been enthused by her vision for improvement. Although staff have had positions of responsibility in the past, there has been little delegation of responsibility. As a result, the roles

of the deputy headteacher and subject coordinators require further development, with a need for them to become more fully involved in leading their respective areas, monitoring what happens and providing impetus for improvement.

58. The governing body is very knowledgeable concerning all school issues. It is very effective in carrying out its statutory responsibilities and has been instrumental in influencing the new direction the school is taking. Governors' meetings are well attended and efficiently minuted. The governors are supportive, and their sensitive involvement is enabling the school to take on careful, substantial change following the long tenure of the previous headteacher. Governors make regular visits to classrooms to help in lessons and are, therefore, well in touch with classroom practice. This helps governors to be clearly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and to be both supportive and helpful in how the school is run. Governors have attended teachers' training sessions in school to raise their awareness of the curriculum, and members of the governing body are very aware of their roles and responsibilities.
59. The school has maintained many of the good features outlined in the previous report and is now ready to take effective action to secure further improvements without losing any of its strengths. The new headteacher has yet to establish routines for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, and the use of assessment data and target setting is still to be developed. The existing school development plan is not yet being used as an established working document. However, the headteacher and governing body have chosen clear priorities for development within the school, many of which build on existing strengths. These include raising standards in mathematics, the organisation and integration of information and communication technology, and the improvement of practical and investigative activities through in-service training. Priorities also include the monitoring of teaching and widening the responsibilities of subject coordinators. Shared commitment to school improvement is good, and the headteacher has set up a satisfactory rolling programme of performance management for herself, the senior management team and all teachers. There is good provision for the induction of new teachers where an effective programme of guidance enables teachers to receive appropriate support.
60. The coordinator for special educational needs is well qualified and knowledgeable and acts in an advisory capacity for staff. She is meticulous in dealing with all of the administrative aspects involved with coordinating the provision for pupils with special educational needs, in so far as time allows. However, the constraints of running the assessment and support unit mean that the amount of time she is able to devote to coordinating provision within the main school is limited, and it is not possible to oversee all aspects as thoroughly as she would like. The governor responsible for special educational needs has received appropriate training and is very supportive.
61. Educational priorities are supported very well by carefully considered financial planning. Very effective procedures ensure that the necessary financial checks and balances are in place, and the few recommendations of the most recent audit report have been implemented. Good attention is paid to ensuring best value in the purchase of goods and services. The school works very closely with the local authority's finance officer. The quality and frequency of financial information made available to the headteacher and governors are very good. The chair of finance is well experienced in matters of finance and, together with the headteacher, ensures the school maintains a contingency fund to preserve staffing levels during a period of falling school population. The high quality of financial information is particularly helpful in assisting the work of the governors' committees. The steps taken to review the impact of spending are appropriate, but procedures to assess spending in relation to raising standards are at an early stage of development. Administrative systems are very efficient and

unobtrusive. The use of specific grants and funding made available to the school is efficient, with all expenditure clearly targeted. However, the organisation of the computer suite lacks direction and this, in turn, is adversely affecting standards in information and communication technology.

62. Staffing levels remain good. There is a good range of expertise among the teachers and support staff, and the well-qualified and experienced teaching staff, together with an above-average number of learning support assistants, are deployed effectively to maximise learning opportunities. As a result, both pupils' academic progress and their personal development are supported well. The pupils are divided into small groups, which enable increased opportunity for all pupils to participate in all activities, and they are able to receive the requisite help which allows them to keep up with the others and to complete their tasks. However, a teacher appointed by the previous headteacher has not yet been able to take up her post because of prolonged illness, and this is causing a problem for the school.
63. The accommodation is good, enabling the curriculum to be delivered effectively. Although a number of classrooms are housed in outside buildings, the accommodation has many favourable aspects such as a library area, a small computer suite, a hall, a music room, and a food technology area. Classrooms are of a good size, and are light and airy. There is a secure outdoor area with soft surfaces under outdoor equipment, and many attractive features such as seating areas and raised beds for plants. The school is well maintained, clean and tidy.
64. The school now has good resources overall to teach all subjects, although the coordinator for information and communication technology has been experiencing frustrations with the unreliability of some equipment. The system needs to be simplified as the hard drives of many of the computers are unnecessarily cluttered. There is a limited range of artefacts for religious education. Resources for design and technology are very good.
65. Most staff involved in the Foundation Stage work hard to try to make their classrooms bright, welcoming and stimulating for the children. However, some rooms are less stimulating than others, and there are some examples in Reception classrooms where resources are past their best and need replacing. The resources are used well, but in their present condition do not offer the necessary stimulation for learning for these young children. This is also the case with equipment in the outdoor play area for Reception-aged children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to improve the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve, the governors, headteacher and staff should work together to:
- i. improve the quality of the teaching and standards achieved by pupils in mathematics [*paragraphs 2, 8, 21, 22, 26, 32, 48, 83, 99-106, 110*]. Particular attention should be given to:
 - providing appropriate training and in-service development opportunities for staff;
 - ensuring that sufficient time is given to the development of pupils' mental agility in handling numbers and using different ways to solve problems;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems in real-life situations and to carry out investigative work.
 - ii improve the quality of the teaching, the standards achieved and the use of information and communication technology throughout the school [*paragraphs 10, 21, 32, 61, 64, 86, 95, 101, 110, 132-137*]. Particular attention should be given to:
 - providing further opportunities for training and clearer guidance to staff on how information and communication technology should be taught;
 - ensuring that there is clear guidance which will help teachers to plan their lessons, cover all aspects of the curriculum for information and communication technology and use technological equipment as aids to pupils' learning in other subjects;
 - resolving the difficulties experienced with the school's existing equipment;

- making better and more regular use of all of the school's equipment, whether situated within the computer suite or within the classroom.
- iii strengthen the role of subject coordinators and ensure that they use their delegated responsibility to provide good leadership *[paragraphs 48, 49, 57, 59, 105, 106, 112, 116, 126, 136, 150]*. Particular attention should be given to:
- ensuring that all subject coordinators have opportunities to monitor the quality of the teaching and the work produced by pupils in order to identify areas for development;
 - ensuring that there are appropriate assessment procedures for each subject and that coordinators use this information to guide future planning and to set the agenda for future improvement.
- iv provide more opportunities for pupils to become more independent learners *[paragraphs 3, 9, 10, 17, 21, 23, 26, 28, 32, 33, 40, 98, 102, 104, 109, 112, 135]*. Particular attention should be given to:
- ensuring that additional support within the classroom is used to develop pupils' ability to work independently;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake investigative work in science and mathematics;
 - developing staff's awareness of how other opportunities during the school day can be used to develop pupils' self-sufficiency and independence.

67. In addition to the key issues for improvement, the school should consider the following areas for improvement:

- providing greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils *[paragraphs 3, 23, 25, 26, 28, 33, 49, 78, 83, 100, 111, 149]*;
- improving the quality of teachers' marking *[paragraphs 28, 105, 148]*;
- reviewing the time allocated to different subjects within the curriculum *[paragraphs 33, 150]*;
- improving the quality of the daily act of collective worship *[paragraph 38]*;
- providing more opportunities for multi-cultural development *[paragraph 41]*;
- reviewing the role and responsibilities of the special educational needs coordinator *[paragraph 60]*;
- improving the outdoor environment and range of resources in the Reception classes *[paragraphs 65, 89]*;
- ensuring that displays feature more of pupils' own work *[paragraphs 26, 103]*.

THE ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT

68. The Assessment and Support Unit offers a specialist service to children between the ages of three and a half and five years, who encounter a variety of developmental difficulties of relative severity and complexity which may require a statutory assessment. These difficulties need early assessment in order to place them in an appropriate school or specialised Unit. Pupils are referred to the Unit by the chief medical officer and the local authority's psychological and speech therapy services. Pupils are drawn from all over the south east of Cornwall. The Unit is situated in the school grounds adjacent to the Nursery. It currently has 13 children on roll,

one of whom is integrated into the Nursery. Five boys and two girls attend the Unit for morning sessions, and four boys and one girl attend the afternoon sessions. These children have specific speech and language difficulties, communication disorders and developmental delay. The Unit is staffed by a full-time teacher-in-charge and a nursery nurse. A midday supervisor provides additional assistance at lunchtime. When necessary, additional staffing provides one-to-one support for individual children. The staff form a very strong team which works together efficiently and cooperatively to provide a caring and stimulating environment for the individual learning needs of each child. The very high standards noted in all aspects of the Unit's work at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

69. The quality of teaching and learning within the Unit is very good. The staff provide an outstanding level of care and concern for each individual pupil, and both staff and children show a real sense of enjoyment in their learning activities. Because of the nature of their difficulties, the children's attainment is well below that which is normally expected for their age, but they make measurable progress as a result of the close care and attention they receive. When they enter the Unit, most of the children find it very difficult to relate to other children and adults, but they are now beginning to talk to each other and share activities together. They learn to respond to the teacher's instructions or actions. In one morning session, for example, the children learnt how to blow bubbles and play blow football, an enjoyable session which was used effectively to help them develop language skills and also encouraged them to talk about they were doing.

The staff provide the children with very good role models and teach them patiently how to carry out tasks. In an afternoon session, for example, the children successfully followed the teacher's instructions when listening to tape-recorded music and playing instruments. The children are motivated by the praise they receive as, for example, when they were praised for putting down their instruments when the music stopped, and there is evident enjoyment of the activities. Despite the persistent encouragement given by the staff to speak at every opportunity, the children's language skills still remain very limited.

70. The nursery nurse provides very good support both for individuals and for groups of children in a variety of learning activities, such as painting and construction work. The children also receive very good support from outside agencies, which provide speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, and regular visits from the educational psychologist, the school doctor and learning support staff.
71. Liaison with and the information provided for parents are very good. A detailed handbook for parents explains the procedures and personnel involved in the Assessment Unit. It is written in an easy, straightforward style so that readers are able to understand day-to-day procedures. The coordinator makes home visits before a child enters the Unit to ensure secure knowledge of the child's needs. There are also close links with local primary schools and detailed information is passed on to inform staff of the needs of children who join them following their stay at the Unit. Links between the school's Nursery and the Unit are well developed but, because of the physical layout of the school, there are few natural opportunities for joint activities, and closer contact between teachers and pupils from other classes should be encouraged.
72. Very good curricular planning is based on the individual needs of each child. Their needs are continually assessed through informal observations and analysis of more formal recording of children's achievements. Portfolios of children's work show progression, and these are shared with parents. Taped recordings of developing language are also kept as a record, and video evidence is sometimes used. A panel of related professionals meets termly to discuss the progress of individual children, and regular review meetings are held for each child.

73. The day-to-day running of the Unit is very well managed by the teacher-in-charge. The delegated budget, however, has been managed by the headteacher with little involvement of the teacher-in-charge, which is unsatisfactory. Under the new headteacher, it is envisaged that the coordinator will be more closely involved with financial planning relating to the Assessment Unit.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

74

Number of formal discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

[In addition to this figure, there were many informal discussions with staff, other adults and pupils]

44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	20	53	26	1	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	282
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	–	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12	24

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	62	66	128
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	59	58	60	
	Girls	64	64	64	
	Total	123	122	124	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (99)	95 (99)	97 (99)	
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	57	60	60	
	Girls	64	64	64	
	Total	121	124	124	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (98)	97 (99)	97 (99)	
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)	

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	214
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.6
Average class size	19.5

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	367

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	18
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	682,918
Total expenditure	690,289
Expenditure per pupil	1,907
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,871
Balance carried forward to next year	55,500

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	333
Number of questionnaires returned	145
Percentage of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category³

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	78	19	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school	72	26	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good	54	41	1	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	49	45	3	1	2
The teaching is good	77	22	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	54	35	10	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	70	25	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	73	27	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents	59	33	7	1	1
The school is well led and managed	66	28	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	70	26	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	23	30	24	7	17

Other issues raised by parents

74. Parents are pleased at the way the new headteacher has settled in, and feel that the school is now a more friendly and child-centred place. They feel much more comfortable approaching the school with suggestions or problems than they used to.

³ Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. Children are admitted to the Nursery at the age of four and attend for five sessions a week. Children are admitted into the Reception classes on a part-time basis in the term before they are five, and full-time in the term in which they reach their fifth birthday. Even though the range is wide, assessments made when they enter the school show that their overall attainment on entry is average. Their listening skills are slightly above average and their physical development is below average.
76. The school has maintained good overall provision and teaching for children in the Nursery and Reception classes since the last inspection. All children, including those with special educational needs, follow a broad curriculum based on the Early Learning Goals. These relate to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development. Most children are on course to achieve standards which are just above average in all these prescribed areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as a result of the many opportunities provided for them to work and play together. They cooperate with each other well and know the accepted codes of behaviour. They take turns in a variety of activities, for example when acting as a waitress or a customer in the role-play area, where they share and relate to each other confidently. In the Nursery, there are good strategies to help children learn how to take turns in the playhouse, such as wearing coloured bands when they are playing together. Signals within the classroom for the end of a session help children to recognise and become familiar with daily routines. They take responsibility well, sweeping up the sand area and dressing themselves quickly and confidently before and after a physical education lesson. They also help adults to prepare fruit for snack time.
78. The teaching and provision for children's personal, social and emotional development are good. Staff are patient and set a good example to children, showing care and concern for their needs. The staff use their knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children well, but there are times when they miss opportunities to intervene in what children are doing to take their learning forward. Three statemented children with severe physical difficulties are fully involved in all class activities, supported efficiently and positively by their learning support assistants.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Children make good progress in the development of speaking and listening skills because teachers use every opportunity to stimulate and develop language and vocabulary through the use of effective questioning. Children listen attentively. In the Nursery, for example, they were captivated by the story of 'The bear and the picnic lunch' and made suggestions for sentences to insert in speech bubbles in the story. In the Reception, they show the ability to sequence a story. In one lesson, the children confidently explained the main sequence of 'The bear and the scary night'. Questioning is used effectively in both group and class situations and, in one class, deliberate mistakes are made by the teacher to promote the children's listening and observational skills. In this class, there is a strong sense that learning is fun.

80. Children make good progress in the early stages of reading and enjoy looking at books. They choose, for example, to take part in reading activities together when they have finished their work. The school has retained a 'reading together' session on a daily basis, and this is having a positive impact on children's progress in reading. During this time, the children read and discuss the content of their reading book with an adult. There is close cooperation with parents in the development of reading skills, and the link between home and school is very good. The Reception class teachers have developed another link activity, where children take a puppet home overnight to care for it, and suggest sentences for their parents to write in the diary to inform the rest of the class about what happened. In the Nursery, the children recognise their names when taking their milk at break time, and identify their names for tracing practice.
81. Children have many opportunities to develop and practise writing skills. In the Nursery, the children trace carefully over the letters of their name, guided by the teacher who ensures correct letter formation. In the Reception class, they copy accurately under the teacher's writing.
82. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, and staff ensure that all children, and especially those with special educational needs, are included. Where necessary, the curriculum content is altered so that it suitably matches the needs of those children who have particular difficulties.

Mathematical development

83. Overall progress in mathematical development is good, and lessons are generally planned effectively. The teaching is generally good, although there are occasions when it is barely satisfactory. In the Nursery, children recognise the missing numbers when the teacher uses a glove puppet to count to 10. Children at the Reception stage count forwards and backwards to 20, and some children recognise numbers to 100. All children are aware that numbers are ordered from left to right. They solve simple practical problems related to 'one more' and 'one less'. Songs are used effectively to reinforce number recognition such as 'seven days in the week' and naming the days. Most children recognise and add to sequences of colours and shapes correctly, and use a variety of resources, including the computer, to create patterns. In most cases, the activities are stimulating, but there are occasions when activities are lacklustre and there is lack of challenge.
84. The teachers help children to develop their range of mathematical vocabulary. Words such as 'next to', 'behind' and 'in front' are displayed in the classroom, and opportunities are made to link these words to activities using play people and a model village. Words such as 'smallest' and 'largest' are used in role-play situations, for example, when three bears are tucked up in different-sized beds.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. Children make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The teaching in this area is good, and the children are presented with many opportunities to find out about the world in which they live. In the Nursery, for example, they examine frog-spawn as it develops in the tank, and they look closely at vegetables and fruit to see the texture and seeds. Well-planned activities encourage them to explore and experiment. In one Reception class, the children were encouraged to compare and contrast their teddy bears to look for similarities and differences between old and new bears. They have opportunities to discuss the needs of their pets and make decisions about caring for them.

86. The children visit local places of interest. In one such visit, they extended their knowledge of butterflies and minibeasts. They are involved in discussions about special places and special people and are introduced to the concept of Christianity through the use of artefacts such as a cross and a candle. The children are given some opportunities to work on computers. In two of the Reception classes, children were developing sequences of patterns and pursuing work related to their topic about bears. Generally, however, this aspect of their work is not as well developed as others.

Creative development

87. Many valuable opportunities are provided for children to express themselves creatively. The teaching is good, and children make good progress. In one lesson in the Nursery, children created spring pictures using finger painting, and made choices about which colours to use. They experiment with a range of materials to create three-dimensional shapes, using card, glue, corks, paper, wool and adhesive tape.
88. In the Reception classes, good opportunities are provided for role-play, for example when children visit the vet's surgery, linked with their work about caring for animals. They use modelling materials to cut out shapes and extend their control, and clay to make marks and create shapes.

Physical development

89. Good teaching is helping the children to make good progress in their physical development. In the Nursery, they use paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with increasing control. Opportunities are offered to develop fine and gross motor skills through finger painting and printing and, outdoors, they play together using three-wheeled pedal toys, climbing apparatus and blocks for balancing. Similar experiences are offered in the Reception classes, but the quality of the wheeled toys is not as good, and the facilities need improving to ensure better opportunities for learning for these children.
90. In the Reception classes, the children have physical education lessons which give them good opportunities to practise skills such as jumping, throwing and catching, and developing their coordination and control. In dance, they experiment with different types of movement, which reinforce their understanding of words such as 'light', 'strong', 'slow' and 'quick' when 'going on a bear hunt'. Staff interact with children well and model movements and skills, supporting and encouraging them to improve their performance. Every effort is made to include children with physical disabilities in all physical activities, and the care and patience of the staff make these very rewarding occasions for all children.

ENGLISH

91. The results of the most recent national tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 in reading and writing is well above average when compared with all schools, and also in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is above the national average for reading and well above the average for writing. This is also the position when making comparisons with similar schools. In both reading and writing, results over the previous four years have been consistently well above the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment in reading and writing are well above average. Considering that pupils' attainment on entry to school is judged to be average, this represents very good learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress.

92. In speaking and listening, standards are above average at the end of the key stage. Pupils are generally attentive, contribute to discussions and follow instructions carefully. They show respect for both views and efforts made by their peers. By the age of seven, many pupils are articulate, and use well-formed sentences and an appropriate range of vocabulary. Their responses are considered and appropriate, reflecting the quality of their listening skills. In the discussions at the end of lessons, pupils are able to explain what they have learned. In a geography lesson in Year 2, for example, one pupil gave a very clear, detailed account of the climate in Egypt and how it differs from ours. The good development of speaking and listening skills owes much to the value teachers place on pupils' oral contributions, and the emphasis all teachers and support staff place on extending pupils' working vocabulary. This is particularly so for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress.
93. Standards in reading are very good, and the inspection findings confirm the high standards shown in the national tests. There are indications that, by the end of Year 2, most pupils will attain at least the nationally expected levels, and a significant proportion of pupils are likely to achieve at higher than expected levels for their age. By the age of seven, most pupils read accurately and confidently. They take notice of punctuation and have a good knowledge of phonics. Pupils know about the differences between fiction and non-fiction books, and can use contents pages and an index successfully. Higher-attaining pupils are independent, fluent readers of both fiction and non-fiction. They show a good understanding of the text, talk about the plot and the characters, and anticipate what may come next. Lower-attaining pupils are more hesitant when reading a new text, but most have sound knowledge of strategies to use when tackling unfamiliar words and are gaining confidence in their reading. Pupils are happy to read to adults and are keen to demonstrate their abilities. Home-school reading records are checked regularly and kept up to date. The school gives suggestions for methods parents may wish to employ when reading with their children. Parents' written comments indicate their consistent support, and this is a significant factor in the development of pupils' reading skills. Pupils' attitudes to reading are very positive. They enjoy reading, and some visit the local library to choose books for themselves.
94. Pupils' attainment in writing is well above average by the end of the key stage. Many pupils make very good progress in their ability to write independently. They write sentences and short stories using capital letters and full stops. Many use the apostrophe correctly, and suitably distinguish commentary and description from direct speech. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, such as composing simple poems and limericks and writing safety instructions, and higher-attaining pupils experiment with dialogue in their stories. Writing seen in pupils' workbooks demonstrates fluency and comprehension. The quality of handwriting and methods of presentation are of a consistently high standard. Good opportunities are given to pupils to develop their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as writing accounts of experiments in science, recording the changes in the Torpoint ferry in geography and in comparing vehicles from long ago with vehicles today in history. The school should continue to develop its efforts to create opportunities for pupils to use their very good, basic writing skills in creative, independent ways, through further exploration of verse, drama, literature and a wider range of story writing.
95. Overall, the effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy skills is very good. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully integrated into the school's own planned programme. The school has embraced the spirit of the Literacy Strategy and implemented it in accordance with the needs and interests of the pupils. This adaptation is well justified by the results of national tests. Some use is made of information and communication technology for word processing and presentation in different fonts and forms. However, these skills are not used consistently across the school.

96. Pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and contribute significantly to the quality of learning. Pupils generally work with concentration and diligence. They behave well and form very good relationships with their peers and with adults. Overall, they take pride in their written work, enjoy reading and generally have good work habits.
97. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching seen during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and in 90 per cent of the lessons seen was at least good. This is a broadly similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers, as part of their everyday practice, share with the pupils what they want them to achieve in their lessons. This gives a sharp focus to the teaching and gains the attention of pupils. Where the teaching is good, the level of challenge is high and the materials being used hold the pupils' interest. In one lesson in Year 2, in which pupils were exploring words and sounds, the teacher introduced several 'wh' words into the discussion, 'where', 'what', 'why' and 'who'. Without any preamble, she asked the class, "If any of these words appeared at the beginning of a sentence..." and, almost before she could finish, several pupils responded, "...it would be asking a question". Thereafter, the teacher skilfully exploited the pupils' obvious interest in exploring words and sounds. Her own confidence enabled her to respond to pupils' suggestions. So whilst looking at developing lists of 'wh' words, when one pupil offered 'whatever' the teacher led a discussion about compound words, and when another pupil suggested 'whether' the teacher developed words of a similar sound but different meaning, such as 'whether' and 'weather'. The pupils were engrossed and loved the challenge. Questioning was used well to encourage all pupils to share their ideas and move learning on, as well as to assess understanding. A particularly good feature of teaching is the use of semi-permanent displays to act as prompts for learning and to illustrate work in hand. Teachers manage pupils very well, and the deployment of extra adult support in classrooms is very effective. This is well demonstrated in the Reading Input sessions, where teachers, learning support assistants and parents work together to give intensive, close support. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the very effective help by additional adults, or when taught in small groups in the classroom.
98. The coordinator manages the subject well. The National Literacy Strategy planning model has been successfully implemented and monitored, and the advice suitably adjusted to meet the specific needs of the school. The coordinator is able to monitor planning and standards of pupils' work on a regular basis, and has done some monitoring of teaching in Year 2. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place to track pupils' attainment and progress, and the school has recently introduced targets for improvement, which the pupils have in front of them when working. The targets are proving beneficial in helping the school maintain its very high standards. Resources for the subject are good. The school has a good quantity of reading books for use in the literacy hour, and regularly audits its supply of fiction and non-fiction to ensure the maintenance of a good range of suitable texts. Due to the physical arrangement of the school library with its high shelving, the facility cannot be fully used to develop pupils' research and enquiry skills. This has an adverse effect on the ability of all pupils to work independently. The school has plans to remodel and develop the library.

MATHEMATICS

99. Pupils are attaining similar standards in mathematics to those achieved at the time of the last inspection. However, because standards have risen nationally in the intervening period, the school's results are now in line with the national average, compared to above average five years ago. Results have also fluctuated in recent years. In 2000, they were significantly lower than in 1999 when the teaching of mathematics was supported by a comprehensive, well-tried scheme of work with which the teachers were familiar and which helped pupils to develop their numeracy skills in a systematic way.

In September 1999, and without consulting all staff, it was decided to implement new methods of teaching and subject content for each year group in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. However, staff received insufficient training to support this sudden change in direction, the quality of teaching suffered and standards started to fall. Assessment procedures, previously judged as useful in supporting teaching targets, do not currently provide sufficient useful information to help teachers with their planning. Overall, there has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection.

100. In 2000, the results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were in line with the national average and with the average for schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds. Nearly all pupils achieved Level 2, the minimum standard expected of seven year olds. There was no discernible difference in the performance of boys and girls. Inspection findings show that the standards currently achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. However, given the school's previous success and the standards achieved in other subjects, pupils are not achieving as well as they could in mathematics. Because the more able pupils frequently undertake the same work as other pupils in the class before moving on to more difficult work, they are not sufficiently challenged and make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs, however, receive much additional help and make good progress in relation to their prior levels of learning.
101. Pupils develop a sound understanding of number. However, the opportunity to solve problems in real-life situations is mainly restricted to the use of decimal coinage. More use could be made of mathematical challenges and games to help pupils, individually and collectively, to develop a deeper understanding of mathematical principles. In Year 2, as observed in an excellent oral mathematics session, pupils work confidently with numbers up to 100. They are generally confident with money, adding and subtracting amounts up to 50 pence and giving the correct change. Pupils confidently use patterns to investigate the doubling of numbers. Most pupils can count in multiples of 2, 5 and 10 up to 100. Nevertheless, they have not yet been taught how to develop the mental agility to use more than one method to arrive at a given answer, and this is unsatisfactory. Pupils make sound progress in their knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure, and confidently name a good range of solid shapes, identifying edges and faces accurately. Pupils' progress in handling data is less well developed; scrutiny of pupils' work and classroom displays indicate barely satisfactory levels of attainment. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to gather and interpret data in the form of graphs and diagrams, and to draw conclusions.
102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the last inspection, it was judged to be good. In some classes, implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a beneficial impact. Here, there is a suitable balance of whole-class teaching, individual and group work involving all pupils. The oral mental starter, the sharing of lesson targets with pupils and the getting together at the end of the lesson to review learning, are benefiting pupils' understanding of mathematical language and concepts. In other classes, however, the strategy is having a marginal effect, and teachers need greater direction and support in order to help them to provide the level of challenge and rigour necessary to raise standards. In one lesson, for example, the pace slowed to a pedestrian level, lacking in vigour and enthusiasm, even though the start was brisk and energetic. In contrast, in a lesson in Year 1, the teacher maintained a high level of challenge for all pupils in an excellent oral mathematics session, underpinned by the sharing of methods in a positive manner where all pupils' answers were valued. In some lessons, the discussions at the end of the lessons are rushed and fail to celebrate success and review progress made. Sometimes, inappropriate activities are selected which do not build upon pupils' prior knowledge; learning targets are not well defined and are not shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons.

While pupils are encouraged to think why certain things happen and to look for patterns which will help their understanding, some tasks are directed too closely by the class teacher and do not give pupils the opportunity to decide on their own methods and thus improve their ability to solve problems. There are few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills, and pupils are required too frequently to record their answers formally rather than developing a more practical problem-solving approach. The teachers miss opportunities to develop mathematical understanding when dealing with other areas of the curriculum. In a design and technology lesson, for example, pupils were learning how to develop and use measuring skills, but such occurrences are rare.

103. Pupils are taught relevant mathematical vocabulary, and most classroom displays reflect a range of appropriate mathematical language. However, the displays contain very little of the pupils' own work. Good use is made of support staff as well as the occasional parent helper. Non-teaching staff are aware of the teachers' intentions and provide a lot of help, especially for pupils with special educational needs, as well as those who find aspects of mathematics challenging. The good relationships which exist between pupils and adults help to ensure calm and well-organised routines.
104. Pupils have very good attitudes to mathematics and respond well in lessons. This enhances the quality of learning, even though some of the work undertaken lacks challenge. Pupils work cooperatively in groups, collaborating and sharing ideas in a responsible manner. Their behaviour is good, and most pupils show good levels of motivation and confidence. They answer questions independently and listen carefully to their teachers' instructions. However, the opportunity for pupils to develop greater levels of independence are restricted by the prior positioning of resources on the group table before pupils undertake their tasks. As a result, pupils are offered no choice in the selection of appropriate resources to investigate a given task.
105. Taken as a whole, arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory. However, the subject coordinator is aware of the need to review national test results in greater detail to identify trends and areas for development. Careful assessments are carried out regularly in lessons, and half-termly test results are recorded. However, assessment data are not used consistently to plan work for pupils of different ability within the class. The present portfolio of pupils' work needs updating to assist moderation of standards across year groups and the school. Marking gives praise to individual pupils and the very best examples inform them how to improve their work, though this level of help is not always given.
106. After an unsatisfactory start to implementing the National Numeracy Strategy, the subject is now being managed satisfactorily, and appropriate areas for future development have been identified. Few teachers have yet to observe very good practice in the opening part of a numeracy lesson, and the need for this supportive training to raise standards in pupils' mental and oral skills and teachers' subject confidence has been recognised by the school. Time has been allocated to enable some limited monitoring and support. The impact of this monitoring of standards has yet to be fully realised as it is still at an early stage of development. The school is aware that, when fully in place, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning linked to the better use of assessment will have a direct impact on raising standards. The good range of recently purchased materials to support class teachers' subject expertise has yet to fulfil its potential. Teachers perceive the current weaknesses in the school's provision for mathematics, but there is a very positive shared commitment to raising standards.

SCIENCE

107. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum teachers' assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Comparison with the results achieved in schools in similar contexts are the same. Observations of science lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work made during the inspection substantiate these findings. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
108. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 2 talk knowledgeably, explaining the difference between living and non-living things, the importance of a good diet and exercise to maintain healthy living, and the function of the heart and lungs. They describe what plants need to grow and can explain what happened during an investigation into changing the conditions for growth. They know how to construct simple circuits and explain that sound is caused by vibrations.
109. Pupils are not as confident, however, with the process of science investigations. They are unsure of the process of fair testing and do not have the knowledge or understanding of how an investigation can be carried out. In the investigative tasks organised in their scheme of work, there are satisfactory opportunities to develop their observational and diagram drawing skills, but not enough emphasis is placed on organising a fair test, making predictions or setting out their conclusions. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were learning how certain materials could change through the effect of heat. Good resources were available for a variety of demonstrations of this process, including a microwave oven and a frying pan. Pupils observed the variety of materials changing, such as chocolate, egg, wax and popcorn, and were able to discuss whether the changes were reversible or irreversible. They used appropriate language and understood how certain changes were not reversible. However, pupils were not involved in any predictions. Although the teacher acted as scribe to produce a written account of the investigation, evidence from pupils' books shows that they are not given enough opportunities to develop the range of skills required to record their investigative work. Pupils in Year 1 were also investigating changing materials. Having seen how long they could keep an ice cube from melting in a previous lesson, they watched as chocolate melted and then cooled. They were able to link the two processes to help their understanding and were able to describe what they observed. There was no emphasis on prediction, however, and the demonstration lacked the opportunity to illustrate the process of fair testing.
110. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained a satisfactory provision for science, and activities are securely linked to ongoing termly topics. These topics serve as a focus for science, history, geography and religious education. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were working on 'Islands and Pirates' and Year 1 on 'Getting There'. These links give very good opportunities for the development of literacy skills within science. For example, work on floating and sinking and sorting materials by their properties have direct links to the topic on 'Islands and Pirates'. Pupils were able to write about their favourite pirate with deeper understanding, based on their knowledge and experience of different materials. These opportunities give an unusual richness to pupils' writing, and they are able to use vocabulary within wider contexts. The ability to learn and apply numeracy skills within science is not so well developed. Pupils need to be offered wider opportunities within investigations, using estimation and measurement, in order to improve their numeracy skills through science. Pupils have used CD-ROM encyclopaedias to find out about different animals, but the more general use of information and communication technology, such as word processing and database activities, to support learning in science is underdeveloped.

111. The overall quality of teaching in science is satisfactory. Teachers take care in explaining scientific concepts and terms clearly, and ensure pupils can apply them appropriately in their written work. They ensure, in general, that work is matched to their pupils' abilities. However, the higher-achieving pupils are not always given challenging activities to stimulate them. The school has good resources for science, and teachers use these imaginatively to support learning. Overall, learning is satisfactory, and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and they apply themselves with enthusiasm, working cooperatively and sharing the resources.
112. The school's scheme of work covers science content satisfactorily, but a greater emphasis should be placed on the practical opportunities that investigations offer in order to help raise standards. The coordinator has no time allocation to monitor science teaching, although she does monitor teachers' planning. No in-service training has taken place within the past few years, as the school has lately concentrated on literacy and numeracy, and this has slowed progress in the development of science. There is a lack of assessment in the subject, and pupils' evidence displayed in the science portfolio, which could be used for assessment purposes, is outdated. Very limited use is made of the immediate environment to support learning in science. The recent school development plan outlines a number of initiatives which should help towards addressing these issues.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils show enjoyment and motivation in their art activities. The staff also demonstrate a strong commitment to the subject and show that they value pupils' work by creating very good displays of work which celebrate pupils' achievements. Art displays around the school are also used to raise pupils' cultural awareness as, for example, in the creation of a dragon using collage techniques to celebrate the Chinese New Year.
114. The quality of the teaching in art is good. The teachers support and encourage the development of skills. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher helped pupils to develop their sketching techniques by suggesting improvements and encouraging the pupils to observe more closely. The quality of learning is enhanced by the commitment and concentration shown by the pupils as they accept the guidance given by their teachers and show a willingness to improve their final results. Teachers use questioning effectively. In one lesson, for example, well-directed questions encouraged the pupils to make decisions about choices of colour when painting landscapes related to work about the Egyptians. The pupils were able to give reasons for their choices and discussed their results with confidence. Teachers are effective in suggesting ways of improvement, pointing out the importance of working with care and the need to return to a piece of work to continue to improve it.
115. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good, and they work at tasks with evident enjoyment and concentration. They develop an awareness of texture through using a variety of media and different techniques, such as collage, painting, pastel work and some computer-generated design. Pupils in Year 2 show good observational skills as they match colours when extending a picture. They show good control as they use fine paintbrushes to build on water-colour background to develop their spring pictures. Others show skill in creating a floral design based on the theme of spring, using a selection of vegetables for printing. Pupils learn to establish links between two- and three-dimensional work. Observational paintings of daffodils, for example, are skilfully developed into three-dimensional designs, and observational paintings of the Torpoint ferry are used well in the development of three-dimensional models. The latter project also helps pupils to develop a good awareness of their local culture.
116. The coordination of the subject is satisfactory, although there are ways in which the role of the coordinator could be improved. The coordinator provides some technical support for

members of staff and coordinates the display of pupils' work, which is of high quality, collecting work from classes and using this opportunity to inform her knowledge of standards throughout the school. There is a clear scheme of work based on the five basic skills of drawing, painting, printing, collage and three-dimensional modelling, and the planning sheet is based on these areas. Artwork is linked effectively to other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils had produced paintings of cavemen to illustrate their work in history, and creative work is frequently linked to literacy and stories. Although the coordinator monitors teachers' planning, there is no monitoring of teaching and no formal assessment of pupils' work in art. The good level of resources includes a broad range of media and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. The display of examples of work by famous artists stimulates pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Very good standards in design and technology have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are making very good progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make good use of a design plan, for example when constructing bird-scarers using recycled materials. They show very good competence in using a range of techniques and materials, such as wire, sequins, foam and pipe cleaners. They evaluate their work well. In one class, pupils made sensible decisions about the suitability of the hats they had designed, identifying the flap at the back of a cotton hat as a good feature as it protected the wearer's neck from the sun. In another class, pupils identified the difficulties involved in designing a crunchy yoghurt and evaluated the quality of their results well.
118. The quality of the teaching is very good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. They are supported by a good scheme of work which incorporates all areas of learning and has helped to maintain the high standards in the subject. Teachers use questioning effectively and challenge pupils to make decisions about the quality of design, suitability of materials and success criteria. They reinforce language skills by using relevant vocabulary and encouraging opinions. Pupils learn to use their initiative to solve problems. For example, when a teacher challenged them to measure round a teddy's head, they realised that an ordinary ruler does not bend and used their initiative to suggest using strips of paper as a measure.
119. The quality of learning is very good. The teachers' good behaviour management and their enthusiasm for the subject encourage positive attitudes from the pupils who are keen to try new methods. The pupils are enthusiastic and work cooperatively, having respect for each other's views and skills. They sustain their concentration well, and their sense of enquiry and curiosity has a positive impact on learning.
120. The subject is coordinated very well. The coordinator is both knowledgeable and experienced. She has developed an effective policy, a scheme of work and assessment criteria which provide good guidance and support the non-specialist teachers. The subject's good level of well-organised and easily accessible resources has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The food technology area is well equipped. Pupils are made aware of the need to use consumable items economically. The high standards of the coordinator are reflected in the very good quality of pupils' work.

GEOGRAPHY

121. Evidence from lessons observed, pupils' previous work, displays in the school and planning documents all indicate that pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is above what is expected of pupils of this age. Progress is good through the key stage. This is a broadly similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection.

122. Younger pupils develop knowledge of the area around school and study the local environment. They are able to draw a map showing a walk from school to the ferry and can identify places such as 'supermarket', 'bank', 'dockyard' and 'garage'. Older pupils develop good mapping skills and are able to show symbols and a 'key' on maps they draw. They work on room plans and routes and journeys linked to stories they have read, such as the memory maps drawn after reading 'Peter Pan'. Their awareness of the wider world is suitably developed by a study of Egypt. They begin to understand how the environment affects the way we live. Work on the weather develops as pupils move through school, and they can contrast different lands and seasons in respect of clothes, food and homes.
123. Progress is good. Pupils' use of skills in finding information from a range of sources improves as they get older. Pupils in Year 2, researching an aspect of Egyptian life, showed an ability to select key pieces of information, such as "The River Nile is like today's motorway" and "Things used to grow because the Nile had lots of soil nearby". Awareness of the local environment is developed through visits to such places as Churchtown Farm, Mount Edgcumbe Park and to the local recycling station. Pupils build up their knowledge of geographical vocabulary.
124. Attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils reveal enthusiasm, listen attentively and readily offer ideas. They enjoy the numerous practical activities and field trips organised as part of the geography curriculum.
125. The teaching of geography is good overall. Teachers display good subject knowledge and this, together with enthusiasm, good management of pupils and well-planned lessons, contributes well to the quality of learning in the classroom. Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills well by providing a range of opportunities for pupils to record and write independently. Topics such as 'Mandy goes on Holiday' and 'Jeremy Bear' stimulate pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills. The needs of individual pupils are well catered for, often by the careful use of learning support assistants.
126. The subject is managed well. Teachers' planning, guided by the coordinator, ensures that skills are developed systematically, and the coordinator is able to monitor the standards of pupils' work. However, opportunities for assessing pupils' understanding are currently underdeveloped. The coordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. Much careful thought has gone into developing the school's planned programme in the light of the new National Curriculum, and there is now a greater emphasis on trying to use local resources to give pupils first-hand experiences. Visits from the 'post lady' and the local coastguard, and visits to places such as Pennywell Farm, help to stimulate pupils' interest.

HISTORY

127. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in history are generally above those expected, and pupils make good progress. This is a broadly similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection.
128. Across the key stage, pupils develop a good understanding of how things change over time. They are able to make comparisons between 'then' and 'now'. In looking at cars today and long ago, pupils identify 'wheel', 'sunroof', 'starting handle' and 'boot' as examples of similarities and differences. By the end of the key stage, pupils show great interest in everyday artefacts used in the past and are developing an appropriate understanding that such items provide important clues as to how people must have lived, and the changes that have taken place over time. In finding out about Ancient Egypt, pupils come to learn about the work of the archaeologist, and how we learn from items carefully dug up from the ground. Items such as 'Canopic jar' and 'scarab' become a familiar part of their vocabulary, and pupils use their acquired literacy skills to record their findings appropriately.

129. Pupils' learning is good through the key stage. Pupils' attitudes to history are very positive. They relish the varied experiences teachers provide for them, and standards of behaviour and cooperation are good. The youngest pupils enter the key stage with an emerging understanding of chronology, through activities such as tracing their own development from babyhood, and listening to grandparents talk to them in school about life when they were young. Topics such as 'Holidays then and now' introduce pupils to an increasing range of sources of historical evidence, including primary evidence. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the practical elements of the curriculum and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
130. The quality of teaching in history is good. In one lesson observed during the inspection, it was very good. In this lesson, looking at seaside holidays enjoyed in Victorian Britain and comparing them to now, the enthusiasm of the teacher, allied to very good provision of primary sources of evidence, was a key feature. Pupils enjoyed handling old cameras, pre-decimal money and beach artefacts. Two pupils dressed up in typical Victorian children's bathing outfits, and the teacher was able to make a vivid contrast between 'the old' and 'the new'. Pupils were enthused and learning was very good.
131. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator. Considerable thought has gone into ensuring that the programme of work enables key skills of enquiry, interpretation and chronology to be taught. The subject is well supported by good quality resources, and visitors, such as 'Sir Francis and Lady Drake' to give an historical talk and dance, provide vivid experiences for the pupils and make a significant contribution to their progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Although the school has made some improvements to its resources for information and communication technology, and training has been provided for some staff, the curricular provision, quality of teaching and standards achieved by pupils are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection. The recent departures of the coordinator and shadow coordinator have left a vacuum, resulting in a lack of direction for the subject and a consequent loss of confidence in teaching the subject by some staff. Although pupils achieve the standards expected of seven year olds in most aspects of the subject by the end of Key Stage 1, the opportunities provided for pupils vary from class to class. In some classes, there is regular access to computers, but other pupils receive very fragmented opportunities to acquire information and communication technology skills or to use computers to aid their learning in other subjects. The school has already identified the rationalisation and improvement of its provision for information and communication technology as one of its main priorities for development.
133. By the end of the key stage, standards of attainment in most aspects of the subject are in line with those expected for seven year olds. However, given the very high standards achieved in other subjects and the fact that many pupils give examples of wide-ranging capability when using computers at home, pupils are not achieving as highly as they should because of the limited opportunities for them to use computers in school. The pupils have a sound understanding of how information and communication technology is used in everyday life. They are familiar with everyday uses of equipment such as tape recorders, video cameras and remote control units. They know that computers can be used to communicate with other people a long way away. Some pupils use their computers at home to send emails to their friends, but have not done so at school. Likewise, some pupils use the Internet at home and, in some classes, have watched their teacher use it to find out information. Few pupils, however, have had the opportunity to search the Internet themselves.

Pupils know how to use a word processor to enter text, and can alter the font, the size of text and various aspects of the layout. Few opportunities are provided, however, for pupils to use the word processor to draft, amend and edit text, and the pupils, therefore, have little understanding of how they can use a word processor as a tool to improve their writing. Most pupils use a graphics program capably, and the covers of many of their project books are enhanced by attractive designs produced on the computer. Although there are a few examples of the use of data-handling programs on display, pupils are unsure how to use such programs to produce graphs or analyse data. Pupils have little experience of using programmable toys, which was a feature of some good work produced during the previous inspection. In 1997, the school received an award from a major computer supplier as a 'centre of excellence'. At this time, some pupils were showing the ability to produce quite complex work under the guidance of a very knowledgeable subject coordinator. Such standards are not being achieved at the present time.

134. Only one information and communication technology lesson was observed during the inspection. The teaching during this session was good. The teacher had clear objectives and helped the pupils to gain competence in altering the font, size and characteristics of text by gradually introducing new elements and providing frequent consolidation. The use of the computer suite enabled her to use time efficiently, giving explanations to half of the class at the same time, rather than having to repeat or cascade explanations to numerous pairs of pupils taking turns in using the classroom computer. The pupils' positive attitudes, and their sense of delight when they saw the size of their text magically change, helped to create a positive learning environment. As three-quarters of the pupils had access to a computer at home, they were given a sensible consolidation task as homework, and opportunities were provided for those who did not have such access to use the classroom computer at a later stage.

135. The overall quality of teaching in information and communication technology, however, is unsatisfactory at present. Of 11 sessions timetabled for the computer suite during the inspection, only one was utilised. The staff's expertise is gradually improving. Some teachers and assistants have already undertaken specific training, and others are due to start shortly. There is increasing evidence of staff using information and communication technology effectively themselves within the classroom, for example to enhance the quality of displays and the presentation of pupils' work and to produce teaching materials. At present, however, staff are unsure about how best to set about teaching the subject and do not have sufficiently clear guidance. When planning their termly topics, consideration is given as to how information and communication technology can be used within the topic. This results in some interesting and useful applications. For example, in a class in Year 2, the teacher has logged on to the Internet with her class to find useful sites about Ancient Egypt. Covers for topic books are produced using a graphics program. However, these arrangements are somewhat ad hoc and do not help pupils to acquire skills systematically. They also lead to sporadic and inefficient use of computers. In some classes, pupils get to use computers when they have finished their other work. There is no regular rota, with the result that some pupils use the computers frequently and others have very little opportunity to use them. Little is done to encourage pupils' independence in their use. Machines are switched on for them and the appropriate program or file loaded. As a result, they do not develop familiarity with the computer's operating system and still need help to retrieve and save files. In some cases, pupils' natural inclination to experiment is suppressed. As one pupil put it, "We can do anything we like except click on something we don't know."

136. Whilst strong leadership has been provided in the past, it has not helped staff to become sufficiently confident and independent in their teaching and use of information and communication technology. The interim arrangements for coordinating the subject have been unsatisfactory. For one term, a group of staff volunteered to coordinate the subject, although this proved impractical and now one teacher has assumed overall responsibility. Much work

needs to be done. Clearer guidance needs to be given to teachers to help them with their planning and to ensure that pupils' skills are developed systematically.

There are currently no procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the subject. As more pupils gain access to a computer at home, staff need to have a clearer picture of what their pupils can and cannot do. The subject portfolio, a collection of photographs and pupils' work, has not been updated since shortly after the last inspection. The potential usefulness of providing teachers with exemplification of standards which pupils are expected to achieve is not realised, as the work has not been assessed or annotated.

137. The school has created a valuable resource by transforming a small area into a small computer suite. Parental help has been significant in setting up this area but, at present, it is under-used. Although all classes are timetabled to use it once a week, very few do. Staff express concern at having to split their class, but the example observed during the inspection week shows that arrangements can work well. The class teacher taught half of the class in the computer suite, whilst the other half had their music lesson with a specialist teacher. In both sessions, the pupils made good progress as a result of well-informed teaching and the close attention they received as a result of the small class size. Although the school now has more, and in many classes better, computers than at the time of the last inspection, the unreliability of some increases teachers' reluctance to use them. The school has taken the sensible decision to appoint somebody to deal with technical problems, although further work needs to be done to ensure that all machines function reliably and have appropriate software.

MUSIC

138. Standards are good in music, an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils across the school enjoy music and make good progress. Their singing improves from year to year as they develop a better tone, clarity and expression. Pupils' understanding of rhythm improves as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 1 were able to maintain a steady beat and repeat rhythm patterns clapped by the teacher in time with a poem 'John had great big waterproof boots on' and to change tempo whilst mimicking the sound of a steam train through some nonsense poetry.

139. Pupils respond well when listening to recorded music and sounds. The scheme of work is good and enables many cross-curricular links to be made. For example, linking to the topic 'Getting There', pupils in Year 1 enjoyed joining in vocally with the song 'Train is a-coming' and also used untuned percussion successfully to accompany the music. Although music is played as children enter and leave assembly, opportunities are missed to encourage them to listen and reflect on it. All of the pupils in Year 2 were practising a number of hymns and songs to be sung during assemblies as part of their weekly singing session. The quality of singing was good, and one song was sung as a choral round. The pupils were able to keep together well, and there was a good sense of achievement. Pupils enjoy adding gestures to the music which help them to remember words and to keep the rhythm.

140. Throughout the school, almost all of the music is taught by one teacher, taking half a class at a time. This enables a good pupil-teacher ratio and helps to build up pupils' confidence in performing. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of music and the quality of her teaching are very good. The use of a dedicated music room with good resources enhances this teaching which is carried out enthusiastically, helping the more self-conscious pupils to participate and perform. However, there has not been the expected progress in opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in creative composition and the use of non-standard symbols for notation as mentioned in the previous report.

141. All children take part in school assemblies, where the quality of singing is good. Reading skills are enhanced through the use of an overhead projector, and teachers link music to learning in

other subjects through an interesting selection of songs, for example, including songs on an Egyptian theme to accompany the topic 'Long Ago'.

The musical knowledge and experience of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is enhanced through the 'Music Box' story sessions taught once every three weeks. They introduce pupils to classical music and the life of famous musicians. A small choir enables chosen pupils to participate weekly and sing a variety of songs. Pupils take part regularly in whole-school concerts at Christmas and the Year 2 concert in the summer term. Pupils participated locally in the Education Sunday event where they joined three other schools in a choral performance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. Standards in physical education are consistently good, an improvement since the previous inspection where standards were found to be average. During the inspection, a variety of physical education lessons was observed, but this did not include dance lessons in Year 2. Pupils know the importance of the warm-up, and older pupils can explain why their heart-beat increases during these sessions. Most pupils are able to set out large equipment in the hall safely. They know how to carry and place the equipment, and the older pupils have developed a good sense of responsibility. In gymnastics, pupils are developing good control in moving around the hall, running, jumping and twisting with increasing spatial awareness. Pupils build up good sequences of controlled actions on the floor and transfer these to the large equipment. The dance lessons give good opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and self-expression with ways of moving accompanied by music or simple percussion. They also provide a cross-curricular link to other areas, such as in lessons in Year 1 where pupils were trying out different ways of moving through the jungle in connection with their topic 'Getting There'.
143. Behaviour throughout lessons is very good. Pupils enjoy their physical activities, motivation and interest are high, and there is an eagerness to do well. Despite their enthusiasm, pupils listen well and carry out instructions accurately. Pupils in Year 1 were able to work independently in dance lessons where the majority could express themselves unselfconsciously as they moved around a make-believe jungle in a variety of ways. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported during lessons and make good progress.
144. Overall, the quality of teaching in physical education is good, although it ranges from satisfactory to very good. In general, the teachers' management of pupils is very good. Lessons are well structured, with warm-up, main activities and cool-down sessions. The teaching is good where pupils are given opportunities to practise particular exercises and then progress to using these skills on the large equipment. A class in Year 2 had practised forward rolls on the floor and then added this exercise to a sequence of movements using the large equipment. This enabled pupils to achieve well and allowed them to extend their sequence of moves successfully. Teachers are generally good at using pupils as examples to demonstrate to, and inspire, others. However, teachers need to ensure there are enough opportunities for pupils to make evaluations of their own and others' performances.
145. Swimming arrangements for pupils in Year 2 are well established and offer an excellent opportunity in this area of physical education. The school has also recently re-introduced swimming lessons for pupils in Year 1. All pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, up to two-thirds of the year group can swim 18 metres.
146. The coordination of physical education is good and, since the last inspection, all staff have attended training courses at the local junior school in the 'Top Start' and 'Top Play' schemes. The school's scheme of work offers very good lesson details for gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. Resources for physical education are good, although the school lacks a grass

area, thus limiting opportunities for outdoor activities. The equipment in the hall is adequate and offers pupils opportunities to develop a full range of skills using large equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Pupils are on course to achieve by the end of Key Stage 1 standards which are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Similar standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils become aware of the need to care for others and look after weaker creatures as St Francis taught. They relate simple stories like Moses and the story of Joseph to feelings expressed as members of a family. Pupils have a confident understanding of the Christian account of Creation. Their knowledge of the Hindu story of creation and Krishna helps them to realise that other faiths have something in common with Christianity. Through the celebration of seasonal festivals like spring, pupils become aware of life cycles affecting us all.
148. Little has changed since the previous inspection. Pupils continue to make sound progress, and the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The curriculum follows the new Cornwall Agreed Syllabus, and this provides teachers with a suitable structure for their planning. Where the teaching is most effective, activities are well planned and conducted at a lively pace which helps to maintain pupils' interest. In one lesson, for example, the teacher's expressive reading of the story of Joseph and his brothers helped to involve all pupils. The teachers' sound subject knowledge enables them to pose suitably challenging questions, and pupils are encouraged to justify their reasoning. Discussion is guided well and so leads pupils to deeper insights. There is good balance between direct instruction and work which pupils undertake independently. There are some opportunities to evaluate how people behave in certain situations, either in real life or in the stories chosen. This encourages pupils to think of how their actions affect others. Where planning is least effective, it is superficial, and lesson targets lack clarity, so neither pupils nor teachers can evaluate if they have been achieved. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and, at present, does not inform pupils as to how they can improve their work. Artefacts and multi-faith resources are used well to support pupils' learning and develop their understanding. Visits and visitors enrich the opportunities for pupils to learn about religious education, but there are few enrichment opportunities for faiths other than Christianity. Pupils respond positively and behave well in religious education lessons, demonstrating respect for each other's ideas and suggestions.
149. The written work which pupils produce for religious education makes a very positive contribution to the development of their literacy skills. They record events in the correct sequence, neatly and accurately. Too often, however, the pupils are only required to retell a story or sequence of events, and the written task does not extend their ability to think or interpret. In some classes, too much time is spent on low-level drawing and colouring tasks.
150. The newly-appointed coordinator is enthusiastic. She provides satisfactory leadership, although there are aspects to be developed. She is aware of the need to monitor more closely the amount of time allocated to the subject each week and, at present, there is neither formal assessment nor monitoring of teaching and learning.