

INSPECTION REPORT

Polruan C P School
Fowey

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique Reference Number: 111883

Inspection Number: 188865

Headteacher: Ms Patricia Crumpler

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess
T13049

Dates of inspection: 21st to 24th September 1999

UNDER OFSTED CONTRACT NUMBER: 707097

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Saviours Hill Polruan Fowey Corwall PL 23 1PS
Telephone number:	01726 870402
Fax number:	01726 870161
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Janet Downes
Date of previous inspection:	May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Geoff Burgess Rgl	Under 5s	Attainment and progress
	English	Teaching
	Information Technology	Curriculum & assessment
	Religious Education: Music	Leadership and management
	Geography: History	
Catherine Rentoul, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attendance
		Support and guidance
		Partnership with parents
		Staffing, accommodation & resources
Tony Burgess	Mathematics	Attitudes, behaviour & social development
	Science	Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
	Art: Design Technology	Efficiency
	Physical Education	
	SEN	

The inspection contractor was:

Geoff Burgess Inspections

4 Dodhams Farm Close

Bradpole

Bridport

Dorset DT6 3EZ

01308 421504

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The Registrar

The Office for Standards in Education

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- More than half of the teaching in the school is good with a little very good
- Pupils behave well, get on well together and are growing into responsible citizens
- It provides a rich, stimulating and relevant curriculum and a wealth of extra opportunities outside school hours
- Pupils who find learning difficult are well provided for
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good
- It takes good care of its pupils and ensures their safety and welfare
- Parents are very well involved in their children's learning and are kept well informed
- It makes a very important contribution to the life of the village and gains greatly from the support and involvement of the local community
- The school is efficiently run, effectively led and has a positive, caring ethos

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in information and design technology do not match standards in other subjects
- II. Not enough is expected of potentially higher attainers
- III. Assessment procedures are not good enough to enable teachers to keep adequate records to monitor the progress of individuals or the impact of their teaching and the curriculum
- IV. Not enough attention is paid to developing pupils awareness of the wider world and the richness and diversity of other peoples cultures

The school has many more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has addressed most of the issues from the last inspection with improvements in the provision for information technology, the monitoring of planning and a much improved school development plan. However, despite developments, assessment continues to be an area for improvement. The standards of school leavers have, over time, improved in the core subjects and there were no unsatisfactory lessons this time. However, standards in information technology are still not high enough. Though the most recent results for seven-year-olds were disappointingly below those listed in the last report, this was significantly affected by the high number of pupils with special needs in the group. Standards in all other aspects of the life of the school have been maintained. With the arrival of the new infant teacher, the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, and an increased priority for information technology, the school is in a good position to improve standards, especially in these areas.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
English	B	A	
Mathematics	B	C	
Science	E	E	

The information shows, for example, that standards in English are above average nationally and well above when compared with similar schools. However, these results were for a group of only five pupils and are not reliable as indicators of current standards. This years' results with a slightly bigger group show standards in English and mathematics which fall in the average range and science scores well above. Inspection findings show that in the core subjects, standards are close to the national averages in years six and two. In most other subjects, including religious education, attainments are appropriate for the ages of the children concerned but in information and design technology they are below.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information technology		Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good	Satisfactory

Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons with a little more than half good and one very good lesson

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Most pupils behave well in class and around the school and the school works hard to sustain high standards
Attendance	Good with good attention to ensuring that all absences are explained
Ethos*	The school has a positive, caring ethos where everyone is valued and relationships are very good
Leadership and management	The head, with the considerable help and support of the governing body provides good leadership and the school is efficiently run
Curriculum	Every opportunity is taken to enhance pupils' learning with a rich and varied curriculum including out of school activities. However, the study of the richness and diversity of other cultures is underdeveloped.
Pupils with special educational needs	Support staff make a valuable contribution in ensuring that provision for pupils who find learning difficult is good
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall with especial strengths in the way the school promotes pupils' moral and social development
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory except for the lack of a hall and the outside steps. A notable feature is the creative way the strengths of the teaching staff are used.
Value for money	Given the good quality of education provided and sound standards

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- V. The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life
- VI. The staff are very approachable
- VII. It keeps parents well informed about their child(ren)'s progress
- VIII. Pupils achieve good standards of work
- IX. Behaviour is good
- X. It gets pupils involved with lots of activities apart from lessons
- XI. Their children enjoy going to school

What some parents are not happy about

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. No significant negative views were expressed

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To build on its many strengths, ensure that all pupils achieve their potential in all subjects and that they get to know the world as well as they know their own community, the governors, headteacher and staff of Polruan School should:

- take advantage of recent gains in expertise and provision for each subject to raise standards in information and design technology in line with other subjects (Paragraphs 7,79,87)
- improve awareness of what might be expected of pupils of all ages and abilities and what pupils are actually achieving against these expectations by:
 - using local and national guidance to establish clearly what the school expects of its pupils in each subject for each year group in skills, understanding and knowledge (Paragraph 18)
 - using this as a basis for gathering information to monitor the progress of individual pupils, the value added by the school and the effectiveness of the curriculum provided in this (Paragraph 22,63,94)
 - using this to ensure that work for all pupils but especially the more able is progressively more challenging (Paragraphs 14,62,66)
- give pupils more planned opportunities to learn about the richness and diversity of the wider world to match the high quality of the work they enjoy exploring their own culture and community (Paragraphs 20,26,88)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs

- ¶ 9 - the attitudes to work of some older pupils
- ¶ 27 - lack of time for reflection in assemblies and across the curriculum
- ¶ 35 - insufficient monitoring of what is actually happening in the classrooms
- ¶ 36 - the financial implications of developments in the school development plan are not itemised
- ¶ 43 - the storage and accessibility of resources inhibits use by staff and pupils
- ¶ 59 - learned writing skills are not applied often enough in other subjects

INTRODUCTION

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. Polruan Community School is a three class primary school serving an area to the east of Fowey across the estuary. It is located in the old school above the village of Polruan overlooking the river. Its pupils come from the village and the surrounding area some from out of catchment.

1.Fifty-five children are on roll aged between four and eleven years. Of these, four are under five who start school in a class with year one and two pupils on a part time basis in September, January and April. Fifteen pupils have been identified as having special needs, four of whom have a statement, a very high number. No children are descended from ethnic minorities and eleven are eligible for free school meals. There are more girls than boys on roll. Attainment on entry to the reception class is similar to that which is found in most schools but varies considerably from year to year.

2.The schools aims to provide an education for each child which will give them equal opportunities to develop the ability to work hard and succeed; self esteem and self confidence; a thirst for knowledge; positive relationships and a sensitivity to the needs of others and a set of personal attitudes, values and beliefs.

Among its priorities, the school intends to:

- consolidate practice and update the policy for work in literacy
- implement and evaluate the numeracy strategy
- review all schemes of work with regard to documents provided nationally and locally
- provide new playground equipment and begin the cycle for the internal decoration of the school
- work with parents on homework policy, the Healthy Schools initiative and the home-school agreement.

4. **Key Indicators**

4. *Attainment at Key Stage 1¹*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	3	6	9

4. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	7	6	7
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	78(76)	67(76)	78(76)
	National	80(80)	81(80)	84(84)

4. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	1	2	2
	Girls	6	6	5
	Total	7	8	7
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	78(76)	89(76)	78(76)
	National	81(80)	85(84)	86(85)

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Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	0	5	5

¹ National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys Girls Total	0 4 4	0 3 3	0 3 3
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School National	80(25) 65(63)	60(46) 59(62)	80(25) 69(69)

¹ Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys Girls Total	0 4 4	0 4 4	0 4 4
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School National	80(66) 65(63)	80(54) 65(64)	80(66) 72(69)

¹ **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through			%
Authorised	School		5
Absence	National comparative		5.7
Unauthorised	School		0
Absence	National comparative		0.5

¹ **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) the previous year:		Number
Fixed period		0
Permanent		0

¹ **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
Very good or better		3
Satisfactory or better		100
Less than satisfactory		0

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Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

2 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

2

Attainment and progress

1. Most children on entry to the reception class are attaining levels similar to those expected in most schools. Four year olds make sound progress in all areas of learning, and by the age of five, their attainments are generally in line with national expectations. They share a class with year one and two pupils and activities provided enable them to progress smoothly onto work in the National Curriculum.

2. The small numbers in each year group leaving the school or reaching the end of Key Stage 1 combined with the significant numbers of pupils with special needs within some of them makes the interpretation of the results of statutory assessments unreliable as an indicator. National tests for eleven year olds in 1998 showed that standards in English and mathematics were above national standards. Compared with similar schools, English attainments were well above average with mathematics in line. Attainments in science were well below the average nationally and when compared with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or better was similar to national averages in reading but well below for writing and mathematics with the number achieving a higher grade lower than in most schools. Science attainments were well below national averages in each category. When compared with similar schools, average grades for each aspect were well below what might be expected. This year's results show an improvement in science with a similar fall in English and standards maintained in mathematics by leavers. At the end of Key Stage 1 overall results for 1999 were well down especially in writing but this was greatly affected by the presence of two pupils with significant special needs in a peer group of only seven.

3. Pupils are currently making good progress through Key Stage 1 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and all pupils are achieving appropriate levels in the core subjects. They are making mainly satisfactory progress in the core subjects in Key Stage 2 with some acceleration towards the end. At the end of the key stage, attainments in mathematics and science are in line with national averages with English a little better, which matches national testing for English and mathematics but is better in science. Fewer pupils are achieving higher levels in either key stage. Standards in literacy and numeracy reflect these findings though there is evidence of better progress in numeracy through the school as teachers focus on mental mathematics. Reading standards are better throughout the school than writing and all pupils are confident speakers with most very articulate. Although progress is being made, standards in most aspects of information technology do not meet national expectations with data handling and control and modelling elements particularly underdeveloped. Boys and girls make similar progress and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress for their abilities. However, the small number of potentially higher attainers in the school are not working at the pace or level of which they are capable.

4. The amount of first hand evidence available for the other subjects on the three days of the inspection was small and in some cases, including religious education and design technology, almost non-existent. Available evidence showed that pupils' knowledge of religious education matches the requirements of the agreed syllabus. However, from lessons observed, discussions with pupils, the scrutiny of their work and teachers' planning, overall standards are high for the age of pupils concerned in personal, social and health education and swimming and broadly appropriate for the other foundation subjects.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

5. Pupils are friendly, open and polite. They listen well, volunteer answers willingly and are able to sustain concentration for quite long periods. When given the opportunity they work well together in pairs or in groups. Boys and girls are happy to show and discuss their work with visitors. In practical activities, they are keen to learn and are enthusiastic and responsive in lessons. However, in the older classes, the pupils' attitude to work in some subjects is less positive and this slows the pace of learning.

6. Good behaviour and relationships are recognised and much appreciated by the parents. Most pupils behave beautifully. They are courteous and show respect for their friends, teachers and other adults. Unfortunately one or two individuals in class occasionally spoil the learning environment by calling out or behaving inappropriately which is a great pity since otherwise there is an atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the whole school community. Good behaviour around the school makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils get on well with each other both in class and at break times. The older pupils work and play well together with the younger pupils and all respond well to the school rules and conventions. No instances of harassment or bullying were observed.

7. Pupils are interested in the views of others and are willing to listen to what they have to say. They are given and take on additional responsibilities as they become older, such as ringing the school bell, preparing the classroom for assembly and looking after the younger pupils. Most pupils enjoy school and their work, especially when given the opportunity to use their initiative or extra responsibility. Their contribution to the life of the school and in particular the life of the community is very good. They willingly support many activities and events in and around the school, which helps to foster the close links the people of Polruan already have with the school and children.

Attendance

8. Good attendance continues to promote the positive approach to learning identified in the last report. No lateness was observed and lessons start on time. At 94.4%, with no exclusions or unauthorised absence, last year's figures were above the national average.

12. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

12. Teaching

9. All teaching is at least satisfactory with one very good art lesson. Of the rest of lessons, just over half are good. Nearly four fifths of the teaching in the infant class is at least good with one very good lesson. The teacher has only just taken over from a temporary job sharing arrangement. She is developing a caring environment and provides a good balance of activities to enable four year olds to work towards the desired learning outcomes. Her planning and preparation for all pupils is good and she manages both the activities and the children well. Of particular note is the speed with which she has developed practices and expectations to cope with the three age groups in the class. This was well shown by a literacy lesson organised to allow the teacher to work with a focus group and where she used targeted questioning to challenge and draw out individuals of each age group. In a very good art lesson pupils were given lots of opportunity to use their initiative in a very well, prepared and structured environment using a wide range of available resources.

10. The teaching of English and mathematics, mainly through the literacy and numeracy hours are a strength of the school with nearly two-thirds of these lessons good. Substantial evidence was seen of the impact of the support provided by the structure and materials of the strategies in many lessons. The good use of well-briefed support, some of it voluntary, enables pupils to make good progress and focus on their work in groups. A further good feature of the teaching of reading is the priority which teachers give to ensuring that individual pupils are heard to read regularly. This also involves knowledgeable support and a

consistent home-school partnership and is enhanced by the use of well organised resources. A minor, but important weakness in these and other lessons is the lack of real planned challenge in terms of difficulty or quality for potentially higher attainers.

11. In Key Stage 2 over two fifths of teaching is good. Other than the English and mathematics lessons noted, good teaching is often associated with the creative use of staff to make best use of their subject expertise in other classes such as in science, history, music, design technology and personal and social education. The confidence and very good subject knowledge which teachers bring to their subjects enables them to create a very positive learning ethos and use detailed, challenging questioning.

12. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to the progress of pupils on the special needs register. They work well with teachers in ensuring that current targets are kept in view and modified to best meet the needs of the pupils.

1. **The curriculum and assessment**

13. The school provides a broad and generally balanced curriculum much enriched by its links with the local community and use of the local area, which effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. Overall the curriculum meets statutory requirements and the school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The appropriate amount of time and effort is spent on Literacy and numeracy and the school has managed to ensure that other subjects have kept their place on the timetable. Over the years, personal, social and health education has become a feature of the school and aspects such as health, sex and drugs misuse are very well covered in a planned programme. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and are appropriately prepared for their next stage of education.

14. Curriculum policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects through the implementation of the literacy and numeracy materials and the very sensible adoption of the Cornwall Primary Planning pack. This contains a detailed curriculum framework with rolling programmes for all subjects, including religious education which match the organisation of the school. Coordinators are also in the process of adopting or integrating some of the material provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). Wherever possible cross curricular themes are used to lend coherence to pupils work such as where the river topic in the oldest class was picked up by the music teacher for her lesson. Most subjects are managed by curriculum coordinators and medium-term and weekly planning is monitored effectively by the head to ensure continuity and coverage of skills.

15. Teachers' planning based on these materials is good with medium term plans broken down into weekly forecasts with sufficient detail to ensure continuity and progression. Weekly planning is detailed and specific with a range of work to meet the needs of the mixed age classes especially in literacy and numeracy for which the planning is good.

16. Most pupils are given small tasks such as reading and spellings to complete at home and older pupils sometimes have work to do based on current topics. The governors are in the process of agreeing a policy to formalise arrangements for homework. Provision for extra-curricular activities in such a small school is good with a number of lunchtime and after school activities ranging from music to environmental walks, despite the difficulties of the site. The school provides an excellent range of visits and residential trips to enhance the curriculum which includes older pupils having residential visits to Roseland and Delaware. Very good use is made of the local area for humanities topics and outdoor education including sailing and orienteering. Typical of these is the cross-harbour swim and the Fowey canoe trip from Lostwithiel to Polruan. However, the study of contrasting cultures and communities in the outside world is not as well developed.

17. Curricular provision for those pupils identified with special educational needs is satisfactory and the policy clearly sets out procedures and arrangements that are in line with the code of practice. All support is provided in the classroom working on material either similar to or parallel with the work of the class.

18. Procedures for assessing individual pupil's attainment and progress are not adequate to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum accurately. Some systems are in place and teachers are beginning to use the information to help in their planning. Baseline assessment has been in use for some time, the school has started to use the optional tests in Key Stage 2 and standardised reading tests are used in the older classes. Each pupil has an individual record of achievement, containing pieces of work but it is not annotated to indicate the level of achievement when compared to national standards. Assessment opportunities are indicated in planning but these were rarely taken during the inspection and it was unclear how the evidence gained is recorded or used. However, marking is regular and usually includes encouragement and advice. The small numbers in the school make it difficult for teachers to relate the attainments of their pupils to the national picture. Current assessment practices are not sufficiently rigorous to accurately track each pupil's progress or set and monitor targets for improvement. The school has identified the need to improve assessment so that the value added by the school can be judged and targets for improvement set and a useful new policy statement has been drawn up.

22. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

19. Provision made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school offers a secure, calm and caring environment where children and adults alike are valued. This positive ethos encourages pupils to show respect for each other and for themselves. Pupils have a clear understanding of the values and beliefs that the school promotes. A well-planned daily act of worship makes a positive contribution to the development of spiritual awareness. It provides an opportunity for pupils to share feelings with each other and the whole school community. During one assembly, a candle was lit to celebrate a new beginning, in this instance the birth that day of a new sister. In lessons pupils develop their self-knowledge through study of their own and other people's lives. However, pupils have few opportunities to reflect during moments of stillness and quiet around the school and in lessons.

20. Teachers actively promote moral values so that each child develops integrity, self-discipline and sound moral judgement. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and are encouraged to show respect for each other and the environment. They respond well to the high expectation of good behaviour. Discussion of sensitive issues such as 'drugs' are used to help extend pupils understanding of their personal responsibilities and to help children to distinguish right from wrong behaviour.

21. The social development of the pupils is good. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to show consideration for each other, work amicably together and to play fairly. Pupils co-operate well and value each other's contribution within groups containing both boys and girls. At break and lunchtime, older pupils often look after the younger children. They also gain valuable experience of living and working together during the residential visits organised by the school to outdoor activities centres. Opportunities are provided for pupils to play against other local schools at football, netball, cricket and athletics. The high quality programme the school provides for personal, social and health education includes dealing with issues such as substance misuse and sex education and stresses personal responsibility as in the keeping healthy sessions observed during the inspection.

22. Pupils develop a very good understanding of their own local culture and heritage through their involvement in numerous activities and events which take place in and around the village, by studying and talking to visitors from the local community and by visits to places of interest. Each year pupils participate in a variety of local events such as Maypole dancing at the Du Maurier Festival and the

annual harbour swim for the older juniors. The mutually supportive relationship between the school and the village is exceptional and has a positive impact on the education provided. Some visits are planned to help pupils learn about the influence of other cultures in religious education, history, music and art. However not enough attention is given to the providing sufficient opportunities to explore the richness and diversity of different cultures and traditions by, for example, studying a different country in geography.

26. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

23. Parents unhesitatingly point to the caring atmosphere and the approachability of the staff as the school's major strengths. Their judgement was endorsed in the last report. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of all pupils remains good. Pupils with Special Educational Needs are seen to integrate well in the life of the school and parents of those with statements are kept fully informed of their progress. Taking advantage of well established links with the nearby playgroup, staff do their best to support reception pupils when they enter the school. They make home visits, timetable the first days at school with the playgroup and parents report that their children settle well. Equally the school prepares junior pupils for the transition to secondary school. During their last year in school pupils' homework increases, they are encouraged to meet up with pupils from schools in the local cluster group going on to the same secondary school and their new Tutors come in to visit them before the summer Induction day. Recognising that swimming skills will be vital to give pupils confidence for their daily crossing of the estuary by open boat, the school encourages them to take part in the Harbour swim in their last year and the majority also achieve certificates for swimming a mile in Liskeard pool.

24. Teaching staff keep registers meticulously and the school follows up unexplained absences within half an hour of the start of the school day. They know their pupils well and informal monitoring of their personal development and academic progress is good. Parents are satisfied with the annual reports and the evenings which are arranged to discuss them. Reports fulfil all statutory requirements but the school recognises that formal assessment needs more development to be fully effective.

25. The behaviour policy works well and pupils feel secure that staff and support staff will apply it consistently and deal vigorously with any incidence of bullying. All staff have appropriate First Aid training and have attended courses on the teaching of swimming. Child protection procedures are in place. On outside visits, parents are co-opted to raise the adult - pupil ratio and lend further specialist skills such as life saving. In school, staff continue to provide sensitive and effective support for those with medical problems. Recent changes in staffing have allowed the expansion of health education to all classes and the school has been chosen to join a pilot scheme for the Health Promoting Schools award. Health education is matched by careful attention to Health and Safety issues such as classroom procedure and governors are involved in regular risk assessment exercises.

29. Partnership with parents and the community

26. In the last report, inspectors noted that the children are valued members of the community. The school recognises this and reaches out to form a good partnership with parents and maintain very good links with the wider community which enrich pupils' education. This is a major strength of the school.

27. The Prospectus gives parents clear information about the school's aims and policies before their children enter school. Once part of the school, all parents are made members of the Parent, Staff Association which has an important social and fundraising role. Some parents are elected as committee members or serve on the board of governors. Others come in to school as voluntary helpers or give assistance on outside visits or swimming lessons. All parents are asked to join staff in making reading and homework diaries effective and since the last report, well supported Parents' evenings are held to discuss annual reports and target setting.

28. To pupils in their last year ringing the school bell serves to offer a post of responsibility for timekeeping during the school day. It also reminds local residents that term is in progress and they are generous in offering help. Many take an interest in class projects and offer artefacts to support them. The church invites the school to take part in the major festivals and the parish council and Town Trust have been generous in their support for fundraising. Local farmers and authorities in the docks make sure that pupils are properly informed about the different aspects of the working life of their community. Local businesses provide prizes for fundraising events and have contributed towards the updating of classroom and playground equipment. Pupils use the village hall once a week and also have access to the playing field. In turn, the school shares what they can with the local community.

29. Senior citizens' lunches are cooked in the school kitchen very week, a regular Easter tea party is held for senior citizens and pupils distribute flowers after their Harvest services in church. The school takes part in the Du Maurier Festival, putting on a Maypole dancing display, running a coffee stall and putting on an exhibition of children's work in the church. After school activities have long included neighbourhood walks. Recently the school has been affiliated to the Estuary Trust which has further raised pupils' awareness of ecological issues in their neighbourhood and given them a sense of responsibility by involving them in Beach Sweeps.

30. Relationships with the local playgroup and secondary school are good and this boost pupils' confidence about making the changes necessary at the different stages of their education. There are good links with the County Education Authority and the school is taking advantage of the facilities for educational residential visits. Staff value the support available from the formation of their local cluster group of schools. They are also aware of the value of teaching resources outside the classroom. They welcome in local speakers and through after school clubs encourage a range of sports which bring their pupils into contact with pupils from other schools and widen their sporting horizons. The education in this small school is greatly enriched by the interest which parents and the wider community take in pupils' progress.

34. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

34. Leadership and management

31. The head teacher provides positive leadership and she is well supported by a small, very committed staff team and an active and knowledgeable governing body. They work closely together towards meeting the school's clearly stated aims and have achieved much over the years. All understand their roles within the school community and the procedures that they have developed for decision making, monitoring and maintaining lines of communication are effective. Many governors spend a considerable time in school and know it very well. Together they form a significant asset to the school community in providing both practical and moral support. The school is forward looking and seeking to meet the needs of future generations in the tightly knit community.

32. Though teaching staff have subject responsibilities, much curriculum work is effectively done as a team. Teaching and non-teaching staff are all very aware of what is going on but pressures on the budget and time have limited the formal monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum. However, new funds will now make this possible. The head regularly monitors planning. Governors are in the process of developing their role in this area and already receive responses from staff on the effectiveness of various current policy developments. Individual governors and groups, such as the finance subcommittee are responsible for the various aspects of governors' work. Staff development has a high priority with a conscious effort made to bring in outside influences and new ideas.

33. In the last report, the school development plan was an area for improvement. It is now a more effective document with clear medium and long-term priorities and people or groups responsible for carrying out the identified tasks. Resource requirements are noted but the financial implications are not included. Progress towards the fulfilment of the current plan is monitored at each governor's meeting.

Staff and governors are fully involved in its development and application and it is linked to staff development priorities and staffing policy.

34. Polruan School has a very important place in the life of the community providing, as it does, a focus for local pride and involvement. It is committed to high standards of work and conduct and the head and all staff have created and sustained a caring positive ethos. Staff provide a rich, effective learning environment for its children, all of whom have equal access to a full curriculum.

38. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

35. Although there have been staff changes since the last inspection the school has retained a good balance of training and expertise among its staff and numbers are adequate for the number and age range of the pupils. All staff are appropriately qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum and job descriptions are now in place. Support staff and part time staff are well deployed allowing full use of particular subject expertise such as music and design technology. Part time staff are also used to provide cover for the headteacher while she is involved in administrative duties. Assessment procedures are being developed but arrangements to further improve standards by monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by direct classroom observation have only recently been put in place. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

36. The school occupies a spectacular site overlooking the estuary. The buildings are just over a hundred years old and provide three good sized classrooms. Although there have been recent improvements providing better office accommodation and a small staff room there is no hall or library and due to the lack of storage facilities and display space the building seems cluttered. All the windows have been replaced during the last two years so that ventilation and insulation are good. Outside, the school recognises the need to improve provision for play in the juniors' playground but the infants' area is well provided with a variety of equipment and a very effective safety mat.

37. The old swimming pool area is waiting for redevelopment and the surrounding walls are in a poor state of repair. The school is able to use the village hall for indoor physical education, dance and drama and rents a playing field from the National Trust but lack of storage space makes the use of large apparatus impossible. There is a well equipped kitchen where school lunches are cooked and served in the classroom next door. All arrangements in the school are complicated by the lack of an internal staircase connecting the infants' classroom and the kitchen with the junior classrooms and office. Although the external staircase is wide, with a long, gentle gradient and shallow steps it is very exposed and in winter is at best unpleasant, if not hazardous.

38. Resources for the teaching of English and information technology are good. There is a maypole for country dancing but otherwise large resources for physical education are sparse. For all other subjects resources are adequate. The library area is cramped and many of the books, especially in the fiction section, are ageing and in need of review. There is scope to look again at the possibility of reorganising the eastern end of the top classroom to provide dedicated storage and workspace for such subjects as science and technology. The school recognise the value of outside resources: pupils have regular sessions at Millenreath swimming pool and the many after school clubs cover sports such tennis and cross country running. Environmental walks in the neighbourhood have long been a feature of school life and add an extra dimension to classroom teaching.

42. The efficiency of the school

39. Standard of financial planning and management are good. The governing body provides strong

support and has worked hard to ensure alternative strategies for managing expenditure are considered when building the budget. They try to plan strategically rather than simply rely on the historic budget but at present, the scope for real choice is limited by the tightness of the budget. The income per pupil at £2382 is inevitably high given the nature of the school. Good accounting records are maintained and monitored by the school with regular financial reports presented to the governing body to provide current information to inform spending decisions. The school carried forward a small surplus from the last financial year. The school receives generous support from the parents. Many of the refurbishments and major resource purchases were made possible through their generosity - for example the climbing apparatus and flooring. Additional funding has been received from both the Town Trust and the Parish Council to purchase the safety surface and new furniture respectively.

40. Since the last inspection, significantly improvements have been made to the development plan so that it now includes a longer-term view. However, it still does not include the financial implications of the developments. Staff are suitably qualified and well deployed. Creative organisation allows subject specialists to teach their subject to more than their own class (e.g. science, history, DT). Lack of non-contact time however, limits the opportunity for subject co-ordinators to monitor the teaching of other subjects effectively. The contribution made by the well-trained support assistants is a strong feature of the school, and their work is highly valued, particularly in their good support for pupils with special needs. Effective use is made of the accommodation and sensible procedures have been established to overcome some of the problems inherent in the buildings. The broadly satisfactory range of resources is well used, although storage and accessibility could be improved.

41. The administration systems of the school are good, and efficient procedures support the day to day running of the school. Systems of financial control are well developed and the school secretary, supported by the local authority bursar, provides valuable support. The most recent external audit carried out in 1996, found the financial procedures and planning to be satisfactory. The school has subsequently put in place the actions recommended.

42. In view of the positive ethos of the school, the sound standards achieved and the good quality of the provision including teaching, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

46. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

43. At the time of the inspection, there were only four four-year-olds, two of whom were part time mornings only, sharing an infant class with years one and two. The teacher is new to the school and the inspection took place on the third week of the school year. Well-established liaison links and good procedures ensure a smooth transition from home into school life. The infant classroom is more than adequate for the numbers involved with extra space and access to a secure outside play area. However, it is cut off from the rest of the school with the only access by a long outside stairway which is very open to regular gusty winds. Although some adult help has been provided in the mornings and the cooks are on the same floor, there are occasions in the afternoon when the teacher does not have adult support.

44. On entry to the school, inspection evidence shows that most children are achieving average levels of attainment for their age, although the profile of attainment varies year on year. They are currently making sound progress in the reception class and will be ready to work on National Curriculum programmes of study as they reach the beginning of Key Stage 1.

45. In the lessons observed which were shared with years one and two, the teaching was well planned and prepared and the teacher has already built up good relationships with high expectations for behaviour and work habits. The under fives were not reported on at the last inspection.

49. **Social and personal development**

46. Boys and girls in the reception group are well settled and responsive. The class teacher provides them with a good range of appropriate and relevant experiences and they have adjusted well under her guidance. Pupils are growing in confidence and are learning to take responsibility in small ways such as in finding equipment, and settling to their tasks.

Language and literacy

47. Children at this age have the confidence to ask and answer questions and they listen attentively to stories and explanations. All of them enjoy choosing and looking at books and talk about the stories and pictures. Some can recognise letters, match words and read simple sections of text. Pupils are beginning to write words independently, trying out their knowledge of sounds and using a growing sight vocabulary. They use the home corner for role play which gives them opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills but few activities are included in play for trying out writing skills. Displays are used effectively to promote reading. The literacy strategy is being carried out and is adapted appropriately for the youngest pupils, using a good range of stories.

Mathematics

48. Under fives make steady progress in learning about numbers and shapes. They are able to count and to read, write and talk about numbers up to ten. Some children talk about numbers beyond ten and are beginning to see patterns. They are given suitable, practical tasks to help their development in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

49. Four-year-olds are given a range of suitable and appropriate experiences that enable them to explore the world around them. Along with their classmates they closely observed their own school and thought up questions which they could ask to compare it with another school. Good use of literature and early photographs enabled them to see how things have changed for children. They use

sand and water to discover how materials behave and talk about where they live and places they have visited.

Physical development

50. Fine motor skills are successfully developed through a range of activities such as painting, drawing, cutting and sticking. The village hall is used for indoor activities but a lack of large equipment limits the activities possible to dance and work with small equipment such as the balls used during the inspection. In good weather, climbing equipment in the playground is available for them to try out their physical skills.

Creative development

51. Children enjoy making models and using a variety of materials to make pictures. Some of their work is of a good standard for their age group. Most are learning to take a pride in their work and to work in a variety of scales. They enjoy manipulating dough to make three-dimensional tiles of the school. Older four year olds have the opportunity of sharing in good quality music lessons with year one and two pupils.

55. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

52. All judgements on National Curriculum subjects and religious education are made against the background of a school with small numbers in each age group and eight or less in most. The inspection took place early in the school year and judgements on attainment are made taking into consideration evidence from the work of the previous years two and six, to give a fairer reflection of standards at the end of key stages.

56. English

53. Results of the National Curriculum 1998 tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, show that standards in reading were close to national averages, but well below when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing were well below using both comparisons. This year's results were lower especially in writing but this was in a group with a high percentage of pupils with special needs. At the end of Key Stage 2, the National Curriculum 1998 test results show that standards were well above the national average for English, and when compared with similar schools. However, this was for a group of only five pupils. In 1999, the results were similar to the national average in previous years. Inspection evidence suggests that by the end of the two key stages, overall attainments should be close to national standards and could well be better in Key Stage 1 especially in reading. Pupils make good progress in reading in both key stages. Current progress is good in writing in Key Stage 1 and steady in Key Stage 2. In speaking and listening good progress is made throughout the school and at the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above average. Standards in English at the last inspection were judged to be in line with national averages throughout the school.

54. Staff have made good progress in implementing the literacy hour strategy in all classes, based upon careful consideration of the pupils' needs. Within the literacy hour due attention is given to reading and writing and speaking and listening. Pupils are taught spelling structures, specific grammar vocabulary and punctuation which accelerates their progress in reading and writing. The school has targeted aspects of the English curriculum for improvement such as improving the quality of writing.

55. The youngest pupils are confident in speaking and eager to contribute. Many are articulate speakers in a range of situations, including talking to the whole class and visitors about their work. They are keen to contribute ideas and to reflect on their own experiences. Well-planned question and answer sessions and opportunities for group discussion encourage the more tentative speakers as well as the confident. By the time they are eleven, most pupils are very confident in their contributions to class discussions and in one-to-one situations with adults, for example when discussing their favourite

authors and books. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress and benefit from the individual support they receive in lessons.

56. The youngest pupils are building up a sound knowledge of letter sounds and word recognition and in developing their spelling skills. They make good progress in developing these skills in years one and two. Most pupils can retell a story logically, talk about their favourite authors, and say why they enjoy reading their books. Group reading sessions and whole class lessons using Big Books have sharpened pupils' skills of looking carefully at a variety of texts. They can identify specific features and find information from books and talk articulately about their observations. Standards in reading are below average in year three but better in years four and five and progress is good throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils read with increasing confidence and fluency and identify significant themes and characters in the stories they hear and read. All pupils make some choice in the range of literature they read, with sufficient teacher guidance to ensure they are reading a good balance. Pupils are heard to read regularly by teachers and other adult helpers. Most parents support reading at home and write their assessment of their children's progress in a home/school booklet. Those pupils who have special educational needs are supported well, careful note is made of their progress in reading and they make good progress. Pupils show a good knowledge of alphabetical order when using wordbooks, indexes and dictionaries. Many are able to use a range of reference books, summarise information from information books in note form and use this to write their account.

57. Current written work at the end of Key Stage 1 shows a higher standard than that in a scrutiny of previous work of pupils now in year three. Most pupils form their letters accurately, use spaces appropriately and write in a sensible size. They understand what constitutes a sentence and use full stops and capital letters appropriately. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in writing is mainly average but with few pupils attaining above average standards. Attainments are relatively lower in the younger class. Spellings are regularly taught and pupils learn groups of words for homework. Pupils make good progress in learning to spell correctly and in learning the conventions of grammar. Most use full stops, capital letters and punctuation correctly by the end of the key stage. Pupils produce well-organised poems and accounts but few opportunities are given for older pupils to write extended pieces for a purpose and an audience such as might be stimulated by work in other subjects. Handwriting and presentation skills are variable, being mainly good in English but unsatisfactory in some foundation subjects. Limited use is made of computers for word processing. Throughout the key stage pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the development of their literacy skills towards meeting targets set for them by their teachers.

58. Pupils have good attitudes to work in Key Stage 1 and sound attitudes and work habits in Key Stage 2. All enjoy reading and show positive attitudes to writing but older pupils sometimes lack urgency when completing work. They cooperate well with each other and work effectively in small groups making supportive comments when listening to each other's contributions. Apart from a few individuals, behaviour is good. Pupils who have special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work in English especially when working with their adult helpers.

59. The quality of teaching is almost all good. Teachers identify specific learning targets in their planning and support individual pupils as they work, using encouragement well. They display a secure subject knowledge, make clear their expectations and set specific tasks but expectations in Key Stage 2 are not always matched to the abilities of the older and more able pupils in the class. Teachers give good input and summarise well at the end of sessions and all adults employ good questioning skills

60. Guidance and policies for English help to ensure that pupils receive a well-balanced curriculum in all three elements of English. Evidence of work examined and teachers' plans reveal that the requirements of the Literacy strategy are being met. Assessment of pupils' progress is mainly ongoing during lessons. Work is carefully marked and specific teaching points made to help pupils develop their work. Teachers keep regular records of pupils' reading progress with some self-assessment and standardised tests are used in Key Stage 2. Some assessment tasks are built into planning but it is unclear how these are used

to monitor the progress of individuals. The school has published exemplars of work at various levels and has started to use national tests for years three, four and five. However, as yet, this is not used in a sufficiently systematic way to provide clear evidence of the progress and achievements of individuals measured against national standards.

Mathematics

61. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant class so that by the end of the key stage attainment is close to the national average. In Key Stage 2 progress is maintained and as a result attainment is again close to standards achieved nationally. Attainment is broadly consistent with the results of the national standard tests for 1998, where at the end of Key Stage 2 60% of pupils achieved Level 4 or above and 20% Level 5. Of the nine children taking the Key Stage 1 test, 78% achieved level two or above, which is below the national average. However when dealing with such small numbers of children in a year group any national comparison is statistically unreliable.

62. Throughout the school teaching of mathematics is now organised broadly in line with the structure outlined in the Numeracy Strategy. In Key Stage 1 the introduction of the daily mental maths at the beginning of each session has a noted impact on the computational ability of the pupils who are encouraged to explore the strategies they are using to work out problems in their heads. Pupils are able to count forward and backwards in 10s and 5s up to 100, double numbers and recognise that operations such as subtraction are not reversible. Pupils are introduced to mathematical vocabulary through a range of practical activities, which promote understanding of patterns, number and shape. Year 1 pupils enthusiastically played snakes and ladders to improve their ability to count on. Displays are used to promote learning; for example how different shapes tessellate. By the age of seven most pupils have a basic understanding of place value, number bonds to 10 or more; they add, subtract small numbers and know some multiplication facts. Pupils recognise two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle.

63. In Key Stage 2 pupils build on and extend their mathematical skills and knowledge. Younger juniors estimate, measure and record their results using standard units. By the age of 11, most pupils demonstrate satisfactory mathematical knowledge of number, shape, space and measure, and data handling. They learn about the properties of different shapes such as triangles, quadrilateral and hexagons. Scrutiny of exercise books indicates pupils are encouraged to learn and practise number facts. However only a few older juniors have instant recall of all 'tables' up to 10 times. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum, are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Teachers and learning support assistants provide additional help to pupils encountering difficulties. In most lessons, the work is well matched to the ability of the child. However, on occasions, pupils who are more able are not being sufficiently stretched or challenged.

64. Most pupils respond well to work presented and generally approach mathematics with confidence and enthusiasm. This is particularly evident in the infant class where there is a high degree of active participation by the class and pupils are willing to explain their methods and solutions to others and share their mental strategies. In the junior classes pupils work hard, but often lack energy and drive, which effects the pace of learning. Most pupils enjoy the practical aspects of mathematics. They persevere and collaborate well when given the opportunity. Occasionally pupils are given the chance to work independently; for example working on mathematics related topic using the computer.

65. In all the lessons observed, the teaching was good. In both key stages, lessons are well planned and in general, teachers match activities to attainment. Good use is made of practical activities to reinforce concepts and skills, this being particularly helpful for pupils with learning difficulties. Time and resources are mostly used efficiently. Teachers use effective questioning to extend and challenge pupils thinking. Direct whole class teaching is well used and the clarity of explanation is a feature of much of the teaching in mathematics. In most lessons observed the pace of learning slowed during the group work. The

plenary session was well used to summarise and to emphasise key points and, in some cases, to demonstrate improvement.

66. The headteacher has been acting as co-ordinator since the beginning of term and the long-term leadership of the subject is uncertain. Over time, the school has developed a basic policy statement and scheme of work to ensure continuity, coverage and progression and to support teachers' planning. However, the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy has largely made the scheme of work superfluous.

67. The influence of the Numeracy Strategy is evident in the method and organisation of the subject throughout the school. The core curriculum in mathematics is now based on the programme outlined in the Numeracy Strategy. Work is largely selected from the two commercial schemes already in use and is supplemented by additional material from a variety of sources. The curriculum provided meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and covers all sections of the programmes of study. Investigation work or the opportunity to explore real life problems is less evident. Inspection of books from last year indicates that in the past the work in the infants was too often 'workbook based'.

68. Evidence of achievement through the school is monitored by using the results of statutory assessments at the end of each key stage, non-statutory national tests in the juniors and check-up tests provided by the two main schemes in use. Some teachers use regular on-going assessment to modify planning but this is less consistent and needs to be developed. To support the teacher's judgement selected pieces of work are kept in the pupils' own record of achievement but these are not levelled against national standards. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and usually offer guidance to pupils about how to improve future performance. Satisfactory quality resources are mainly class based and are sufficient to support the delivery of the curriculum.

72. Science

69. During the inspection science was not taught in Key Stage 1 so no judgements could be made about the quality of teaching or the pupils' response to the teaching. Judgements of standards in this key stage were made from scrutiny of past work, planning and discussions with pupils.

70. Pupils in both the infants and juniors make satisfactory progress so that seven and 11-year-olds achieve standards that are close to the national averages. This is consistent with the results of the most recent Key Stage 2 national tests where 79% of pupils achieved level 4 or better. Although the results for 7-year-olds were below national averages, this was significantly affected by the high number of pupils with special needs in the year group which has a disproportionate impact.

71. In Key Stage 1 pupils recognise that plants, such as cress need water and light to grow. They look at ways of keeping a hot water bottle warm and use a Venn diagram to classify materials that change. Junior pupils investigate the effects of friction to discover on which surface objects slide most easily and ways they can record their findings. They identify different creatures' position in a food chain, as well as studying habitat. After school pupils are encouraged to take part in walks to study the environment. Pupils readily use subject specific terms, such as Newton meters. They understand what constitutes a 'fair test' when carrying out an experiment. Pupils are encouraged to raise questions, make tentative suggestions and predict, to analyse the results of an investigation and to identify trends or patterns.

72. Key Stage 2 pupils are eager to participate in scientific activities, but only a few observed were happy to volunteer ideas. Children enjoyed scientific investigations and particularly welcomed the 'hands-on' part of science. They generally work well with each other, although occasionally the over-enthusiasm of a few caused some disruption.

73. In the lesson observed teaching was satisfactory. Lessons are soundly planned but there is little difference in content for pupils of varying ability. Consequently some high ability pupils are not being

sufficiently challenged. Detailed explanations of the purpose of the lesson are given and questioning is used to establish present knowledge. Good use is made of language and terminology specific to the subject. Display work on topics such as the water cycle is used to inform. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the effective use of subject specialism.

74. Planning is sound. The co-ordinator is suitably qualified, has good subject knowledge and has attended relevant in-service courses to up-date his knowledge. A science policy statement and scheme of work has been developed to ensure continuity, coverage and progression and to support teachers' planning. The science curriculum is based on the local authority planning pack and national guidance. It follows the requirements of the National Curriculum and offers breadth and balance. The present teaching arrangement in the juniors ensures the co-ordinator is responsible for the content, method and organisation of the subject in that part of the school. However, he does not directly monitor teaching and learning in the infant classroom and this limits his influence on the development of the subject.

75. The procedures used to assess the children's work are broadly satisfactory but lack the detail to enable the progress of individual pupils to be tracked against national standards in the mixed age classes. Assessment is carried out at the end of each module. On-going assessments are made by the teacher closely observing the pupils' work, particularly during experimental and investigative science. In future the school intends to use the non-statutory national tests when available to help monitor progress measured against national levels. Pupil's written work is marked and provides valuable feedback to the pupils. Resources for science are of satisfactory quality although storage at present does not ensure reasonable access and is therefore inadequate.

79. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

79. **Information and Control Technology**

76. During the week of the inspection no formal lessons on information technology (IT) were observed. Some pupils were working independently at computers with little teaching participation and some with dedicated help. Judgements are based on these observations, scrutiny of work, printed copy and displays, plus discussion with pupils, the head and other staff. Since the last inspection, the school has substantially improved its provision for information technology and the current number and quality of computers, printers and other hardware is sufficient to cover all aspects of the subject with the exception of control technology. Improvements in support are having a positive impact on the development of the subject but some changes are recent and have not had sufficient time to take effect properly. However, although standards have improved, they are still below those expected nationally especially in data handling and control and monitoring.

77. The school has identified a suitable progression of computer skills to be covered by each year group to ensure coverage and progression using national guidance but, as yet, these are not being reflected in planning. In-service opportunities for the staff have been limited so that some teachers have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the use of IT to challenge pupils to extend their capabilities in all strands of the programme of study.

78. Pupils are enthusiastic and concentrate hard during IT sessions. They work well independently and show initiative and resourcefulness in dealing with any difficulties that arise. Most can explain the purpose of their task and are happy to make suggestions or volunteer answers. Support observed during the sessions observed was effective. However, in the school generally, computers were underused during the inspection and present levels of use are insufficient to ensure that all pupils have sufficient time involved in IT work to cover the programme of study. No formal records of pupil's achievements in IT are kept. Information technology has been identified as a major priority in school development plans with improved resources established. The introduction of the internet will provide further opportunities for pupils to explore the wider world. The range of software is generally sufficient but some is underused.

82. Religious Education

79. Only one lesson was available for observation during the inspection. From this, teachers planning, the scrutiny of pupil's work and discussions with pupils, standards of attainment in religious education are generally satisfactory and the school meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make mainly steady progress throughout the school and are developing a growing awareness of the significance of religion in people's lives. They have some understanding of religious festivals, beliefs and practices associated with Christianity, Judaism, Islam and the Hindu faith. Most understand that the bible is a special book and understand some stories from it.

80. Pupils' response to religious education is mainly positive. Boys and girls are generally respectful of one another's suggestions and opinions. In discussion, they say they enjoy listening to stories and visiting the local church for services.

81. The quality of teaching is sound. Teacher knowledge and understanding is secure. Learning objectives are well linked to the Agreed Syllabus and teachers successfully build on previous learning and use questions well to assess knowledge and understanding. The school makes use of the support materials supplied in the local authority planning pack and follows its topic cycles which are matched to the agreed syllabus. Themes for collective worship are suitably identified and all members of staff regularly lead assemblies. Little time is given for quiet reflection in assemblies and this limits the opportunity for pupils' spiritual and religious development. Resources are adequate. The school has collected appropriate artifacts and has a suitable collection of books for the study of the subject.

Art, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education

82. Though all the pupils in at least one key stage were observed learning all the foundation subjects, the total number of such observations was inevitably relatively small. Where possible this was supplemented by the scrutiny of teachers planning, work completed this school year and by discussions with pupils. To avoid repetition and provide a solid base for judgements about teaching and pupil's attitudes to learning, art, design technology, geography, history, music and physical education are reported on as a group, with strengths and weaknesses pinpointed. Pupils will achieve appropriate levels in all these subjects except design technology in Key Stage 2 this year. They are currently making sound progress through both key stages in art, geography, history, music and physical education but slower progress in design technology in the middle years. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress, especially in the more practical aspects of the above subjects.

Art

83. Art enhances work throughout the curriculum in a range of media including painting, collage, printmaking, modelling and the use of information technology. Pupils' folders and wall displays show the result of a variety of art activities in both classes. They are proud of their work and keen to explain their methods and the reasons behind using certain materials in their work. In Key Stage 1 this included work connected to their topic on the school involving observational drawing, pastels and modelling with salt dough. Older pupils, as part of their Egyptian topic made collages and decorated artifacts for display. All children have had experience of the works of different artists as varied as Monet, Constable and artists from the time of the Aztecs.

Design Technology

84. Design technology (DT) has been identified as an area for development and the new teacher is a subject specialist who, when settled in, will take charge of the subject. She is already having an impact in her own class and the oldest class, which she takes weekly for DT. In her own class, the art activities noted above were part of a unit of work with elements of designing and making in which pupils used salt

dough, play dough and construction toys to make representations of their own designs for the school. In the oldest class, the pupils made, tested, evaluated and modified structures using rolled up newspaper and cellotape. This was their first attempt and the teacher plans to incorporate the design at a later stage. Younger juniors made mummies and tomb jewellery related to their topic. Cooking with volunteer helpers also features on the timetable.

88. Geography

85. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils recognise features of their own locality and talk about the reasons why it is attractive to visitors. They discuss features of their own school and formulate questions to ask pupils in an inner city school so that they can make comparisons. In Key Stage 2, pupils use appropriate geographical language to describe many features of the landscape associated with rivers. They are able to employ a range of geographical skills such as using maps to locate features. Very good use is made of the local area with planned visits to Bodmin Moor to find the source of the River Fowey and village walks. However, little attention has been paid recently to more distant places.

History

86. As in geography, very good use is made of the rich resource of the local area and community in providing stimulus and evidence for history. However, as part of the rolling programme, pupils in Key Stage 2 were studying ancient Egypt which did not lend itself to this approach but even here a pupil was able to bring in papyrus rolls as an artefact. In the lesson observed, the teacher, who is a specialist, used her expertise to good effect to tell the complex and challenging story of Seth and Osiris. Unfortunately, the follow-up activity was much less challenging especially for the more able year fours. In the infant class, good use was made of J Paton Walsh's story 'When I was little like you' and old photographs to enable pupils to identify articles used in the past, suggest modern day equivalents and identify differences.

90. Music

87. Music teaching has just been taken over by a part-time specialist who is in the process of using her expertise to revive music throughout the school. In the lessons observed, pupils were involved in rhythm work based on the class river topic and the rhythm of pupils' names and features of the river such as a waterfall. In this, pupils performance levels were appropriate and their singing confident and tuneful in hymn practice. She has also started a music club which gives pupils the opportunity to do recorder work and practice instrumental accompaniments for school events such as the harvest.

Physical Education

88. Despite having limited facilities >on site= for physical education, the school makes good provision for the subject and pupils levels of performance as evidenced by two lessons observed and the skills displayed informally on the playground are good. Pupils walk down the hill to the Village Hall for inside lessons, which during the inspection involved movement work and small apparatus work. Pupils performed with confidence and some skill and teachers showed good awareness of health and safety issues. A parent volunteer provided good support as an escort and in helping with apparatus. Pupils also walk up the hill to a field for games and athletics and swimming is a feature of the school with most pupils able to swim a mile when they leave and the annual harbour crossing a strong tradition.

92. Teaching

89. All teaching observed is at least satisfactory, and much was good in both key stages. Lessons are well prepared and cater well for the various age groups within each class with appropriately selected work to match the attainments and experience of pupils. However, higher attainers especially would benefit from more opportunities to have more say in the direction and methods to be used to extend their learning. Relationships and classroom management are good, and resources are used imaginatively to extend pupils= learning. In the better lessons, teachers, often specialists, have a very good knowledge of the subject and their expectations are particularly high. First hand experiences, such as a visit to

Truro museum and creative work with artists at National Trust properties, are well used to stimulate thinking and motivate the children.

Other provision

90. Clear policies and schemes of work provided by the local authority support each subject in this section with well thought-out cycles of work for the two key stages to ensure planned coverage of the various programmes of study. Teachers interpret these into sound medium term and weekly plans. However, the school has not yet developed a whole school framework of skills and techniques to identify expectations at each level to ensure progression and challenge in investigations and practical work. Teachers have imaginatively used elements of geography and history to provide relevant opportunities for work in art, design technology and music. Short term planning has appropriate and clear objectives for the many age groups, and subject coverage is monitored weekly by the head.

91. Assessment procedures are relatively undeveloped in many of these subjects though a start has been made and teachers are aware of pupils' attainments in each. Resources for each area are sufficient to enable teachers to meet their objectives except in indoor physical education, where the lack of large apparatus precludes some gymnastic activity. Each subject meets the requirements of the national curriculum.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

95. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

92. Three inspectors spent a total of seven days inspecting the work of the school. They made a total of 30 observations of lessons, or parts of lessons, or other work with pupils, over a total of 22 hours and 10 minutes. They scrutinised a complete sample of work of about 30 per cent of the pupils in the school, heard a similar number read and spoke to many more about their work. Inspectors held discussions with members of the teaching and non-teaching staff, and governors. All available school policies, registers and teachers' plans and records were examined, as were governors' minutes and reports to parents. A meeting attended by 9 parents was held to hear their views about the work of the school and 12 responded to a questionnaire

93. DATA AND INDICATORS

97. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	55	4	15	11

97. Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	3.26
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	16.9

97. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	53.5
Average class size:	18.3

97. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998-9
	£
Total Income	135819
Total Expenditure	136366
Expenditure per pupil	2392.39
Balance brought forward from previous year	670
Balance carried forward to next year	123

97. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 62

Number of questionnaires returned: 12

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	55	45			
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	46	46	9		
The school handles complaints from parents well		82	18		
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	9	82	9		
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	9	91			
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	27	64	9		
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	64	36			
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	18	73		9	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	18	82			
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	36	55		9	
My child(ren) like(s) school	46	46	9		

97. **Other issues raised by parents**

All parents spoken to were highly appreciative of the work of the school