

INSPECTION REPORT

St Stephen Churchtown Community School

St Stephen, St Austell

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111897

Headteacher: Mr. P. Gibbons

Reporting inspector: Heather Williams
22284

Dates of inspection: 4th – 8th June 2001

Inspection number: 192163

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and juniors

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Creakavose
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St Austell
Cornwall

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. M. Singleton

Date of previous inspection: 24th –27th February 1997

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22284	Heather Williams	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further?
9370	Ros Wingrove	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How does the school work in partnership with parents?
10053	Janet Simms	Team inspector	English Physical education Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities	
18116	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2919	Phillip Armitage	Team inspector	Science Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
12276	Terence Payne	Team inspector	Art and design History Geography Music	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Stephen Churchtown Community Primary School serves the village of St Stephen and surrounding communities. The school has 351 full-time pupils on roll and 53 children who attend the Nursery part-time. This is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school nationally. There has been substantial building work since the last inspection to accommodate the increase in numbers. The majority of pupils are white and are of United Kingdom heritage. Fourteen per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Approximately a quarter of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is in line with the national average, but eight per cent of the pupils have formal Statements of Educational Need, which is above the national average. No pupils have English as an additional language, which is very low compared with national figures. Pupils' attainment on entry is average and covers the full range of ability.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Stephen serves its community well. Although pupils arrive with average levels of ability there is a great deal of mobility in and out of the school. This mobility of pupils is a significant factor in the large percentage of pupils with formal Statements of Educational Needs. This high percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need influences the results in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 which are slightly below the national average. A high proportion of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. The school is well led; the headteacher, staff and governors share a commitment to raising standards. Although the school has above average income for the number of pupils on roll it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Behaviour is very good in classes and around the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Personal development and relationships are very good.
- The quality and range of learning activities provided are good.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.
- Educational priorities are supported very well through the school's financial planning.
- Leadership of the school is strong.
- The school environment is well cared for and well presented for teaching and learning.
- Overall teaching is good.

What could be improved

- Improve pupils' standards of spelling, handwriting and writing techniques
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching impacts upon attainment
- Improve attendance through effective monitoring procedures

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in February 1997 has been satisfactory. Attainment in music is satisfactory at each key stage and the attainment in information technology is now good at Key Stage 2. The development of the role of the co-ordinators to secure effective monitoring and evaluation of curriculum development is still in its infancy. A framework has been established in September 2000 to allow co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in the classes, but, as yet, the framework has not been systematically applied or developed sufficiently to have an impact on standards. The school's assessment policy is good for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and now informs planning. There is an improvement in provision of greater opportunities for pupils to become independent learners, but it is not consistent throughout the school. Children do some browsing of the Internet for specific topics, but they do not have a wide range of search strategies.

The school is addressing the needs of the higher-attaining pupils in English, mathematics, design and technology, religious education and physical education.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	C	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	C	D	D	
science	D	D	C	C	

Information given in the pre-inspection and contextual school indicator (PICS) showed the school as having standards well below the national average for English and mathematics and below for science in the 2000 Standardised Assessment Tests (SATs). The school's analysis of the tests showed that these results were caused by outside influences beyond the school's control. Data was provided by the school to prove that in last year's Year 6 there was a very high number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. Several of these pupils actually arrived in their final year of primary education so the school had no influence over their prior learning. As well as gaining pupils, the school lost some of its original pupils owing to parental mobility. These two factors had a devastating effect on the national tests results for Key Stage 2. If the ten pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need were omitted from the equation the results would be far more favourable. Published national data for the school shows pupils' attainment in 2000 in English at the end of Key Stage 2 to be comparable with their attainment in mathematics and below that in science. After considering all the data provided, it was the inspection team's decision, in the light of the convincing contextual evidence, that all grades should be raised. The above show results the effect of the inspection team's decision. The overall attainment shows that standards in English and mathematics are below the national average and, for science, standards are close to the national average. From the work seen during the inspection, findings show improvement in English and mathematics. For English, mathematics and science standards are broadly in line with the national average (C) by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are above the national average at the end of both key stages. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education are at the expected level for eleven-year-olds. In religious education, standards are very good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have a very good attitude to learning and to the school community. They contribute to, and take part in, a wide range of activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good both in class and around the school and is a strength.
Personal development and relationships	These are very good. Pupils take on roles or responsibility well when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Below average. Unauthorised absences have risen to exceed the national average

Pupils show a positive attitude to school and work. A strength of the school is their very good behaviour. Pupils move sensibly around the school. They are very polite and well mannered. For

example, they hold doors open to allow adults and others to pass through. At the end of an activity pupils use their initiative and clear away without waiting to be asked. An area highlighted in the last inspection that still needs developing is that of pupils taking responsibility for their own learning. Relationships are very good between adults and pupils as well as between peers. Older pupils are caring and protective of the younger children. There is a caring ethos within the school and children are not intimidated by others. Governors have agreed good anti-bullying and behaviour policies and the parents support the home/school agreement. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are very well supported and their progress and personal development are carefully monitored. Circle time in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 together with the personal, social and health education in Key Stage 2 help in teaching pupils how their actions affect others. Attendance figures have dropped to below the national average whilst the unauthorised absences have exceeded the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	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.

Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Eighty-nine per cent of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is good or very good and five per cent, excellent. In Key Stage 1 71 per cent is good or very good and in Key Stage 2 77 per cent of the lessons are good or very good. Teachers' planning is good and they prepare their lessons and resources well. They manage pupils' behaviour very well and have very good relationships with the pupils. Support staff are usually very well used, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to support pupils with special educational needs. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend pupils' learning. Their learning is supported by an inquisitive approach to their work, encouraged as they are by the enthusiastic teaching and positive encouragement.

There are no overall weaknesses in teaching, but there are a few individual examples of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes and subjects. When these occur they are most frequently related to weak subject knowledge or skills, slow pace or low expectations. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. Many aspects of literacy and numeracy are taught well, although the teaching of writing, spelling and writing techniques needs to be addressed. The information and communication technology suite has had a very good impact on the teaching of this subject over the whole school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Across the school the curriculum is good. It is broad, relevant and complies with statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The present arrangements for the use of the learning support teacher's time and for the members of the support staff's schedules are very good. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the full range of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school as provision is very good for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The school's approach is very successful, enabling pupils to become responsible future citizens, very well prepared to take their place in a multicultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a strength of the school. The school cares for all its pupils very well; it assesses their needs effectively and plans accordingly, monitoring their progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school's relationship with parents is very good. Parents support the home/school agreement. The parents' association raises a significant amount of money for the school.

For each curriculum subject standards are either satisfactory or good. Pupils' personal development is very well provided for within the curriculum. Planning is good and provides opportunities for pupils to develop academically, physically and aesthetically.

The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been successfully implemented and have had a positive impact upon the teaching of these subjects. Literacy skills are used well across the school although improvement is needed in handwriting, spelling and writing techniques. The school has identified this as a priority in the school development plan (SDP).

Links with the community and local businesses are very good. The school encourages visitors to come into school to talk to the children. The school has received sponsorship and donations to assist with specific projects.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership of the school is strong. The headteacher and the governors have a clear vision for the school. The governors are aware of the issues facing the school and they are well informed about aspects of school life. Governors provide strong support for the headteacher and members of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body works effectively and fulfils its responsibilities with commitment. There are a few minor omissions in the annual report to parents which are statutory requirements. Individual governors are well informed about the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school effectively evaluates and analyses the test results for the end of both key stages and the optional SATs for Years 3, 4, and 5.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of learning resources. The accommodation and grounds are used well. The school plans well in order to respond to the particular needs of pupils on the special educational needs register and the deployment of support staff is generally very good.

The aims of the school are clearly expressed and are reflected in its work. An extension to the building has had a positive impact on the school. Finances are managed well. The governors are forward thinking and meticulous in the way they plan for change. The school has consistently applied principles of best value. The school employs a sufficient number of teachers who have a satisfactory range of experience and expertise. The quality and range of resources to support teaching and learning are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The good teaching Being able to approach the school with questions or problems That their children like school That the behaviour is good in the school That the school expects their children to achieve their best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closer links with parents More information on their children are getting on Checking that the amount of work to be done at home isn't excessive. How the school is led and managed A better range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with all those aspects which please the parents. The arrangements for homework are generally satisfactory. The reports to parents do provide sufficient information about progress and future targets are discussed with parents at a Parents' Evening. Leadership is considered to be strong by the team and management is considered to be satisfactory. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities catering for a variety of tastes. The inspection team considers there are good links with the community and parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall standards achieved by pupils in national tests by the time they reach the end of both key stages are below the national average except in science where they are broadly in line. Over the last two years standards on entry into school have been broadly in line with national expectations. According to the data provided by the school, previous standards on entry to school at age five were below the national average, most noticeably in the areas of creative development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding. Fine motor skills have always been broadly in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in the 2000 tests in reading and writing were below the national average. However, in mathematics they were well above the national average, which was a dramatic improvement on the previous two years when, in 1998, the school was well below the national average and, in 1999, below the national average. Apart from mathematics, standards have deteriorated since the last inspection. Standards in comparison with similar schools were well below average for reading and below average for writing. For mathematics, standards were well above similar schools. At Key Stage 2, overall standards in English and mathematics were below the national average and close to the national average in science. In the national tests boys are performing less well than girls, with the margin greater than the national average in English and mathematics. The standards in Key Stage 2 are comparable to those at the time of the last inspection. Science is the only subject to have shown improvement. English and mathematics have fluctuated over the years. The overall trend for all core subjects is broadly in line with the national one.
2. Evidence from the inspection confirmed the overall average standards at Key Stages 1 and 2 for English and science, but slightly above average for mathematics at Key Stage 1 and close to the average for Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education are good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are above average at both key stages. All the other subjects are satisfactory at both key stages. The overall rate of achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory for most subjects. However, within Key Stage 2 in English the rate of progress is not consistent from one year group to the next. In Years 5 and 6 progress is greater owing to very good teaching in these year groups.
3. As a result of good and very good teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs of all types make good progress and their achievement is good. Those whose lower attainment in the 2000 SATs had a depressing influence on the school's overall results when compared with national averages, actually did well when judged against their previous attainment. Assessment evidence available demonstrates significant improvement in the achievement of pupils with special educational needs, as they move through the key stages, particularly in Key Stage 2, and, most noticeably, in the core subjects, where assessment is more rigorous.
4. The school is committed to raising standards further and has established procedures for analysing data by individual pupil, by group and by year cohort. Although this analysis is mainly done by the assessment co-ordinator, most teachers are aware of the findings and are provided with copies of the data. The school had set realistic

targets for 2001 for pupils in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics. They reflect the projected achievement of the current Year 6 but do not take account of any value the school may add to the pupils' attainment. However, with the school's new system of assessment they are expecting to have a better overview of the 'value-added' for each pupil. Targets are mainly set for groups of pupils although individual learning targets are increasingly being set for pupils to help increase the rate of learning and raise standards. In order to establish a dialogue between pupil and teacher as to what has been achieved and what is needed for future progress, pupils need to be encouraged to be actively involved in setting their own targets and to take more responsibility for their own learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. The pupils show a very positive attitude to their school and to the work that they do. Many parents commented that their children, from Nursery to Year 6, were very keen to come to school and would come in the holidays if they could. In class, the large majority of pupils show enthusiasm for the varied and interesting work they are given. In addition, the school offers many extra-curricular activities, such as gymnastics and dance clubs, sports and music groups as well as visits to places of interest and trips, such as the recent week in France for Key Stage 2 pupils. All of these activities are well supported and their value in the personal development of the pupils is considerable.
6. Very good behaviour is a major strength of the school. The last inspection team also found this to be the case. With very few exceptions, pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good, which enables classes to make good progress without interruption. Some corridors are quite narrow, but pupils moving between lessons and on their way to the hall do so sensibly and quietly, the younger ones generally in pairs holding hands or in single file. They wait to allow adults to pass and are keen to open doors for other people. They are responsible, polite and helpful to visitors and eager to perform tasks such as taking dinner registers to the secretary or preparing equipment for physical education lessons. It was noticeable how many children assisted with clearing up after lessons without being instructed to do so and they are careful with the school's property. The whole site is well cared for and there is not a scrap of litter anywhere. A criticism of the last report was that children were not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and there has not been much change in this respect, although Key Stage 2 pupils are learning research skills.
7. Relationships in the school are very good both between pupils and with their teachers. Older children are careful with and caring towards the younger ones and it is particularly noticeable in the Nursery how well and how quickly the children learn to be polite and to accept discipline because of the gentle introduction to school life that they receive. The lunchtime helpers and the support assistants also have excellent relationships with the children. One of the aims of the school is for pupils to "develop awareness of self and sensitivity to others" and the school is succeeding in achieving this aim.
8. The school has an ethos of good, caring behaviour, which means that children can safely work or play without fear of intimidation by others. The governors have agreed good anti-bullying and behaviour policies, and the home/school agreement has the support of parents. Boys and girls work and play well together, and pupils generally were seen to help one another when they worked in pairs or groups. Where problems have arisen in the past, they have usually involved pupils with behavioural

difficulties, but such children are well supported by all the staff and their progress and personal development are carefully monitored. They have the help and guidance of support assistants in as many lessons as possible so that they do not interfere with the learning of others. Where necessary, the local education authority's Behaviour Support Department gives help and advice.

9. Work done in circle time in the Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1, personal, social and health education lessons in Key Stage 2 and in assemblies makes children understand how their actions can affect others in good or bad ways. The school aims, by emphasising tolerance, fairness, justice and sympathy, to steer pupils towards good citizenship. Pupils have worked hard to raise money for a variety of charitable causes, including Children in Need, Christian Aid, Imperial Cancer Research and Blue Peter appeals, and speakers from the RSPCA and the RNLI have told the children about the good work that they do.
10. Attendance at the time of the last report was good, but recently attendance figures have dropped to below the national average, whilst the number of unauthorised absences has exceeded the national average. The school is aware that the latest figures show an improvement, but it is still putting more effort into bringing to the attention of parents the importance of having their children in school at all times so that they may enjoy and benefit from the wide and varied programme offered to them, thus enabling pupils to make very good progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is mainly good in all subjects with 78 per cent of lessons observed being good or very good and with one per cent being excellent. Teaching is satisfactory in 19 per cent and unsatisfactory in only two per cent of the lessons. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching. In the last report a tenth of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory and there was no excellent teaching.
12. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is good in 78 per cent of the lessons. Five per cent of the teaching is excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Mathematics is used in practically every area of the curriculum in the Nursery, whereas in the Reception class there is more formality and they follow the numeracy hour format. A wide variety of practical apparatus is provided to support children's mathematical learning and members of staff make good use of further opportunities during the day to reinforce what has been learned. Members of staff have a clear understanding of the needs of these young children and this is having a positive impact on all areas of their learning. Language is seen as very important in the Foundation Stage, especially as there are quite a few children with speech defects. Opportunities to talk are frequent and well constructed. At the 'St Stephen's Clinic' opportunity is given for the children to develop emergent writing in the form of making appointments and writing prescriptions. In the reception class the English lessons observed were more formal as they followed the literacy hour.
13. Teaching of English is good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, although there are variations in teachers' skills. Over half the teaching seen across the two key stages in English was good or very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons.

14. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy skills is good across both key stages. Lessons are well planned and managed, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are secure and they have integrated the National Numeracy Strategy well into their teaching.
15. The quality of teaching in science at both key stages is good. Teachers provide a good range of activities, which helps to maintain the pace of the lesson. Subject knowledge is good and teachers are able to give an informative introduction that ensures pupils' interest and motivation.
16. In Key Stage 1, the good teaching helps to motivate and ensures that pupils who could become distracted are always involved in their lessons. It ensures that it consolidates the effective teaching that children receive right from the beginning of their education and results in the pupils learning effectively and making at least satisfactory progress by the time they are seven.
17. In Key Stage 2, teaching overall is good. In Years 5 and 6 it is usually very good. Here the work is very well targeted and there is a good pace to the lessons. There is good knowledge of the subject matter and the structure of the lessons is very good. In one English lesson the teacher made very good use of local Celtic/Roman background and wove this knowledge into well-focused objectives. The lesson was then linked excellently to the rest of the week's work. A Year 6 lesson was prepared and introduced very well, with good forward and backward referencing to previous work and work to be covered. This reinforced learning and gave pupils an insight into where the series of lessons was leading. In this lesson, plans were detailed and showed that each level of attainment was being targeted. The resources were extremely well prepared so that all groups moved along at a good pace.
18. Teaching is generally good because teachers plan lessons appropriately, maintain a productive and purposeful ethos and manage behaviour very well. Also, they use a good range of interesting materials and largely structure lessons to make best use of time, resources and accommodation. Teachers patently enjoy being with the pupils, and vice-versa.
19. Where lessons are satisfactory there is a lack of rigour to extend the pupils. Time is not always spent effectively and pace is not maintained throughout the lesson. When pupils are reading from the 'big book' there is a lack of enthusiasm that fails to lift it from being mundane. Questioning is insufficiently targeted to extend the pupils that little bit further. Where lessons are unsatisfactory the teachers do not have sufficient skills to extend pupils' learning or even correct mistakes the pupils make. This was apparent in a music lesson where the teacher appeared not to think about how pupils learnt to sing songs and tried to teach the class a song by repeatedly singing the whole of the song instead of going over it by phrase at line. Objectives are not made sufficiently clear and the pupils are confused about what they should be doing. Pupils are not fully focused and waste time. Expectations for the lessons are too low and the lessons lack drive and energy.
20. There is very good teaching of pupils with Special Educational Needs, enabling these pupils to achieve their potential and often exceed standards which might be expected. This success is achieved by the staff having very good awareness of the particular needs of the pupils within their own class, which leads to well-planned and well-differentiated work for them in most subjects. The school annually reviews the use of the special learning support teacher's time in the curriculum. This ensures that

the teacher is used to the best advantage. For example, in Years 5 and 6, a highly effective literacy hour, taught by the specialist in her room, led to very good learning at an appropriate level. In Years 3 and 4 the present arrangements for mixed-aged classes are supplemented in the literacy hour by the use of the learning support teacher as an additional class teacher on most days. This reduces the number in each group and allows each pupil to have more teacher input. In addition to these approaches, the learning support teacher, ably supported by ancillary members of staff who are suitably trained for such teaching, has good on-to-one sessions with individual pupils, either for specific difficulties such as dyslexia, or for general learning support, for example reading recovery. Across all these examples, teaching seen was good or very good, leading to good progress across all subjects and very good progress in the pupils' literacy and numeracy.

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

21. The curriculum across the school is good overall: it is broad, relevant and complies with statutory requirements. Standards attained are generally satisfactory to good across the curriculum. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and the curriculum planning is good. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop academically, physically and aesthetically, as well as in social skills.
22. There are policies in place for all subjects, although some are due to be updated in the near future. There are recently introduced schemes of work for all subjects. The quality of teachers' planning derived from these is good. Work is planned to fit well with pupils' abilities and has good continuity. Some examples were noted of higher-attaining pupils being well challenged.
23. The learning support teacher and assistants are well used to support individuals and groups. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs have equal access to the full range of the curriculum, with maximum opportunities for pupils to benefit from the expertise of specialists. The class teachers have well-organised plans to provide a different level of work, mainly in English, mathematics and science, to challenge and stretch lower attaining pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs, at a level appropriate to their needs. However, further differentiation is needed in some of the other subjects. For children at the other end of the spectrum there were examples of higher-attaining pupils being well challenged, but this was not consistent across the school. There was no significant difference in opportunities offered to boys and girls.
24. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced, and the arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are generally successful. These are now having an impact on developing skills in both of these areas. Literacy skills are used well across the whole curriculum, but handwriting, spelling skills and writing techniques are unsatisfactory, mainly in Key Stage 2. The school has recently organised its information and communication technology facilities into a computer room, as well as having computers in all classes. Being able to teach computer skills to a whole class is having a positive impact on standards in this area and on those in other subjects.
25. There are policies in place to cover areas such as bullying, child protection, and sex education. A policy for drugs education has been drafted and drugs education related activities are taking place in classes. There is good provision for discussions

about such things as bullying, through assemblies, circle time and the programme of personal, social and health education. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, including groups or clubs for cricket, football, choir, recorders, netball, dance, computers, French and Fox (environmental). Homework is set across the school and ranges from the younger children taking home reading books, to work extending English, mathematics and science (the core subjects) in Key Stage 2.

26. Links with the local community are very good. The school has a large number of visitors who come in to school to speak to the children on a wide range of issues. One such recent visitor was the coxswain of the Padstow lifeboat. The school has created its own environmental area and worthwhile educational visits are made to places locally and further afield. There are good links with business and industry, including sponsorship and gifts of money to aid specific projects. The school has had help with providing sports equipment and also with computers for the computer suite. There are good links with organisations such as the Fire and Police Services. The school is a member of a cluster of seven primary schools, which feed into the local secondary school and provide local support.
27. The effective provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Since the last inspection, provision in this area has improved from being sound to being very good overall. All statutory requirements in this area are met.
28. The school provides well for the spiritual development of its pupils. The school assemblies are primarily Christian in emphasis and provide moments of wonder stimulated by high quality performances. Teachers leading the assemblies promote participation by the pupils and these events are enjoyed. Visitors come in to the school to talk to the pupils about their ways of life. In one assembly, led by children in Year 6, aspects of their work in literacy were exhibited in a very good dramatic presentation. In another assembly, a visiting speaker held the whole school entranced by telling the story of Bartimeus. Achievement is celebrated in assemblies. Religious diversity is celebrated in quality displays on Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism in addition to Christianity, as well as through the effective teaching of religious education across the school. Festivals such as Diwali are celebrated in addition to those on the Christian calendar. Visits are also made to places of worship such as the local church and chapel and Truro Cathedral.
29. Pupils in the school have a very well developed moral sense. Few examples of bad behaviour were seen during the inspection and teachers provided good role models for their pupils. Where children had Special Educational Needs which affected their ability to behave well, they were well monitored and supported by the teachers and classroom assistants, to avoid potentially difficult situations. Good behaviour was acknowledged, with praise, team points and other rewards. Issues of bad behaviour were discussed in assemblies and in circle time. Behaviour was good out of class, with the atmosphere in the dining hall being pleasant and friendly. Behaviour in the playgrounds was generally very good. Action was taken to defuse potentially difficult situations before they happened, for example by the provision of boxes of games equipment for use at lunch times.
30. The quality of social development is very good across the school. Pupils care for each other, work well together and are happy to take responsibility. Behaviour in the playground was appropriate, with children playing together well. Lunchtime supervisory assistants and other ancillary staff care for the children well, and deal with them in a positive manner. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very

good. The children respect and like their teachers. The teachers provide a high level of care. In one case, a teacher dealt effectively and immediately with a distressed child as she was entering assembly, taking her aside to console and comfort her.

31. The cultural development of pupils in the school is very good. They are particularly aware of their Cornish heritage and celebrate it with displays, visiting speakers, outings and through participating in traditional festivals. They have also produced their own version of a Cornish newspaper. One visiting teacher taught the children some Cornish phrases. Although not a multi-cultural area, other cultures are celebrated effectively in displays and teaching. This is demonstrated in the variety of display materials around the school, including quality artefacts and photographs of other countries such as India and Greece. Music is used effectively in assemblies for promoting listening skills. At the time of the inspection, the music of Bach was being used. Years 5 and 6 pupils have the benefit of a residential visit to a centre in France, where they are able to enjoy a wide range of activities in a contrasting cultural context.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Teachers and all other adults in the school take great care of the pupils in their charge. The children feel safe in school and know that they can talk to any member of staff if they have a problem. Children with Special Educational Needs come to St. Stephen because their parents know that the school will do its very best for such children. These parents are involved in the preparation of their child's Individual Education Plan and, in Year 6, Special Educational Needs reviews may be attended by the Special Educational Needs teacher from the secondary school, so helping the child's transition from the primary to the secondary school. The Special Educational Needs policy has been updated this year. The school works closely with the local education authority's behaviour support team and with the school nurse. The school nurse has not been involved in sex education at St. Stephen. The members of the teaching staff have undertaken this.
33. Caring teachers and support assistants introduce children to school life in the well-equipped Nursery where, in a short space of time, they accept the routines and feel part of the school. Pupils know the school rules and do not endanger others. If a pupil has a tumble in the playground, others rush to inform a member of staff or take the injured child into school for medical attention. If a child cries for any reason, numerous others will want to help or get a member of staff to investigate.
34. Attendance is being addressed and some improvements can be seen and the school is making sure that these are maintained. Lateness is not a problem although it is necessary for the school to make sure that lessons begin on time and take their allotted space in the day's timetable. Behaviour in the school is very good and there are up-to-date policies covering bullying and behaviour. Any incident that involves anti-social behaviour is dealt with very promptly and, if necessary, parents are contacted and invited into school to discuss remedies. The staff handbooks contain good advice to teachers, supply teachers and support assistants on how to deal with any accident or incident.
35. Assessment was identified in the previous inspection as an area for development. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in this area. Assessment in the core subjects is good, but the present system has only been introduced since September 2000 for English and mathematics and September 1999

for science. The impact of these assessments has not had time to permeate all of the teaching. Teachers have a good overview now of what each pupil can and cannot do. A well-defined structure is in place to track progress in learning in the core subjects. Optional tests for pupils in Years 3, 4, and 5 are used. The results of these tests help the teachers to monitor pupils' progress. Pupils have individual targets in English and mathematics, to which some teachers refer when they are marking pupils' books. There is a good system devised for analysing standardised tests to guide planning and the school has planned to use a commercial software program to develop practice further. Subject co-ordinators monitor books, but, in subjects such as history and geography, there is a great difference in output and standards of work between classes within the same age band, which has not been identified.

36. In the last inspection report, an identified issue was the development of the role of the subject co-ordinator to secure effective monitoring and evaluation of curriculum development. Since the last inspection, the school has put into place procedures for a day's release of the co-ordinators on a rota basis so they can work alongside colleagues and support them where necessary. Again this is a new initiative started in September 2000. It has not had any impact, as very few co-ordinators have actually received release time and not all subjects have been covered. The school documentation shows that ten members of staff have actually received cover in order to monitor their subject. Of the ten occasions when release time was available, only two resulted in members of staff visiting classrooms and watching teaching and learning. The procedures are in place, but this is still an area that needs development and monitoring to ensure that teaching and learning are being monitored by the co-ordinators in the classroom.
37. The school has a Health and Safety policy; a designated member of staff and governor are responsible for regular checking and risk assessment. Child protection matters are dealt with by the deputy headteacher, who has been specially trained, and all members of staff know that they must be alert for any sign of physical abuse amongst the children. The school works with other agencies, such as Social Services, if this is necessary. The local police are frequent visitors to the school to establish relationships with the pupils and alert pupils to the dangers of the wider world.
38. Since 1998, the school has been included in a cluster arrangement with a number of primary schools and Brannel Comprehensive School. This co-operation has included joint in-service training for teachers and sessions to help and advise governors in the complexity of their tasks. The schools in this part of the county find that they have much in common and so they have combined to promote greater expectations amongst their pupils and in the families of those pupils. Standards are being raised in teaching and learning, resources are used more effectively and the school development plan indicates very clear targets over a period of ten years.
39. There are satisfactory records of the children's personal development as well as their academic assessments and attendance, which are being updated and improved. In future each child is to have a record of achievement and compilation of these has begun.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school's relationship with parents is very good. It is fortunate in the degree to which parents support and promote it. At the parents' meeting, in individual discussions and in the responses to the questionnaire, criticisms were minimal and

the large majority of parents gave their whole-hearted support to the way their children are taught and to the school's discipline. The parents' association raises large sums of money every year through a variety of events and has purchased, among other things, a television, video player, chairs for the computer suite, computers and improvements for the nursery.

41. Parents of pupils who have moved to secondary education report that their children have subsequently done well and those with children with Special Educational Needs are particularly grateful for what St. Stephen has done to support and guide their children. The school welcomes parents to discuss problems or progress at any convenient time and they are often invited to see the pupils' work or attend class assemblies. During the inspection, children in Year 1 invited their families to visit the environmental area of the school field. The visit was a great success and children were able to use a plan to show their parents different features such as the pond and the hide-away. An unexpected highlight of the afternoon was when a newly emerged dragonfly stretched and dried its wings showing its delicate colours. The pupils were fascinated.
42. A recent innovation was the computer course for parents, which was held in school with help from St. Austell College. Parents found these classes extremely worthwhile and they have helped them keep pace with their children and led to some taking college courses.
43. Most parents feel that the amount of information they receive is adequate and the content of the information is very good. It takes the form of newsletters, school meal menus, topics to be studied and letters about events. During the spring term, parents receive an interim report on their child's progress. End-of-year reports have recently been improved and now quantify attainment at National Curriculum levels and effort, as well as giving details of progress in various subjects. The Annual Report of the Governors and the School Prospectus, however, do not give all the information required by statute.
44. Children read to their parents at home and have reading diaries to record details of the books they read. The majority of parents feel that the amount of homework set is about right. A home/school agreement is now in place as a result of consultations. Many parents come into school and help in classrooms or with extra-curricular activities. They can observe lessons by arrangement and are offered curriculum evenings as well as meetings with the class teachers.
45. Parents value the broad and balanced curriculum offered by St. Stephen School.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Leadership of the school is strong. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision of both the issues facing the school and of its potential and they work closely with the staff to the benefit of the pupils. Recent changes undertaken, which improve the running of the school, include a sensitively handled turnover of almost one-third of the teaching force. The governors have also reorganised the cycle of their sub-committee meetings so that they now better inform the full governing body and do so in time for decisions to be made over allocation of funds. Overall management of the school is satisfactory, with useful frameworks and policies for action in place, but features of these, most notably the subject co-ordinators' monitoring of lessons and the consequent sharing of good practice, are underdeveloped.

47. The governing body is well informed about all aspects of the life of the school. Governors provide strong support to the headteacher and staff and play a significant role in monitoring key aspects, such as when the Chairman of Governors visited information and communication technology (ICT) lessons and formally reported back to the governing body. They have set performance targets for the headteacher without outside help. They monitor the school development plan (SDP) and ensure that financial planning is closely linked to it. The school development plan and its associated audits and action plans provide very clear priorities for improvement. For example, the school is aware of the need to improve the quality of handwriting throughout the school and has made plans to do so. Each of the key targets of the school development plan is matched with good success criteria as well as cost estimates. In this documentation, the school has created a very effective means of monitoring and evaluating its performance with regard to whole-school issues. The statement of school aims is realistic and very specific. The governors, in monitoring the work of the school, ensure that these aims, as well as more specific policies, provide a coherent set of principles within which the school can function effectively.
48. Finances are managed very well. The governors are forward looking and meticulous in the way they plan for changes in the school, taking advice from a range of sources and ensuring that the principle of best value is applied consistently. Day-to-day administration is very good and supports the smooth running of the school and the efficient office staff provide the headteacher with effective support.
49. The school's accommodation is very good. Since the last inspection, an additional block of rooms has been provided and the school now has adequate space for all of its needs and can provide the locality with accommodation for a playgroup. The school site is generous and includes playing fields, separate hard-surface areas for infants and juniors and an environment zone. It is, however, underdeveloped as a structured play area. The whole site is very well maintained and provides a pleasant, welcoming environment that contributes very effectively to the school's ethos for learning.
50. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are well matched to the needs of the school and the demands of the curriculum. The induction programme for new staff and newly qualified teachers is good: each is mentored by another teacher and given appropriate documentation. Support staff make a positive in-class contribution to pupils' learning. The arrangements for the professional development of all staff are good. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are embedded in the work of the school and training in ICT is ongoing. The staff development co-ordinator monitors course uptake and staff needs on a termly basis and uses this knowledge to make an important contribution to the school development plan. Support staff, including lunchtime supervisors, have received in-school behaviour management training and this has contributed to the calm atmosphere of the school.
51. Job descriptions of staff are not kept up to date. Several do not detail individuals' roles and responsibilities as subject co-ordinators.
52. The quality and quantity of resources are generally good and this enables the teachers to extend the pupils' learning experiences. There has been a significant improvement of resources in ICT with a centrally based suite of machines and one machine in each classroom. No subject has teaching which is curtailed by lack of

facilities or resources. The library, which was part of the recent building programme, has an adequate stock of fiction and non-fiction material, and pupils generally make good use of it, as the nearest public library is in St Austell.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to continue to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Continue to improve the pupils' standards of spelling, handwriting and writing techniques;
(paragraphs 24, 47, 79, 80, 82, 105 and 109)
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching impacts upon attainment;
(paragraphs 35, 36, 46, 82, 108, 111 and 121)
- Improve attendance through more effective monitoring procedures;
(paragraphs 10 and 34)

Other weaknesses, not included in the issues for action, but which need consideration by the school

- to improve the sharing amongst staff of good practice in investigative work to introduce;
(paragraphs 23, 36 and 46)
- to introduce effective assessment strategies for all subjects.
(paragraphs 35, 99, 108, 111 and 121)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	97
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	22	56	19	2	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	351
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	77

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	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	26	19	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	25
	Girls	17	18	19
	Total	36	39	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (76)	87 (74)	98 (77)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	24	25
	Girls	17	18	16
	Total	37	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (74)	93 (79)	91 (74)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	35	32	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	19	24
	Girls	25	23	31
	Total	43	42	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (78)	63 (70)	82 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	25
	Girls	29	27	30
	Total	48	49	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (68)	73 (65)	82 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	351
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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	7	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9:1
Average class size	27.6

Education support staff: YN– Y6

Total number of education support staff	18.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	298

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.0

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	26:2
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	686030
Total expenditure	694036
Expenditure per pupil	1939
Balance brought forward from previous year	46006
Balance carried forward to next year	38000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	404
Number of questionnaires returned	111

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	42	3	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	49	46	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	54	6	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	59	13	2	1
The teaching is good.	44	52	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	48	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	31	9	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	36	47	14	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	41	41	12	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	51	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	46	11	0	4

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

54. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage has been well sustained since the previous inspection. Both the Nursery and the Reception class are well organised. The overall good teaching, with some very good features is having a positive impact upon children's learning and getting them off to a secure start in their early years.
55. Nearly all children begin at the Nursery with well-developed skills in personal, social and emotional development. Speaking and listening and understanding of mathematics are not so well developed. These skills are particularly well targeted in the Nursery as a result of the effective assessment of children's needs that are made in the initial weeks in the Nursery. The assessments are then confirmed by the informal assessment conducted throughout the Nursery and the initial formal assessment conducted with the children in the Reception class. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, the majority of the children achieve well. They are well on their way to achieving the Early Learning Goals in all areas of development. This good progress is due to the good teaching in all areas of learning.
56. All Nursery children attend part-time, with the morning session being allocated to the oldest children and the afternoon to the youngest children. Children transfer to the Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. Fifty-two children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. Of the 31 children in the mixed reception and Year 1 class 12 are Reception aged and have attended the Nursery.

Personal, social and emotional development

57. Children have the ability to make good relationships and are very confident in conversing with both their peers and with adults. They are developing knowledge of what is right and wrong and have some idea of the consequences of their actions. Children plan which activities they wish to do and explain what they want to achieve. Generally, children are enthusiastic about their learning: for example, when they are looking at different bones or when painting the skeleton. Children talk happily to each other as they take part in activities and co-operate well as they play. They respond well to whole-group discussions. They are confident in the knowledge of routines in the classrooms and around the school. When starting tasks they are able to find their own resources, such as scissors.
58. Adults provide good role models at all times, and this encourages children to show respect for one another and develop tolerant attitudes. Adults treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. Members of staff build good relationships with the parents and this has a positive impact upon the children's view of one another and their learning.
59. Nearly all the children enter the Nursery with at least average personal, social and emotional development. By the time they leave the Reception class they have reached the Early Learning Goals in this area of their development and a large number will have surpassed them. This confirms the good achievement and the skilful teaching that has taken place in the Nursery, Reception and Reception/Year 1 classes.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Both Nursery and Reception children listen carefully to instructions. They enjoy sharing books with adults. Adults also pay the compliment of being good listeners to children. This important role model encourages children to converse freely with adults. Where the child might answer a question with one word, the adult, by good use of questioning, will make every effort to encourage the child to extend the answer. This gives a clear indication to children that their answers are being valued but that more is expected.
61. By the time that the children are at the end of the Reception year, the majority achieves the Early Learning Goals because the adults working with them have given them a large number of chances of talking in a variety of situations. For example, in the Nursery class one boy, whilst making a model aeroplane, stated he had flown. The teacher immediately followed this up with questions about where he went and asked him to explain about his experience of flying. On another occasion a skeleton on display and the x-rays taped to the windows stimulated the children. From talking about these, the teacher skilfully led on to the children talking about the times when they had received cuts and grazes and they compared differences and similarities. In the Nursery there were several children with speech problems. These children had no inhibitions and spoke quite freely and confidently to any adult.
62. Children fairly new to the Reception class could recognise and use initial sounds to find pictures that began with the same sound. On one occasion the younger children in the Reception class were asked to colour pictures that began with the letter 'm'. One boy actually coloured in a radio and, when asked why, he explained that there were musical notes written by the side of the radio so that meant there was music coming from the radio so he had coloured it as music began with the letter 'm'. The older children in the Reception class could find the correct words for their shopping lists from those displayed on the board by spelling out the words phonetically. The children in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class were able to write their own sentences using words displayed on the notice board and the whiteboards.
63. Teachers make good use of resources and ensure that every opportunity that these resources might open up is used to encourage development in communication, language and literature.

Mathematical development

64. Children come into school with an average understanding in this area. At the end of the Foundation Stage children have made good progress and the majority will have reached and surpassed the Early Learning Goals for mathematics. Children in the Nursery can count up to 24 in unison and are able to place numerals in the correct spaces up to ten. In the Reception class pupils can use the terms 'bigger than' and 'less than' accurately. Children in the Reception /Year 1 class can create tessellated patterns with coloured bricks and can recognise the shapes such as circle, triangle, hexagon and rectangle.
65. Teachers give the children plenty of practical mathematical experiences and incorporate number and counting in cross-curricular activities. When the children were testing the water resilience of their coats in the Nursery, they had to state the number of the jam jar they thought had the most resilient material stretched over the opening. In singing they sang number games such as a 'Sausage' song. Children in

the Nursery use a variety of materials such as beads, pegs and boards and mosaics to develop their counting. They sort and match on a one-to-one basis.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Children build on their basic general knowledge extensively in the Nursery. Their knowledge base is quickly developed by the practical activities in which they all become involved. Planning of activities and the teachers' careful recording of outcomes ensure that all areas of experience are being appropriately covered. For science, the teachers use Barnaby Bear, which is linked to the geography to introduce such activities as water-resistant materials. The children are trying to find a suitable material to make Barnaby Bear a waterproof hat for when he is out walking. Accurate language is used at all times by adults when they are talking with children, which further supports and reinforces communication, language and literacy skills. After completing their investigations into the properties of materials, they could say which materials would be suitable for a waterproof hat for Barnaby Bear.
67. The children use the computer to help them dress a teddy and match the appropriate clothes. The lower-attaining group is able to do this confidently with sustained concentration. The majority of the pupils are able to control a 'mouse' and create pictures independently, but, when they do have any difficulty, they are well supported by a member of staff.
68. In the Nursery, Reception and Reception/Year1 classes children can use tools such as scissors safely and confidently. When using a glue spatula, one Nursery child managed to control the glue dribbling very expertly and ensured that excess glue was removed from the spatula. In the Reception class children were able to spread their tomato paste onto their rolls and only a few failed to use the correct edge of the blade.
69. Children in the Reception class used a rotational approach to activities. One group designed a lunch box, another group did tasting activities and another smelling activities. The tasting and smelling activities lent themselves to the support of speaking and listening. They could explain what they had smelt and tasted and, through good adult intervention, this led to stimulating discussion about taste and smell.
70. In the role play area, 'St Stephen's Clinic', the children knew that babies were taken to the clinic to be weighed and every time a child came to the 'clinic' the 'doctor' immediately placed the baby on the scales and wrote down a number to represent the baby's weight. They were also aware that doctors gave out prescriptions to make people better, but they didn't know they were called 'prescriptions'. The children pretending to be the doctor knew that the stethoscope was used to test the chest area and that the syringe was to give injections, although they were not aware which part of the body is usually used for injections and were inclined to inject the dolls in the stomach or chest.
71. The Reception children in the Reception/Year1 class were able to discuss their visit to the local park and say how they would like to see it improved. They were able to suggest ways in which they could bring their opinions to the local councillors. This work offered opportunities for discussions and free writing, which the Reception children coped with very well.

Physical development

72. The children make good progress in developing their physical skills in the Nursery class. Teachers and support staff plan for these activities with as much care as for all other areas of learning. The children have an area just outside their classroom where they can use tricycles, scooters and bicycles. They also have a climbing frame and a roundabout. Some of the tricycles have an area where another child can sit or stand. Children take it in turns to use different apparatus in a very mature manner. Children are given the opportunity to learn to roll, balance and climb under and over things. They use the space around them with agility, whilst paying care and attention to the needs of others. The Reception children only occasionally have the opportunity to share the Nursery's facilities. Instead they use the hall for physical education lessons and the field for games. There was no opportunity to observe the Reception children's physical education lessons.

Creative development

73. Children in the Nursery enjoy art and music and make good progress in both. In singing they sing songs that are related to their topic, such as 'Dr. Dolly' 'One finger, one thumb' etc. They sing these songs in tune and with enjoyment. The teacher, who sings very well unaccompanied, provides a good model for the children. The music lesson observed, where the children were learning about instruments, was excellent. The children were engrossed and excellently behaved. They were able to respond to instructions and they used the instruments sensibly. Children listened to others and waited their turn in a very mature manner. Children showed full control in creating and performing music.
74. In the Reception class a very good music lesson was observed where the children played percussive instruments. Again, there was obvious delight and the children, for the majority of the lesson, listened eagerly and followed instructions. They were able to follow hand signals to alter dynamics and to know when to come in and when to stop playing. The instruments were handled with care and, when asked to pack away, the children gently placed them in their correct boxes.
75. The artwork on display around the Reception is of a good quality and shows care and attention. In the scrutiny of work there were some delightful drawing and paintings. There was an effective painting of a daffodil that showed very good detailed observation and care.
76. Teachers give the children the opportunity to explore ideas and experiences. There is a very good mix of teacher-directed activities and opportunity for free expression. Teachers are able to judge when intervention is necessary and when it would be intrusive. Good quality resources are provided, including a wide range of musical instruments that reflect other cultures.

ENGLISH

77. In 2000, pupils' attainment in statutory national reading and writing tests (SATs) at the age of seven fell below the national average for both boys and girls. Taking the last three years together, boys' performance was below that of girls, but both were below average. Overall, pupils' attainment in English was well below their attainment in mathematics, particularly amongst boys. These results were also below those in similar schools. Pupils' performance in SATs at the age of 11 in 2000 showed pupils' attainment to be well below the national average and well below attainment in similar schools. The main reason for this was because Year 6 included an unusually high proportion of pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. This was compounded by a very high proportion of pupils who entered the school during the key stage, many of them only weeks or months before the tests and many of whom were very low-attaining pupils. The effect of this was, naturally, to skew final attainment downwards. In 1999, Key Stage 2 SATs in English showed pupils' attainment in line with the national average. Published national data for the school shows pupils' attainment in 2000 in English at the age of 11 to be comparable with their attainment in mathematics and below that in science. The inspection team judged that these grades should all be raised in the light of convincing contextual evidence.
78. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' current attainment overall in the range of English skills at the end of Year 2 matches the national expectation. The span of pupils' attainment is wide, with, again, a high number of seven-year-olds identified as having learning difficulties, which affect their standards in English. Other, abler pupils have good skills. The same picture emerges at the end of Year 6, where pupils' overall attainment is broadly in line with expectations, but includes the balance of stronger and weaker features outlined below.
79. The National Literacy Strategy is now fully embedded in all years in the school. At both key stages, planning to cover all elements and skills in literacy lessons provides a good, flexibly operated framework to ensure that pupils experience aspects of reading, writing, spelling, grammar, comprehension and other work required. This ensures that all aspects of pupils' English work is contextualised meaningfully, thus avoiding the danger described in the last report, of pupils not understanding the relationships between individual worksheets. By the end of Year 2, pupils have therefore developed a satisfactory level of competence with phonics, can recognise the shape and sounds of appropriate words and can use a satisfactory range of vocabulary. Pupils read and understand an appropriate range of fiction and non-fiction texts and write their own compositions to a satisfactory level, using knowledge and understanding acquired in other aspects of their literacy lessons. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the good quality one-to-one or small-group sessions they receive with the learning support teacher or with ancillary learning support assistants. This ensures that, whilst their attainment remains low, achievement is often very good given their ability, with progress clearly identified in assessment of their skills. Emerging strengths in pupils' English work, by Year 2, are seen in their oral skills, where some higher-attaining pupils are articulate, and some pupils understand and use a good range of vocabulary, such as "industrious" and "devoured" as seen in a Year 2 lesson. They can also read together very well in the plenary sessions. For example, a Year 2 class read a poem very clearly and with good pronunciation. Weaknesses are evident in pupils' spelling, which is often inaccurate, despite the school's identification of the need to improve this and elements of teaching being planned to redress it. The mechanics and pupils'

application of the motor-skills required for well-formed handwriting are also much weaker than average by the end of the key stage. Many pupils have developed poor habits in their writing, which hinder the fluency and neatness of their work at this stage and later, and which often go uncorrected.

80. Pupils' skills are thus satisfactory overall when they move into Key Stage 2, but include these residual weaknesses in spelling and handwriting, exacerbated in some cases by unsatisfactory punctuation. Their knowledge of the structure of the language: parts of speech, functions of words, phrases, clauses and so on, in sentences is satisfactory and in some pupils, good. By the end of Year 4, however, when handwriting should no longer be an issue, many pupils still have uneven script and badly formed letters, with handwriting in some books showing regression across time. This does not apply only to lower-attaining pupils. In some cases, children identified by the school as higher-attaining pupils cannot produce consistent, even script, even when they are specifically engaged in handwriting lessons. Where it appears better, when these pupils are observed, their handwriting is often scripted upside-down, with pupils forming letters from the bottom up. These and other unsatisfactory habits prevent pupils developing the degree of fluent script required to get their often very good, imaginative thoughts down on paper fast enough. This was especially evident in left-handed pupils, and amongst boys. Some higher-and middle-attaining pupils also still retain unexpected errors, such as using a lower case "i" as a pronoun or not using capitals for proper nouns.
81. By the end of Year 6, however, despite the retention of some of the weaknesses described above, most pupils' attainment in English matches the expected range of levels. Some very high-attaining pupils in Year 6 read very fluently and articulately, with excellent expression and comprehension. Their writing is often also very good, including a wide, interesting range of vocabulary and good, complex sentence structure, well written for a range of different audiences and purposes. Free verse, written about a locally orientated, sea-based project in Year 6 included some very good examples of high quality creative writing. This project also demonstrated very good links across the curriculum as much of the stimulus for the writing came from a science project. Creative discussion about "Black Beauty" in a Year 5 lesson showed pupils able to discuss the idea of empathy in written text competently and with good understanding. Lessons for Year 5/6 classes are very helpfully organised to enable all pupils to achieve maximum benefit from their literacy hour time, as a group of lower-attaining pupils have a separate literacy hour with the learning support teacher. Naturally, attainment in this class is low, but the progress they made in the lessons seen was very good. Pupils with special educational needs, both in this group and when integrated into whole classes, achieve well or very well compared with their abilities. Higher-attaining pupils are well identified and classes well organised to give them maximum opportunity to achieve the higher levels of which they are capable. The balance in the current Year 6 classes between pupils with special educational needs and those able to attain higher levels is more equal than in 2000.
82. Teaching of English is good overall. It is always satisfactory at Key Stage 1, with most teaching good. In Key Stage 2 English teaching includes some very good practice in Years 5 and 6. The National Literacy Strategy has had a profound effect on the teaching of English and teachers now structure their lessons confidently around the literacy hour. They use a much more appropriate, modern range of resources than reported in 1997. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the basic structures of the language are good and they prepare lessons well so that pupils will develop their own skills and understanding of vocabulary and grammar usage. They have also

adapted the National Literacy Strategy skilfully, with some very well-chosen text work, for example, which reflects their own interests and expertise. Plenaries are well managed, with subsequent group work well planned to match the needs of pupils of different abilities. Teachers manage these literacy sessions effectively, so that pupils remain interested and engaged throughout the hour-long lessons. Most provide pupils with a good level of encouragement, which builds their confidence, so that pupils come to believe that they can use vocabulary, and structure appropriately themselves. Many literacy hours observed showed pupils actively engaging their imaginations in creative oral or written work, confidently participating in question and answer sessions and plenaries, and developing a good degree of enjoyment in their use of language. Although the school plans to extend the range of reading materials, books are appropriate and teachers use them well to promote good reading habits. Pupils of all abilities are very enthusiastic about reading and generally enjoy it. Teachers need to ensure that the reading diaries pupils keep are up to date, signed properly and provide a sensible record of pupils' real progress in reading. At present, too many of these documents show that pupils have not been heard reading by an adult in school for some months. The school has put this home/school reading record system in place as mentioned in the last report, but is not yet using it as part of a rigorous assessment procedure to help to track pupils' progress. Teachers' records of pupils' attainment levels, for example related to their reading ages or to levels of the National Curriculum, are good and accurate. They now need to use this existing wealth of data to demonstrate more clearly and simply the "value added" dimension related to pupils' progress and achievements across each year, and across the key stage. Teachers are aware of, and plan lessons to redress, the acknowledged weaknesses in pupils' writing, particularly handwriting, and spelling. Many methods of teaching these were seen. Spellings, for example are displayed on walls and referred to. This teaching is not fully effective, though, as pupils' learning and consistent application of these aspects is much less secure, leading to the weaknesses described above. This mismatch needs to be explored and resolved.

83. The English co-ordinator was absent during the week of inspection, but all evidence suggests that the management of the subject is good. Documentation is abundant and members of staff have had appropriate training for the literacy hour. Assessment information is well documented. Although standards appear to have fallen since the last report, contextual factors explain this. Other aspects criticised have shown improvement. For example, pupils now use information and communications technology much better as a tool for learning and practising aspects of English such as spelling and grammar, as seen with a Year 5/6 group on inspection. Reading records still require further development to ensure pupils make consistent use of their diaries.

MATHEMATICS

84. Attainment in mathematics is above average at Key Stage 1 and close to the national average at Key Stage 2. According to the 2000 National Curriculum tests, the pupils' level of attainment at Key Stage 1 was well above average and at Key Stage 2 slightly below. Subsequent analysis of the school's data shows this relative under-performance to be related to the large number of pupils with special needs and the very fluid nature of the school's population in Year 6. This had the result of significantly depressing the overall results. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 has improved since the last inspection when it was found to be in line with the national average. According to the National Curriculum tests, girls achieve slightly better than boys in Key Stage 1, and

significantly better at Key Stage 2. The reason for this significant difference at Key Stage 2 is that a larger proportion of pupils with special needs are boys. There was no evidence of teachers giving preferential treatment to either boys or girls. By the end of Key Stage 1, children are able to undertake simple sums requiring multiplication and division, such as 24 divided by 8, and 8 multiplied by 5. They can confidently work with numbers up to 100 and have a good knowledge of time. They have good mental addition strategies: in one class they could add 7 plus 4 plus 18. In another they were able to work out the difference between 15 and 9 in their heads and explain the strategies they were using. Children with special educational needs were generally supported in their work by classroom assistants who helped them to achieve, either carrying out the same work as the rest of the class or work prepared specially for them. They could do simple sums such as 5 plus 4 or 9 minus 5.

85. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident with number. They have good mental recall of number facts. The majority of them can undertake long multiplications with decimals, such as 7 multiplied by 3.8. They can calculate percentages (such as 15 per cent of 60) and they can draw and measure angles accurately. In one class they were being challenged by investigating the properties of rotational and reflective symmetry. In another class, they were investigating shape and area by working out the amount of material needed to make a ridge tent. However, there were relatively few opportunities for them to structure their own work. Some data handling is undertaken: pupils collected data in tally charts and used this to make pie charts. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants and work effectively at their own level.
86. Pupils come into the school with average skills in mathematics. They make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1. Appropriate levels of progress were noted across years and between year groups. Learning in Key Stage 1 was good or very good in all lessons seen. In Year 1, the class was learning effectively about how much water different containers would hold. In Year 2, they were learning to subtract numbers such as 45-39 mentally by playing a game at bingo. In Key Stage 2, learning in all lessons seen was satisfactory, with some being good or very good. In Year 3, pupils were learning about co-ordinates by playing a battleships game, which even the lower-attaining children could manage. In Year 5, they were learning to subtract decimals such as 1.29 from 4.68. The children of average attainment or above could manage this with little difficulty and the lower-attaining pupils were supported by using apparatus to help them complete the sums. There was no difference noted in the progress of boys or girls.
87. The teaching of mathematics was good or very good in all lessons seen at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory or better in Key Stage 2, with the majority being good or very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have integrated the National Numeracy Strategy well into their teaching. They have a good knowledge of their pupils' abilities and plan work suited to them. Work is differentiated for different ability levels. They have good relationships with their pupils and use appropriate teaching strategies. The quality of planning is good and they assess pupils' work well. Pupils are assessed every year in Key Stage 2 by the use of optional National Curriculum tests, as well as by teacher assessment. Where classroom assistants or other helpers are used, they are well briefed to support the groups they are working with. ICT is used effectively in some years to support the teaching of mathematics, but there was limited use in numeracy lessons. When teaching was very good, the pace of the lesson was exciting and pupils, including the lower-attaining ones, were challenged mentally. Pupils were used to good effect to explain and demonstrate their mathematical

strategies to the rest of the class.

88. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are generally good or very good right across the school. They enjoy lessons and sustain concentration well. Good behaviour is maintained throughout lessons, even where there are difficult pupils with behaviour problems. Some pupils have difficulty presenting work well because of poor writing skills. There is a general absence of bad behaviour in mathematics lessons, because the teachers know their pupils well and make efforts to keep them interested.
89. The subject has an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. Although not initially trained in mathematics, she has had subsequent training and helped to train the teachers in the school to deliver the Numeracy Strategy. However, she has not been trained in her role as co-ordinator. Training is available for other teachers to develop their skills in teaching mathematics where needed. She makes sure standards are improving by monitoring pupils' work, teachers' planning and class teaching across the school. She is aware of the range of resources needed to ensure these are sufficient for the needs of all classes. Although resources are good in Key Stage 1, more practical equipment is needed for Key Stage 2. ICT resources are adequate for the subject, but some are awaiting staff training before they can be introduced. The quality of the accommodation is good for the delivery of the subject and the school has very good grounds, which are occasionally used for the teaching of mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in class and work is specially prepared for them where necessary.

SCIENCE

90. Pupils' attainment by the time they are seven-years-old is in line with expectations. It is close to national averages in terms of the number of pupils achieving level 2 or better and level 3 or better in the 2000 end-of-key-stage teacher assessments. There is no significant difference between the boys and girls at this age. This has not changed since the school was last inspected. By the time pupils are 11-years-old, their attainment is again close to the national average, the PCSI statistics being skewed by the unusually high level of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need and the mobility of pupils in the cohort. Over the past four years, the average points score for pupils achieving level 4 or above has risen smoothly from 66 to its present 82, again with little appreciable difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
91. By the time they are seven-years-old, pupils have developed a strong sense of fair testing, recognising that only one variable should be changed at a time. A good lesson on human development was enlivened by a parent bringing in a three-month-old baby and answering the pupils' thoughtful questions about its needs and actions. They then made sound comparisons between these and the needs of a toddler and an adult. Earlier, pupils had undertaken a good investigation on food and were able to record part of their findings in the form of a bar chart.
92. By the time they are eleven-years-old, pupils display a lively interest in investigations. They were able to classify life forms and knew the key features of each class, for example that mammals give birth to live young whereas birds and reptiles lay eggs. These pupils knew how to plan an investigation and were able to predict the likely nature of their findings. Earlier they had investigated the effects of friction on blocks sliding down a ramp and had come to useful generalised conclusions. Correct scientific terms were in evidence in their work and pupils could provide good verbal

definitions of key words such as 'crustacean' and 'evaporation'. The work of pupils with special educational needs was generally in line with that of the class and classroom ancillaries, who displayed great patience and understanding, gave statemented pupils appropriate help and support. In some classes teaching material was available which provided enrichment opportunities for gifted and talented pupils, so that they were able to use their time to good effect.

93. The teaching of science is good at both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In the best lessons, teachers deployed good subject knowledge, good planning, effective use of time and a wide range of resources to maintain the pace of work and the interest of pupils. Teachers' expectations of both behaviour and effort were uniformly high, so that the ground covered in lessons not only provided useful reinforcement of work already visited, but also extended this into wider understanding. In the best lesson, work in science was deliberately linked to work in English and a Betjeman poem formed an important part of the work. Management of pupils was firm but friendly and most teachers made the purpose of the activity clear at the start of the lesson. Pupils invariably worked with interest and collaborated well. Their questions, and their answers to questions posed, were predominantly polite and relevant and this benefited the learning of the whole class.
94. There is an effective scheme of work for science, which, across a year, ensures that all attainment targets are addressed. Long and short-term planning of lessons is thorough. There is now a consistent means of recording pupils' attainment and teachers link what a pupil has achieved to National Curriculum levels. Records passed from one teacher to the next as a pupil moves through the school do not adequately inform teachers' planning. Resources for science are satisfactory and the school makes good use of its immediate environment.

ART

95. Attainment observed in lessons and in other examples of work seen in sketchbooks, portfolios, photographs and on display is broadly average across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with some pupils beginning to work at above average expectations.
96. In Key Stage 1, pupils make sound observational drawings and paintings from memory as, for example, when they are able to include appropriate detail in their pictures of daffodils or swimming at the beach. Collage work in Year 1 includes well-shaped insects made from bound grasses, providing opportunities for pupils to explore the visual and tactile qualities of natural materials. High-attaining pupils are able to make effective use of line, tone, shape and texture, as when they work well collaboratively creating a mural based on their sketches of the local church using clay, fabric, paper and card. Pupils show satisfactory cutting and appropriate colour-mixing skills. The best paintings show imaginative use of colour as seen in a picture of the Millennium Dome. Pupils in discussions use appropriate vocabulary and they understand words such as technique; they are familiar with the work of some famous artists and can imitate the style and techniques of Monet in painting poppies. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils are working at the expected standard and some are working beyond this.
97. In Key Stage 2, standards are also in line with those expected across a broad range of attainment. There is some imaginative and well-presented art on display, for example where pupils show good use of texture in work commemorating two former teachers of the school. Work is well linked to other subjects, for example where good

quality carvings of Egyptian figures enhance a time line. The amount of work completed by pupils and the amount of use made of sketchbooks vary between classes. Work in Year 6 shows appropriate attention to detail, for example in drawings of fruit interiors or of Greek jewellery. Pupils understand how texture, colours and shapes are important. Year 6 pupils' printing work uses advanced techniques, using neoprene (wet-suit material) to create textured designs of dolphins, turtles, sharks and tortoises. Most pupils speak confidently about their work and can explain why they are making masks and how they will proceed; they show a satisfactory understanding of techniques in collage work, painting, sketching and making jewellery. They are familiar with some aspects of the work of artists such as Van Gogh, Monet, Picasso and Leonardo da Vinci. By the time pupils are 11, most of them are achieving the expected level and some are working above this.

98. It was possible to see only a small sample of lessons in art but it was possible to discuss work with pupils and teachers and see portfolios of work. The quality of teaching and learning in art is good and there is some very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. Since the last report, the advent of the literacy and numeracy hours has reduced the time available for art but pupils achieve well in the time available. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and their understanding of concepts and art skills supports teaching well. They give clear instructions and lessons are well organised so that the pupils know what they have to do. Expectations are high. Pupils are suitably challenged to express their feelings and imagination, and to reflect critically. Teachers' planning achieves a balance of activities within the limited time that is well matched to pupils' needs and the National Curriculum. Pupil management is very good with clear routines established so that time is used well and a good atmosphere created. A few teachers know when to intervene and when to let the pupils learn independently. Teachers use a wide range of stimuli to motivate and interest pupils, who respond well showing very positive attitudes. Pupils work well, enjoy art and most sustain their efforts. They show respect for resources and work well collaboratively; they are patient when they have to wait their turn to use materials. They particularly enjoy being given the opportunity and responsibility to choose their subjects and materials, as seen when they were making masks. The use of information and communication technology in art is satisfactory and developing. In the best lessons, skilful questioning checks what pupils know and teachers show pupils how they can improve. Pupils with special needs are well supported, often with the help of classroom support staff and some make effective use of computers. Homework is not normally set in art, which is a lost opportunity for pupils to capture events and experiences and present them creatively.
99. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic, committed and effective but has only been in post this year. She is clear as to what needs to be done to improve art and has started to keep samples and photographic evidence of pupils' work. This will help strengthen assessment, which is currently informal. The current schemes used are under review as is the time allocated to art. Art in the school promotes pupils' personal development well. It provides opportunities to pupils to explore values and interpret and express ideas, sample opportunities for collaborative learning and makes a useful cultural contribution to learning. The good quality accommodation and the school grounds support learning well; the local area is used well and local influences, scenes and characters are evident in the work of the pupils. However, there are few visits to galleries and museums to broaden pupils' experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. During this inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons, both at Key Stage 2. Discussions with staff, observation of displays of past work and scrutiny of pupils' present work confirm that, at the end of both key stages, the standard of work at least meets national expectations and, in some respects, exceeds them.
101. In Year 1, linked to their work in science, pupils had undertaken the design of an egg cosy using felt. Even at this stage sensible design comparisons and evaluations added to the worth of the activity. Year 2 pupils, linking with the story of Joseph and his coat, had made a series of colourful nearly full-size coats out of thin card. This activity employed a good planning stage, consideration of historical design, methods of joining and an evaluation, which culminated in a fashion show to the whole school. By the time pupils were in Year 6, design work showed an increased sophistication. Models of powered cars and Ferris wheels had been subjected to trial and modification to overcome unforeseen design faults. In group discussions, pupils effectively demanded to know if a given design was fit for its intended purpose and, if not, how it might be improved. A recent enhancement to facilities for design and technology has been the provision of a computer-aided design and make (CAD/CAM) system. Pupils are mastering its use and beginning to achieve high quality finish to their work. Those familiar with it provide instruction to the rest of the class.
102. In the lessons seen, pupils' behaviour was at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils were generally enthusiastic and co-operated with others to good effect. Pupils with special educational needs were able to complete their models and discuss why changes had had to be made to the original design. Only with pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need did the class ancillary need to provide an alternative learning opportunity, always to good effect.
103. Teaching in both lessons seen was good. Teachers ensured that the pupils understood the task, had appropriate resources and were able to use simple tools correctly. Pace of work and level of challenge were good, so that learning by pupils was effective. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and used technical terms appropriately.

GEOGRAPHY

104. It was possible to see only a small sample of lessons but of the work in books and on display was examined and discussions were held with pupils and teachers. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 standards are broadly in line with expectations and most pupils show satisfactory geographical skills, knowledge and understanding.
105. Pupils in Year 2 understand appropriate terminology and can describe their route to school. They know the names of some distant places and their locations; they are aware of different environments such as mountains and deserts and some can describe well when comparing locations. Pupils know the location of Mexico and can make sensible comparisons between Toluca and St Stephen or between the Isle of Skye (a fictional isle in Scotland) and St Stephen. Pupils' oral work is better than their written work, which is sometimes spoiled by poor presentation. By the time pupils are seven, most achieve the expected Level 2. Key Stage 2 pupils can comment on features, follow directions and read simple maps and plans. They show an appreciation of environmental issues, strengthened by their work on distant places, for example the earthquake in San Salvador, or their locality, for example the foot and mouth crisis. Mapping skills are developing appropriately and most pupils understand how settlements change. For example, local geography work in Year 5

looked at how the traffic problems of the village might be resolved. Work is presented in a variety of ways but insufficient use is made of graphs, charts and sketch maps. Pupils' oral work is ahead of their written work at all levels; work is often spoiled by poor presentation and mis-spellings. In Year 6, pupils show some general geographical knowledge of the United Kingdom, Europe and the wider world, for example of continents, countries, rivers and mountains. Pupils make good use of ICT to select information by accessing the Internet using school and home computers. They use geographical knowledge to support their work in other subjects such as history.

106. Pupils usually make good progress in lessons and the quality of learning is good; high- attaining pupils are suitably challenged by tasks and pupils who find work more difficult are well supported by work well matched to their needs and often by classroom assistants. Pupils are increasingly aware of geographical issues, able to record evidence in investigative work and use more sophisticated vocabulary, as they grow older, but not all pupils know the meaning of peninsula (in relation to the South West) or delta (in relation to rivers). Geography makes a useful contribution to pupils' spiritual development by helping them realise their place in the world, to moral development through the study of environmental issues, to social development through the study of different societies including their own and to cultural development through the study of the wider world.
107. Pupils usually show very positive attitudes, behave very well and enjoy geography. They respond to questioning, follow instructions and sustain their concentration in individual or group work. They stay on task and treat resources respectfully. They enjoy chances to make choices for themselves in investigative and extended topic work, work well collaboratively, and enjoy talking about their work and contributing to discussions in lessons.
108. The quality of teaching is mainly good. A very good lesson was seen with Year 6. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed with a younger class, where the objectives were not made clear to the class and, as a result, pupils were unclear about what needed to be done. This was not typical. Teachers show good knowledge and lessons are effectively planned to match the needs of the pupils. Objectives are clear and shared with pupils so that they know what to do. Lessons are well organised and use an appropriate range of resources, for example in a lesson seen on St Stephen. Class management is very good and there is skilful use of praise and questioning so that pupils are encouraged, supported and challenged. The pace of lessons is suitably brisk, especially with the older pupils, and lessons have variety so that they are interesting. The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and committed but until very recently has had insufficient time to monitor standards and support other teachers. Monitoring and assessment procedures are currently informal and insufficiently developed. The school uses the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes, which are also being reviewed with the policy. Good use is made of the school grounds, farms and villages in the locality in environmental work. Pupils enjoy visiting the immediate locality, the Sealife Centre in Newquay, Gosmoor Habitats and a local reservoir. There is an annual trip to France. Since the last report there has been satisfactory improvement.

HISTORY

109. It was possible to observe only a small number of lessons but samples of pupils' work and work on display were examined and discussions held with pupils and teachers.

At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, attainment is broadly in line with expectations. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 are introduced to history through stories and time ordering; most pupils are beginning to develop an appropriate sense of chronology. Most pupils in Year 1 show good general knowledge and high-attaining pupils, when stimulated by good teaching, are able to talk with confidence about their own experience of Victorian artefacts such as toys. Pupils in Year 2 develop further an understanding of time, comparing life in the past with modern living, for example when comparing street scenes of the past to those with the present day, and, by the time pupils are seven, standards are satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 pupils are increasingly able to understand the reasons for historical development. Pupils are confident in discussion and oral work is of a higher quality than written work. In Years 5 and 6, pupils show appropriate knowledge about life in Ancient Greece and Egypt from their previous work and also show suitable research skills in studying the Indus Valley Civilisation. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary in discussion but written work is below the expected standard; spelling is often poor. By the time pupils are 11, the majority meets the expected standard.

110. Pupils achieve well in lessons but overall progress is satisfactory. Pupils are given work to match their prior attainment, which stretches pupils who work faster and is within reach of those who need more help. Pupils show increasing historical awareness and are able to collect and record evidence and use a more sophisticated vocabulary as they mature. Those with special educational needs are well integrated and make good progress in reaching targets set for them, often supported by classroom assistants. History makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development by letting them empathise with people in time; moral development by understanding the consequences of people's actions and through discussion of issues such as the attitude of the rich towards the poor in Tudor times; social development by developing political awareness; and cultural education in understanding Britain and Cornwall's rich historical heritage and other links with the world. Pupils show very positive attitudes, are very well behaved and enjoy very good relationships with each other and their teachers. They enjoy history and are responsive to questioning. Pupils follow instructions carefully and sustain their efforts in individual or group work. They are friendly, open and work with interest, treating resources carefully.
111. It was only possible to see one lesson in Key Stage 1, which was very good. In Key Stage 2, most of the teaching seen was good. Teachers show good subject knowledge, enjoy history and the well-planned lessons use a wide range of well-prepared resources and imaginative approaches to focus the interest of the pupils. Teachers explain things clearly and lessons have clear objectives so that pupils know what to do. Lessons proceed at a good pace so that pupils' interest is maintained. Content and approach, based on the QCA schemes, are appropriate. Class management is very good: teachers use praise to encourage pupils and skilful questioning teases answers from shy pupils so that relationships are very good and confidence developed. Leadership in history is effective: the coordinator has only been in post this year but is keen and has clear ideas about how the subject can be strengthened, including the monitoring of standards and teaching. Time has now been allocated for this to be done. Assessment is informal and insufficiently developed, but due to be reviewed with the policy and schemes. Good quality resources such as artefacts, posters and videos assist learning. There are good cross-curricular links with many subjects and history introduces aspects of citizenship at most levels. Visits and use of the locality extend the experiences of the pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards in ICT are above average at both key stages, with some work of very high quality being seen. Children in the Nursery can use a mouse to manipulate a picture and were able to select clothes to dress a teddy for particular weather on the computer. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can log on and off the computers unaided, and can create cartoon stories with text on the computer. They can draw simple pictures on the computer and can enter information into a database and use it to draw graphs. By the end of Key Stage 2, they can word process effectively, choosing the style and appearance of their text by selecting fonts, alignment and other features. They can create newspapers and magazines using text and pictures and manipulate text effects with Word Art. They can use features of a spreadsheet, including writing formulae and drawing graphs. They can find information from the Internet or from a CD ROM encyclopaedia. They can program simple robots to undertake mathematical tasks, and design three-dimensional (3D) shapes to be cut out using a CAD/CAM system. However, although the school has access to suitable equipment, there was no evidence of ICT being used in Science to measure events. Standards of attainment have improved in both key stages since the last inspection and some work of high quality was seen.
113. The teaching of ICT was good in all the lessons seen in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory, with most being good or very good. The teachers know their children well and have good relationships with them. Their planning is good and the work meets the needs of the pupils. Most of the teachers are generally confident in using a range of applications on the computers, but there are some who are lacking in confidence. They used appropriate strategies, demonstrating work to the whole class, and then letting the children work on the computers. However, the lack of a display projector or large screen made it difficult for children at the back of the class to see well. When pupils are working on the computers, the teachers monitor and support them well, and classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs. In some cases, when there was a large class using the ICT room, it was difficult for all the children to get access, and for the teacher to provide the support needed. During the course of the inspection, a technical assistant was available to maintain the equipment and support the teaching. This resource proved invaluable to all the teachers using the facility.
114. In both key stages, the children learned well using ICT as was clear in the lessons observed, and the scrutiny of work. The provision of the computers suite has provided good opportunities for access and this was evident in the skills developed. The children were confident in using the technology and, in Key Stage 2, they could type effectively, save, load and print their work. In Year 1, children were seen learning to use a program called 'Playtrain', which enabled them to learn to use numbers up to 30 and also to make recordings on a tape recorder. In Year 2 they learned how to program a simple robot and to type in text with a range of fonts. In Year 5, they learned how to check data for errors in a database and, in Year 6, they learned how to present writing for specific audiences by creating newspapers and magazines. Pupils with special educational needs were generally supported very well when using ICT, and groups of pupils with special needs had time allocated when they used ICT to develop literacy skills by creating a leaflet about the Royal National Lifeboat Institute.
115. The children had very good attitudes to the use of ICT in Key Stage 1, and mostly good in Key Stage 2, although one lesson was seen when pupils misbehaved before

going to the computer room. Apart from this example, their behaviour was very good in all the lessons seen, they sustained concentration, listened to their teachers well and then got on with their work sensibly. They obviously enjoy opportunities to use the technology and get great benefit from it. One group of Year 6 pupils had independently created a school magazine of very high quality including a range of games and activities such as riddles, word searches and puzzles.

116. The subject is well co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is a subject policy and a scheme of work. However, there is not enough time for all ICT management tasks to be undertaken such as essential computer housekeeping tasks. Now the computers are arranged in a suite, access to resources is satisfactory and children can also use computers in the classrooms. However, some of these computers are ageing and there are problems with reliability and access to programs. One major problem is that there is not enough room in the computer suite for a whole class of children, and the ventilation is inadequate. This made working in the room for more than a short time very unpleasant. There was no large display facility such as a projector or large screen, which made demonstrations to a large group of children difficult for the teachers to manage. One area of ICT was not in evidence, that of measurement with computers. However, pupils did have opportunities to program floor robots and a screen turtle. In Year 6, one class was observed doing some advanced work using the computer to design and cut out 3D shapes from a sheet of card as a part of a design and technology lesson. The teachers are in the process of receiving training to develop their ICT skills further and it is anticipated that this will improve their ability in those aspects not yet fully covered.

MUSIC

117. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in classroom work are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Standards in instrumental tuition are average and standards in extra-curricular music are good.
118. In Key Stage 1, pupils experience mainly singing and a little instrumental work and composing and listening following a commercial scheme. Music often supports other learning as when pupils learn counting songs or songs that extend vocabulary. Pupils sing well in assembly or when directed by teachers who know how to improve their singing but not all teachers can do this or use the accompanying tapes effectively, so that standards are very variable between classes.
119. In Key Stage 2, standards vary greatly between classes in relation to the musical experience of the teacher. Most pupils sing and play percussion in instrumental work, but performing and music-reading skills are insufficiently developed, as for example, when pupils play their own compositions using graphic scores. In composing, most pupils lack techniques to develop pieces or the performing skills to realise them. Group work often depends on the skills of the most musical pupils. Pupils listen well. They listen carefully to each other and to recordings in lessons and in assembly. They appraise sensibly, using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils in the lower juniors can recognise most instruments. When specialists teach pupils, standards improve, as in Year 5 where pupils used correct terminology, listened exceptionally well and made perceptive comments in discussing the musical characteristics of 'The Swan' from 'Carnival of the Animals'. In performing, pupils used correct techniques because they had been taught how to use them correctly, so that high-level compositions resulted. In Year 6, performing skills are limited. Although pupils listen and appraise well, their understanding of musical elements and their general musical knowledge, for example of instruments, artists, forms, styles, well-known pieces and composers, is weak.

Overall, standards are broadly in line with national expectation with some individual pupils working beyond this level.

120. Pupils' achievement also relates to the level of expertise of the their teacher. High-attaining pupils who are instrumentalists and read music make the best progress, building on their previous learning, experience and their personal interests, but they are insufficiently stretched in lessons. Work does not build on pupils' own interests or develop instrumental, vocal and simple notational skills sufficiently to enable them to achieve their potential in performing, composing and listening. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils; they are very well integrated. Pupils show positive attitudes and good behaviour and effort support achievement. Pupils are friendly, open, responsive, and respectful towards staff and each other, use equipment sensibly, work well collaboratively and remain on task so that they learn well. They show initiative and enjoy taking responsibility, for example when composing in groups. They enjoy music making, especially using instruments.
121. In classroom work, most lessons are sound and there is some very good teaching when teachers have musical skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to teach confidently and where pupils are engaged in active musical learning. Teachers work hard and do their best but not all have sufficient practical expertise. As a result, instrumentalists do not use their instruments in classroom work, which would support their instrumental lessons and the class teaching. Organisation is good but neither planning nor methods focus enough on the needs of the pupils to develop skills sufficiently. Discipline and relationships are very good at all levels. The best lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Assessment is encouraging and supportive and praise is used well, but goals are absent. In the best lessons, teachers use the musical skills of the pupils. Following the last report, the school appointed a music co-ordinator who has done much to move the subject forward. There is a policy and schemes, but the co-ordinator has insufficient time to monitor and support teachers or help assess pupils' achievements. Resources are good but insufficient use is made of ICT.
122. A visiting teacher provides instrumental lessons, for which parents pay, involving 14 pupils. In school tuition, pupils' attitudes are excellent; standards are about average but improving rapidly with the new teacher. Pupils achieve very well now because of the very good teaching. The teacher has also taken class lessons this year and some excellent work was seen during the inspection in these workshop-type lessons. Extra-curricular activities include the choir, guitar and two recorder groups. Numbers involved are small and few boys are involved but teaching is good, standards are good and pupils are enthusiastic.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Pupils' attainment in physical education matches the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Many pupils have good skills; most are within the average range and the few less agile pupils noted do well for their abilities. All pupils make good progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding of a range of sports. They have good opportunities in their curriculum and through extra-curricular activity to develop interests and skills in a wide variety of contact and non-contact sports, including swimming.
124. In Key Stage 1, a lesson seen in Year 1 showed pupils understanding the need for warm-up activity. Their attainment in running, skipping and jumping showed an average range of standards. Most boys and girls could skip swinging the rope forwards, with a minority able to skip swinging it backwards. By Year 2, pupils in an outside games lesson on the school field could create new, interesting games in pairs, using a variety of equipment to send and receive an object, most often a ball, but some used beanbags. Most of these pupils could develop complexity, often using a sequence of movements, to slalom around marker cones, for example, finishing with a send/receive activity. In their use of bats, hand/eye/ball co-ordination showed the expected range of competence for Year 2. Pupils here could also make up and explain rules of their new games, including scoring systems and could show others how to play them.
125. Lessons in Years 3 and 4 showed pupils developing these skills appropriately. They understand the need for warm-up and can explain why they undertake this using appropriate physiological references to pulse rate and heartbeat. In one Year 3/4 lesson, pupils' build-up of a sequence of different jumps showed good understanding of the variety of footwork possible and the resulting sequences showed the expected range of physical attainment. Other team games showed pupils with a satisfactory understanding of instructions for a new game and an average range of attainment in pitching and catching beanbags. A Year 5 class engaged in cricket practice outside on the hard-standing courts showed a wide range of competence in the co-ordination of bat/ball in the receiving and striking of balls bowled by partners. While some pupils could use a good grip on the cricket bat, others had a weak grip, making it difficult to keep a flat bat profile or to protect their fingers. Dance lessons seen in Year 5 showed some very agile, well synchronised movements in groups to achieve effects generated from the ideas of capture and release, related to dream-catchers and notions of circular movement. In another such lesson, pupils interpreted the music less well. By Year 6, pupils' range of attainment still covers the range expected. In a Year 6 lesson outside on the field, pupils quickly caught on to the basic rules for a new team game, and could rapidly refine these to their own specifications. Pupils can co-operate well, mostly reaching harmonious, negotiated outcomes in any dispute. They have developed a very good sense of fair play, co-operation and sportsmanship by the end of Key Stage 2, with the development of these attributes forming a very strong component of the effective learning taking place in all years.
126. At all stages, the quality of learning is good and pupils' attitudes to physical education of all types is highly positive, as it was at the time of the last report. Their achievements are good, partly because they work hard and enjoy the subject. Physical education in the school makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development through the pair and group activities they undertake, through team-work and co-operation and through the very good balance pupils develop between a sense of competition and co-operation, self- and peer-evaluations and

through the support they give one another in sensitive appraisal of each other's performances.

127. This good quality of learning derives principally from good teaching. Almost all teaching of physical education is good. One lesson seen was very good and none was less than satisfactory. Teachers are confident in the subject, passing on enthusiasm and encouragement to their pupils, which creates confidence in almost all pupils that they can do the activities presented. Lessons are well prepared so that even the least agile will be able to achieve tasks given, whilst the talented pupils amongst the classes will be well stretched and challenged to high attainment. Teachers maintain a vigilant sense of the health and safety aspects of the subject, such as the good warm-ups they prepare. Lessons almost always take place at a good pace, with good variety in the activities presented so that pupils remain active, engaged and interested. All elements of the physical education curriculum are considered and given due weighting, so pupils often had an opportunity to watch and evaluate others' performances. Resources and accommodation are very good and well used to provide the variety of activity described. Swimming is a high priority for the school, undertaken by all Key Stage 2 pupils for a term each year. The school's own swimming pool is an underused asset though. The rich range of extra-curricular activities, such as tournaments, outdoor activities trips and residential visits described in the last report remains, providing a wealth of opportunities for pupils to develop their physical and social skills further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Standards of pupils' work in religious education are good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Religious education is a strength of the school. No lessons were seen in Year 2, but they had undertaken work on special buildings focusing on the church. In Year 1, they had learned about the works of Mother Theresa; in another class, they looked at the purpose of holidays. Some particularly sensitive responses from the children were noted. In one case a boy explained that the nuns in a hospital wore face masks, "so they don't get poorly from the other people", and they could explain the purpose of prayer. By the end of Key Stage 2, they had completed work on famous people, created cartoon stories about ecological disasters and looked at religions other than Christianity, including Sikhism, Judaism and Hinduism. They could talk well about their personal values including responsibility, friendship, love, caring for others and the environment. Standards have improved considerably since the last inspection, when they were in line with the local Agreed Syllabus at both key stages.
129. Only two religious education lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and four in Key Stage 2 during the inspection, so judgements about the quality of teaching also reflect work in the teachers' planning and assessment. In Key Stage 1, the teaching seen was good. The teachers knew their children well, had good relationships with them and had planned work which challenged the children to think and to express their thoughts and feelings. Much of the work here was done orally. Planning generally for the subject is good across both key stages and is reflected in the high quality of work seen. In Key Stage 2, the teaching in the lessons seen was all good. The tasks were well suited to the needs of the children and the teachers asked them challenging questions. Planning and assessment in the subject are generally good right across this key stage, with resulting high quality work. Pupils with special needs were supported well, and work appropriate to their needs was provided.

130. Learning in religious education by pupils right across the school is good. All pupils are introduced to the work of famous people and these works are placed in a cultural context. Children learn to express themselves in speech, writing and pictures. The children learned effectively to express their thoughts and feelings about themselves, others and the environment. In one case, when questioned what a synagogue was used for, one child answered “, You go there to get instruction on how to live life.”
131. Pupils’ attitudes to religious education were good. Behaviour was good or very good; they concentrated hard and sustained effort. They took obvious pleasure in the work they were asked to do and participated effectively in discussions. They co-operated well when asked to, took initiative and behaved responsibly.
132. The subject is well managed by a co-ordinator who has an enthusiasm and specific expertise in religious education. Although not trained as an religious education specialist, she has led training for schools across Cornwall as well as for her own school and has been able to lead the staff in making the subject a strength of the school. There is a subject policy and a scheme of work in place. Resources are very good for the needs of the school and further equipment can be purchased if so required. The school has a number of pictures and artefacts which are used both for decoration and as a stimulus. The local environment and visits are used effectively as a stimulus. Religious education uses other subject skills effectively.