

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Truro

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111990

Headteacher: Mrs C Raymond

Reporting inspector: Mr Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th September 2001

Inspection number: 192728

Full 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 junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Higher Trehaverne Truro Cornwall
Postcode:	TR1 3RJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M A Trethewey
Date of previous inspection:	17 th March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i>
9652	Colin Herbert	Lay inspector		How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</i> How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23080	Rob Isaac	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Geography Religious education Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
13122	Stephanie Matthews	Team inspector	English Art and design History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a medium sized Church of England primary school for boys and girls aged from four to eleven years old. There are 203 pupils. Pupils are mainly drawn from the local parish but many come from other areas of Truro. Most children start full-time but a few start on a part-time basis if this is appropriate. Their attainment on entry is broadly typical of that found nationally. An average proportion of the pupils has special educational needs, including specific learning difficulties, behavioural problems and physical disabilities; five have statements of special educational need. Six pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is good school with many strengths. High quality teaching enables pupils to progress well and to achieve good standards. Pupils are well behaved and enthusiastic in response to the positive and caring ethos. All are valued and have equal opportunities to succeed. As a result of the highly effective leadership of the headteacher and with the strong support of governors, the school is very much improved since the previous inspection. The school is an important part of the local community and is held in high esteem by parents. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Consistently effective teaching means pupils learn quickly and achieve good standards
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has played a pivotal role in improving the school
- Pupils' have very positive attitudes and do their best
- Activities outside lessons contribute much to pupils' personal development
- Parents have high regard for the school and work in partnership with it
- Governors and staff share a commitment to move the school further forward

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by eleven year olds in information and communication technology (ICT)

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Very good improvement has been made since the school was inspected in March 1997. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly and the school is led and managed much more effectively. Standards of behaviour have improved and weaknesses in curriculum planning and assessment have been addressed successfully. A more effective partnership with parents has been developed and better systems enable the school to keep a closer eye on children's welfare.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Early in the reception year, all children have made a good start and most are on course to meet the early learning goals in each area of the curriculum.

Results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds have been above average in recent years. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and writing was smaller than expected in 2000, which meant the average grades matched the national picture but did not exceed it as in previous years. Current standards indicate that both these areas of literacy have improved, although the number of pupils attaining higher levels in writing is still relatively low. Results achieved by seven year olds in mathematics vary from year to year but have at least matched national averages. Current standards broadly match those expected early in Year 2. Standards in science are good. In all other subjects pupils make sound progress through Years 1 and 2 and achieve the expected standards. Over recent years, boys have achieved better results than girls in reading, writing and mathematics tests for seven year olds, against the national trend. However, no significant differences in standards were evident during the inspection.

Since the fall in test results at eleven in 2000 that the above table illustrates, standards are improving and eleven year olds are now achieving good standards in English, mathematics and science. Achievement in all other subjects is at least sound, except in ICT where progress is too slow and standards are below expectations. In history, music and religious education, eleven year olds progress well and attain good standards. Overall achievement from seven to eleven is good. In contrast with results at seven, girls tend to do better than boys but no significant differences in standards were apparent during the inspection. The small number of children from minority ethnic groups do just as well as other pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainments. Although some are up to two years behind the level expected for their age, they usually make good progress in meeting their individual targets.

In recent years, the targets for eleven year olds have been mostly achieved. Realistic targets have been set for the current Year 5 and 6 groups; given the high quality teaching and learning in these classes, the school is well placed to meet them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are very keen to do well. They work hard and join in all activities with commitment and enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally very good and often excellent in lessons and around the school. Pupils are attentive, and co-operate without fuss when working in pairs and small groups.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships across the school are very good. Pupils are responsible and reliable, and have an evident concern for others. They are polite, mature and confident. They respond very well to the trust the school places in them. Pupils have warm and mutually respectful relationships with the staff and contribute to the life of the school willingly and responsibly.
Attendance	Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Very good

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

The teaching is very good. In three-quarters of the lessons seen, the teaching was good or better. No teaching was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in reception and Years 4,5 and 6 is particularly strong. Specialist teachers are deployed well in music, religious education and swimming, and staff with particular expertise effectively support pupils with special educational needs.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers explain things clearly, generate enthusiasm and create a purposeful working atmosphere where pupils feel confident and do their best. They meet the needs of all pupils well. Teachers have good knowledge of all the subjects they teach and are able to build on pupils' existing knowledge through skilful questioning. Links between subjects make learning meaningful for pupils. In some lessons, although the teaching is generally satisfactory, the pace is too slow and there is insufficient challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils. Some teachers do not use ICT enough in other subjects.

Pupils are very enthusiastic and try hard. As they move through the school, they develop increasing independence. The oldest pupils have a good degree of maturity. Their high level of commitment means they get the most out of lessons and take full advantage of the high quality teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good balance is achieved across the curriculum, except in religious education and geography where the time allocated is barely enough to allow all aspects of these subjects to be covered in the same depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: pupils who need extra support are identified early and their progress is carefully tracked. Teachers provide work at different levels in the classroom and are ably assisted by the learning support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few children with English as an additional language are well supported and do just as well as other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good: there are many opportunities for reflection in assemblies and lessons. The school provides a very appropriate moral framework and a highly effective background for social development. Cultural development is strongly supported through art, music and dance.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are well established and the school has due regard for pupils' health and safety. Assessment procedures are effective and enable the school to track pupils' academic progress and personal development carefully.

There is a very strong partnership with parents. Newsletters are informative, reports are very detailed and there are ample opportunities for parents to consult teachers. The school responds immediately and positively to any enquiries made or concerns that parents might have. The wide range of extra-curricular activities contributes much to pupils' all-round education. The buzz of activity after school reflects the part it plays in the local community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and provides very good leadership. The deputy head and subject co-ordinators have a very good grasp of what needs to be done to maintain and improve standards and they successfully lead developments.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed and committed, and have a good level of day-to-day contact with the school. The headteacher and governors work well together to promote the school's aims.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors use a range of data to track performance. They are aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well and funding is carefully allocated to achieve best value

The management team is strong. The headteacher works closely with the new deputy, senior staff and governors to move the school forward. There is a good range of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Space for class lessons and practical activities is adequate and outdoor facilities are good. Resources are generally adequate, although there are shortages in some subjects including ICT and religious education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and make good progress• Teaching is good and pupils are encouraged to do their best• The school is well led, open and welcoming• Pupils behave well and are learning to be mature and responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the work pupils are expected to do at home• information about children's progress• the school's partnership with parents• activities outside lessons

Inspectors agreed with parents' positive views. The school has an appropriate policy on homework but it is not adhered to consistently by teachers. In contrast to the parents' views, the inspection found that the school provides good information for them about how their children are getting on. Every encouragement is given to parents to contribute to their children's education and the school's partnership with parents is strong. Activities outside lessons are many and varied. This provision is a strength of the school and contributes much to pupils' personal development.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Early in the reception year, all children have made a good start and most are on course to meet the early learning goals in each area of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Their social skills are developing well as they settle in to school routines and most children are using their developing communication skills with increasing confidence.
2. The results of National Curriculum tests for seven year olds have fluctuated in recent years but they have generally been above the national average. Following a dip in reading and writing in 2000, results in 2001 were better; writing was in line with the national average and reading was well above it. Currently, standards in literacy are good. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in reading and writing has been below average in recent years. Such pupils are currently doing well in reading but need to be challenged further to improve their attainment in writing. Seven year olds achieve at least average standards in mathematics but again, a below average proportion attain the higher levels. The school's own analysis has highlighted this situation and careful thought has been given to improving the results of those pupils who have the potential to achieve above average levels. Teacher assessments in science indicate broadly average standards in science but following considerable improvements in teaching and in the range and depth of work covered, standards are now good, with higher attaining pupils achieving well.
3. Over recent years, boys have achieved better results than girls in reading, writing and mathematics tests for seven year olds, against the national trend. However, no significant differences in standards were evident during the inspection. Although more pupils should be attaining higher levels, overall, pupils progress steadily through Key Stage 1, with a good proportion achieving national expectations.
4. The trend in the test results of eleven year olds was steeply upwards in English, mathematics and science until 2000, when there was a dip. When the results achieved by these pupils when they were seven were compared to those they achieved four years later, their achievement was below the national trend. There were more pupils with special educational needs in this year group than is usual but, additionally, the school and the parents involved report a period of instability when the pupils were in Year 4 and attribute the disappointing results mostly to this. The current situation is very much improved. Results in 2001 were much better in English; they were above the national average. Results were a little below average in mathematics and matched the national picture in science. Current standards in Year 6 are good in all three subjects, indicating further improvement over the past year.
5. Seven year olds achieve standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, ICT, physical education and religious education at levels appropriate for their age. Achievement in these subjects through Key Stage 2 is at least sound, except in ICT where progress is too slow and standards are below expectations. In design and technology, some more able pupils could achieve higher standards. In history, music and religious education, eleven year olds progress well and attain good standards. Overall progress from seven to eleven is good. In contrast with results at seven, girls tend to do better than boys but no significant differences in standards were apparent during the inspection. There is no significant difference in

the progress and attainment of different ethnic groups. Comparisons based on national results and those of similar schools¹ closely match because the school characteristics are broadly average.

6. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainments. Although some are up to two years behind the level expected for their age, they usually make good progress in meeting their individual targets. Older pupils produce legible, joined writing. They can read relatively fluently and some read expressively. Most pupils are making good progress in numeracy, becoming increasingly able to recall number facts and multiplication tables and to explain how to solve simple problems.
7. The school takes care to track the progress of individual pupils and uses this information to set individual and year group targets. These naturally vary from year to year but always contain an appropriate element of challenge. This helps to raise teachers' expectations and provides achievable goals for pupils, particularly in Year 6 when they take national tests. In recent years, the targets have been mostly achieved. Even when test results were below the national average in 2000, the school target for English was exceeded by 24 per cent. Realistic targets have been set for the current Year 5 and 6 groups; given the high quality teaching and learning in these classes, the school is well placed to meet them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. This aspect is a major strength of the school and there has been an improvement since the last inspection. The attitudes of pupils to school and to their learning are very good overall and their behaviour in and around school is good. The personal development of pupils is very good, and also the relationships throughout the school community are very good. All these factors help to create a very positive learning experience. Parents also have very positive views about behaviour of their children in school. This view was clearly reflected in comments that they made at their meeting and through their responses to the questionnaire.
9. Children in the reception class have settled in well and tackle the various activities with obvious enjoyment.
10. Pupils behave very well in most lessons and approach their work positively, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6. Similar standards of behaviour were observed in the playground, in the dining hall and around school. There was no indication of any unsociable or racist undertones whatsoever during the inspection. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and show respect for their school. For example, there was no evidence of litter, graffiti or vandalism in or around the premises. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
11. All pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to discuss their views in class. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were keen to talk about their ideas of a balanced diet and the various types of exercise that they took. Additionally, in a Year 6 music lesson pupils shared their ideas in a very mature way.
12. Relationships between pupils and one another, and pupils and all adults, are very good. Pupils collaborate very well in all aspects of school life and enjoy working together. For example, during a meeting of the school council they all listened very

¹ This is based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

carefully to each other's contributions. Additionally, pupils are consistently polite and well mannered towards their teachers, other adults and visitors. The high quality of these relationships has a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

13. The opportunities for pupils to take responsibility in school are very good and contribute much to their personal development. In the school council, they make their views known on such topics as playground games and air fresheners in the toilets, in a sensible manner. Additionally, the house system, the recently introduced 'buddy' system and the opportunity to learn first aid give pupils further opportunity to take responsibility. Pupils also make generous donations to a variety of charities and they are particularly proud of the support that they give to a 15 year old pupil in Kenya. Pupils are very aware of the needs of others who may not be as well off as they are.
14. Attendance rates are very good and well above national average. The vast majority of pupils always arrive at school on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is very good and promotes a purposeful atmosphere for learning and positive attitudes and behaviour amongst pupils. Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection when one in five lessons was less than satisfactory. High-quality teaching is found, particularly in reception and in Years 4, 5 and 6. This confirms the views expressed through the pre-inspection questionnaires where almost all parents thought that teaching was good.
16. There are several reasons for the highly effective teaching, many of which relate to all years and a number of subjects. A major factor is the very positive relationship between pupils and teachers. Pupils know that their opinions are respected and this contributes to their positive attitudes. Teachers with particular skills in music, religious education and special educational needs work effectively across the school. Because pupils recognise that their teachers have real expertise in, say, musical performance, or have actually visited the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, they listen more carefully and apply themselves more diligently.
17. In the reception class, the teacher plans the curriculum very effectively, setting clear objectives to promote the six areas of learning. The teaching team provides a well-organised, stimulating range of activities with an appropriate balance between free choice and more structured teacher-led activities. The control and management of pupils is very good and staff set high standards for behaviour. This supports children in their personal and social development very well and they feel happy and eager to learn.
18. Teachers use interesting methods to gain pupils' interest and promote their learning, but more than that, a number of teachers have a very good, intuitive knowledge of what it is like to learn things for the first time. This underpins the best teaching in that the teachers are not teaching at the pupils; they are working with them in a true partnership of teaching and learning. Tasks are purposeful and keep pupils fully occupied. When teachers provide a good range of resources, as they do, for example, in mathematics and music, this adds considerably to pupils' understanding. They give clear instructions to ensure that pupils are then fully engaged in learning.

19. Teachers plan carefully, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to ensure that their lessons are well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. They share the lesson objectives with pupils at the beginning and at the end of lessons to make it clear what they want to achieve. Occasionally, teachers rely too heavily on the published scheme of work, as in geography, and do not interpret it sufficiently with their pupils in mind.
20. Very good use of questioning is an important factor in the high-quality teaching. These lessons often start with a brisk question and answer session, in which teachers question extensively to establish what pupils know. This adds pace and urgency to the lesson. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson, the teacher posed challenging questions to individual pupils to check on how to add using the column method. The questions checked on the strategy pupils used: "How did you...?"... "Why not...?" The teacher was interested not just in the pupils getting the correct answers but also in how those answers were reached. Teachers use questions effectively as a basis for ongoing assessments. In the introductions, questions are effectively used such as "Can you tell me...?"... "What is...?", in order to find out what pupils have remembered. Teachers sometimes explain concepts so clearly, as in a Year 3 design and technology lesson, that pupils exclaim, "Ah! Now I get the picture!"
21. When teachers plan lessons with good links between subjects it helps the pupils to learn even more. This happened in a Year 4 literacy session where pupils were studying a non-fiction text about the South American rainforests. Here, pupils had such a good relationship with their teacher that they were not afraid to reveal the edges of their learning to her. Similarly, a Year 5 lesson on the Victorian artist William Morris was well planned to link art with history, and also involved ICT in the use of a scanner. Also, teachers in upper Key Stage 2 have high expectations of their pupils' numeracy skills, such as when they teach them the associative law and how to double numbers using an exponential progression.
22. Specialists add extra depth of subject knowledge such as in a Year 6 music lesson where pupils learned much about timbre, pitch and contrasting musical motifs. Also in Year 6, pupils became engrossed in discussion about the quirky designs of their special slippers, and were given well-timed and relevant guidance by their teacher. Teachers start and end lessons promptly, and introductions and plenary feedback sessions play an important and positive part in the lesson. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the final summary was reinforced effectively with practical aids to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
23. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently, placing an emphasis on correct procedures such as not calling out and not talking when others are answering. This means that time is not wasted because of poor behaviour and lack of attention. The ancillary assistants work well with designated pupils, ensuring that those with a range of needs have a full understanding of the lesson and the task, so that they are fully involved in learning. These pupils' responses may not be as quick as other pupils, but are considered just as important. This results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, being fully engaged in all lessons.
24. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory but are not as effective, there are occasions when the pace of lessons drops and the rate of learning slows. Where there is a lack of pace, pupils tend to put in less effort. Sometimes teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations, particularly of higher attaining pupils who are too frequently given

undemanding tasks. In a mathematics lesson, for example, in Year 2, pupils enjoyed their tasks with dice and sums but said they found it “dead easy”. Some teachers regularly use computers in lessons but do not use ICT sufficiently to extend pupils’ skills and enhance learning in other subjects.

25. Support staff are always carefully briefed and make a valuable contribution to teaching. Resources, although in short supply in some subjects, are well prepared and used to successfully promote learning. Staff make good use of day-to-day assessment to record children’s attainment and plan future work. Teachers’ background knowledge and structured approach to teaching the basic skills enable pupils to make good progress in most aspects of literacy and numeracy. Teaching takes account of children’s different previous attainments and good support is given to children with learning, physical or behavioural difficulties.
26. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Class teachers are well aware of their pupils’ needs and work in close conjunction with support staff to meet these. They use a wide range of resources effectively and make consistently good efforts to fully include pupils in class. They also deploy classroom assistants effectively. Classroom assistants provide good support to pupils with special educational needs. They have established good relationships, inspiring trust and confidence. Good use is made of praise to encourage extra effort and most pupils show a keenness to do well. All staff note pupils’ progress carefully and maintain accurate records of their progress towards individual targets. Pupils know these targets and realise the importance of working towards them, even when they find this difficult.
27. There are some inconsistencies in teachers’ marking. Where it is effective, written comments frequently relate to pupils’ individual targets, and often provide clear guidance to enable the pupil to improve. Where teachers make regular comments on pupils’ presentation, this has a good affect, but some accept rather carelessly presented work. The school asks parents to hear pupils read at home, and spelling is usually a part of weekly homework; pupils have other tasks set such as research and mathematics. However, the amount of homework set from week to week varies and, without a brief explanation, pupils and parents are often unclear about what is expected.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education are met well. Since the last inspection, the curriculum planning has been considerably strengthened and is now good.
29. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and helps to ensure they get off to a good start when they move into Year 1.
30. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced successfully. The school is in the process of improving provision for ICT but the use of computers is still underdeveloped in subjects such as history and geography. The curriculum in religious education follows the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus.

31. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in school life and careful planning of lessons ensures that they have access to the whole curriculum. In literacy lessons, teachers introduce ideas in a practical and visual way, and this greatly enhances learning. ICT is under-used as a resource for special educational needs and the school is rightly seeking to improve this aspect of provision further.
32. Personal, social and health education is well provided for in specific lessons and within the curriculum as a whole. Social and health issues are discussed regularly, and policies and programmes help to ensure that pupils are well prepared for life inside and outside of school. Good provision is made for sex education and drugs awareness. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 focused on road safety as part of a theme on healthier lifestyles. Older pupils discussed a range of topics including an exploration of their own personal strengths. One pupil showed a clear awareness of the difficulties in giving up smoking from observing adults who had tried to do so.
33. Flexible organization reflects the school's inclusive approach that helps to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential. Pupils frequently work in groups with others of similar potential attainment. Individuals are placed with older or younger pupils during part of the day so that they can progress at an appropriate pace. This policy is ensuring that pupils of the highest ability make good progress. Following its analysis of national test results, this is being given increased emphasis in Key Stage 1. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are very well integrated into the school. Although all the teaching staff are female, there is a male ancillary teacher and caretaker, and fathers help with clubs. Governors, male and female, are frequent visitors to the school.
34. The programme of extra-curricular activities is very good. It includes sport, music, art, drama and first aid. Many pupils join in these after-school and lunchtime activities on a regular basis. Individuals learn to play a variety of musical instruments and many are involved in the choir and in the orchestra. Pupils also have the opportunity to go on an exciting variety of day and residential visits.
35. Relationships with other schools and partner institutions are good. Links with the local secondary school help ease pupils' transition at eleven. Pupils from the nursery join the school for lunch. Although run separately from the school, the afternoon club is well integrated; resources are shared and adult personnel work both in school and in this additional provision.
36. The local community makes a very good contribution to learning. The school has an established relationship with the parish church and members of the local community play important roles in the school. Local history studies involve the study of Truro, and clay work is fired by a local pottery. There are good links with local business and industry.
37. Provision for spiritual development is good. There is a strong spiritual element in many assemblies and in other areas of the curriculum including science, music and English. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect on the value of creativity and the wonders of the natural world. They also consider the worship element of other faiths and reflect on their own worth and their own qualities. Relationships with the local church have been developed since the last inspection.
38. Pupils are effectively encouraged to develop a strong moral awareness and there are clear codes of behaviour in the school. They are encouraged to think about everyday morality and the major issues in the world such as care for the environment. Classroom displays of the destruction of the World Trade Centre carried a clear moral message.

39. Social development is promoted very well. Even quite young pupils help to clear up and give out books. Those who clear up after lessons where clay is used make a really useful contribution in the classroom. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have responsibilities around the school. Older ones act as prefects and the 'buddy system' helps pupils to learn about the nature of responsibility. The school council aids pupils' understanding about how everyone can have a voice in the school community and helps to gain an understanding of the democratic process. The opportunity to join clubs and to compete against others is available to all pupils – the runners in the Truro mini-marathon wear their medals with real pride. The residential and other visits and charity fund-raising activities also contribute effectively to pupils' social development and to real awareness of what it means to be a good citizen. The teaching and other staff provide very good role models for pupils in the school.
40. Pupils are introduced to many kinds of music and many forms of art and literature. There are art, textiles and music clubs to promote interest and participation in creative activity. Pupils are made aware of their own culture and that of others. The library has a choice of books on art and music and older pupils are aware of how they might find out more by using the Internet. The school has a very clear focus on local Cornish culture and the life and history of Truro. Pupils are also aware of non-European culture because they read stories about other parts of the world. They sponsor an African child and through her photographs and letters they gain a valuable insight into life in a very different community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school takes good care of its pupils and there has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection. This level of care is enhanced by the very good knowledge that staff have of their pupils and the very high quality of relationships throughout the school community. Parents have very positive views about the care that the school provides for their children.
42. A number of effective and comprehensive procedures for both child protection and health and safety result in a safe and secure environment for children to learn in. Effective arrangements exist for first aid and the recording of any accidents that may occur. Governors are closely involved in health and safety matters and take their responsibilities seriously. They are currently responding to the points that were identified in a recent site inspection and have already improved such things as pathways around the play area. The school maintains good records for pupils with medical conditions and for emergency contact, should it be required. The supervision of pupils at lunch and in the playground is effective and the midday assistants are seen as an integral and important part of the school team.
43. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are good. The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and uses both the celebration assemblies and the house system to reward positive behaviour. Similarly, the school has effective sanctions in place should they be required. Attendance is monitored closely and parents have a very good understanding of the need to notify the school if their children are absent or going on holiday.
44. Very good progress has been made since the previous inspection in developing systematic and manageable assessment methods in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science. A close eye is kept on each pupil and appropriate records

are kept. Good use is made of this information to set up classroom groups and to identify children who would benefit from a modified programme of work – because either they lack confidence or need to be given more challenging work.

45. Procedures for the identification, assessment and review of pupils with special educational needs are good. Most individual education plans are well written and focus well upon pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers take pupils' views of their own abilities into account although some pupils lack much understanding of this. The special educational needs co-ordinator and other teachers keep good records of the progress made by pupils with statements of special need in meeting the targets set in their individual education plans.
46. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. In particular, the school has a good understanding of any achievements of its pupils outside school and these are celebrated in assembly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school promotes itself very well to parents. It is clear from the comments at the parents' meeting and from the majority of responses to the questionnaire, that parents hold the school in high esteem and the majority have very positive views about it. They feel that they are welcomed into school and that the school listens to their comments. Parents of children with special educational needs are given every opportunity to support them and to review their progress.
48. A large number of parents help out in the classroom on a regular basis and are keen to respond to the *Help register*. Many parents are able to provide special skills, such as organising the gymnastics, football and running clubs; during the inspection a parent was observed making a very effective contribution to a swimming lesson. Others help by hearing readers and assisting teachers with the preparation of resources. Parents also provide appropriate support to home reading and homework. All these activities ensure that parents make a very effective contribution to their children's learning.
49. A committed and hard working group of parents organise the Parent Teacher Association and events that are organised, such as the barbecue, are well supported by parents and raise approximately £2000 each year.
50. Good quality of information is produced for parents and the school makes effective use of regular monthly newsletters. The annual reports on pupils' progress are also very informative and they include useful developmental comments and specific targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership. The headteacher has a clear vision of future developments and she has greatly improved many aspects of the work and management of the school since she was appointed early in 1999. Many positive and necessary changes have taken place in response to the last inspection report and these have transformed the school.

52. Prior to the headteacher's appointment the school had gone through a period of instability in relation to all aspects of leadership and management and, although some changes had been made, little had been done to ensure that they were effective. This was especially true of the management of subjects and of the curriculum. The subject co-ordinators are now fully operational and most are very effective in leading their subjects because they have a clear idea of the way forward.
53. The vision and drive of the headteacher have been pivotal in bringing the school and community together and improving links with partner institutions, particularly the church and the nursery school. This has brought about a significant improvement in the quality of the education. The headteacher has gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils and is good at team building and motivating everyone within the school community. A feature of the school is the unity of purpose and teamwork that is clearly operating in all parts of the school. Teaching and ancillary staff work very closely together and this is of real benefit to all pupils and has been instrumental in raising standards and creating a really inclusive school.
54. There is now a strong senior management team. The skills, expertise and experience of the headteacher, new deputy and the special educational needs co-ordinator complement each other very well. The new deputy already has a clear view of the school's priorities and the special educational needs co-ordinator plays an important part in explaining and promoting changes among established staff and those who have joined the school more recently. The role of the subject co-ordinator is developing well and staff new to their roles share a clear understanding of what should be achieved. Established co-ordinators are well informed and effective in promoting their subjects and in monitoring standards. However there are some anomalies in the distribution of responsibilities: some part-time staff manage two subjects while full-time staff have only one.
55. The quality of leadership provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. Co-ordination has been increasingly strong in recent times and its fruits in classroom provision are plain to see. The co-ordinator is well informed and committed to the best interests of pupils. The governing body works closely and conscientiously with the headteacher and co-ordinator to support special needs provision within the school. The governors with responsibility to oversee this provision are well qualified and appropriately experienced to fulfil their roles. The funding for special educational needs, which is considerable, is used to good effect.
56. The school's aims to raise standards and improve the quality of education are reflected in its day-to-day life. Very good systems are in place to monitor and evaluate its work. This has brought about a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and in the standards that pupils achieve. Targets are set for improvement, and areas of relative weakness, for example in writing, have been identified and strategies are being put in place.
57. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the last inspection and has made very good improvement. Governors give full support to the school and they and the headteacher have worked very hard to appoint new staff, raise standards and involve parents and the community. Governors have good levels of knowledge and they are kept well informed, which helps them to remain fully involved in discussions and new developments. They undertake their roles with enthusiasm, for example in attending the school council. There is a shared commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. The growing culture of monitoring and target setting keeps the school moving forward toward achieving its aims.

58. The school development plan sets a specific agenda for continuing development and improvement and provides a central focus for financial planning. Careful consideration is given to setting the annual budget in order to sustain developments and financial initiatives. Regular monitoring of spending means governors can keep a watchful eye on funds. Such procedures have improved very significantly over the last two years and have enabled the school to clear a substantial budget deficit in a relatively short time. In financial matters and in all other aspects of their work, governors fulfil their statutory duties well. Specific grants are used appropriately. The school makes good use of new technology in all aspects of financial and other management. Teachers are able to use computers and other new technology in lesson planning and the production of resources and displays. Governors frequently compare the school's performance with other schools locally and nationally. They work closely with the headteacher to ensure that every pound is well spent.
59. The school benefits very well from a range of experienced and more recently qualified staff. This enables the curriculum to be taught very effectively. The non-teaching staff also provide very effective support in the classroom. Good procedures have been developed in the last couple of years for staff development and the induction of new teachers. The school has introduced its performance management policy effectively and all teaching and support staff are part of it. The headteacher sees all members of staff as an integral part of the school and has successfully built a cohesive team.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to improve standards further, the school should:

Improve standards in ICT at Key Stage 2 (paragraph 128) by:

- Ensuring pupils have enough opportunities to learn about data handling, modelling, sensing, control and data logging.
- Providing training and guidance for teachers in these areas
- Providing the necessary equipment
- Including ICT where appropriate in more day-to-day lessons

Minor weaknesses:

- Writing and spelling across the curriculum. (paragraph 86)
- More resources are needed in ICT, religious education, geography and art. (paragraphs 128, 150, 120 and 112)
- There are some inconsistencies in marking and in the setting of homework. (paragraph 27)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	22	15	9	0	0	0
Percentage	2	47	32	19	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents over two percentage points

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	203
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y1 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	13	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	19
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	29	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (90)	84 (90)	97 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	19	18
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	27	30	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (93)	94 (100)	91 (86)
	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 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (94)	70 (91)	78 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	18	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (83)	74 (83)	83 (89)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

As there were only ten girls in this year group, separate figures for boys and girls are omitted

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	165
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	0	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)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	388884
Total expenditure	386366
Expenditure per pupil	1961
Balance brought forward from previous year	16221
Balance carried forward to next year	18739

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	33	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	64	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	52	18	1	5
The teaching is good.	38	51	6	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	49	19	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	36	6	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	47	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	26	49	21	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	29	60	8	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	28	64	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	46	12	4	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

61. Most children enter the reception class on a full-time basis at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection, there were 15 children in the reception class, including two attending part-time. The admissions policy allows some children to attend only in the morning so that the needs of individual children can be met. This flexible approach is much appreciated by parents. Children's attainment as they start school varies considerably. Some have already begun to read and others are at a very early stage of language development. Most children have had the benefit of attending nursery or play-group before starting school. Previous baseline assessments indicate that overall attainment as children enter the reception class is broadly average.
62. The consistently high quality teaching enables all children, whatever their stage of development or ability, including those with special educational needs, to make the most of their time in the reception class. Although the children had been in school for two weeks at the time of the inspection, they had settled in remarkably well and were making very good progress. This rate of learning indicates that most will achieve all the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.
63. The teaching team was making careful assessments during the first few days and weeks of the term and making sure that daily plans took account of the stepping-stones² towards the early learning goals. This carefully planned teaching means that every child should get off to a good start when they begin Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children start school with personal and social skills which are broadly typical or a little above those of their age group. They are making rapid progress due to the very good teaching, where high expectations are consistently spelled out to the children who in turn are eager to rise to the challenge. The teaching staff are very careful to listen to and value the children's ideas and feelings. In doing so, they encourage children to feel they have an important part to play in the lesson, and the less confident to 'have a go'.
65. Most mornings feature a 'roundabout' of activities; these include tasks to which children are directed and a range of other activities from which they can choose. Children set about their work with enthusiasm and with a good degree of concentration. They show a good understanding of the routines and have no trouble in making up their minds; some children choosing to work with others in the role-play corner, while others work individually at the 'writing' desk or quietly look at a book. Their independence is developing well and most are keen to discuss what they are doing with visiting adults. One child confidently pointed out a classroom display based on the story of 'Duck in the Muck' and was happy to read the story with a visiting inspector. Teaching staff successfully promote good relationships, setting an excellent example in their own interactions with children and adults, and guiding individual children when necessary. This provides children with a framework within which to explore relationships – to feel safe, secure and to develop a sense of trust.

² The Foundation Stage curriculum indicates three steps towards each learning goal; these are referred to as 'stepping stones'.

66. Children take good care of their classroom, finding resources and putting them away when they have finished with them. This level of responsibility and independence is developing because the teaching team is constantly alert to the needs of individual children through close observation and the excellent relationships with parents.

Communication, language and literacy

67. Very good teaching builds strongly on the broad range of confidence in language that children have when they join the class. Three weeks into the term, it was evident that all children were making very good progress, and developing confidence in speaking to an adult, within a group and to the whole class. High expectations are apparent when children are listening. All children were absorbed as the teacher skillfully read 'The Enormous Turnip'. She introduced the story very effectively, drawing on children's observations, comments and predictions. As the story was read, it was clear that children knew that print carried meaning; several were able to read some words and joined in each time the word 'gigantic' appeared. They understood the cumulative sequence of the story and made spontaneous comments such as, "There's lots of people, they must be very tired", and "I don't understand how cows can pull things". As this dialogue was occurring, the auxiliary assistant was making notes about individual children, recording how well they were listening and taking part in the discussion. With great sensitivity to individual children, she provided feedback, awarding stickers to those who had tried hard and giving some pointers to those whose attention had wandered a little. On this and other occasions, children were beginning to have some sense of their own progress – a very good basis for the future when older pupils are expected to be aware of their individual targets and to take some responsibility for their own learning.
68. Through systematic teaching, children are learning letter sounds; some children know many initial sounds and one or two are already word building. Every morning starts with a whole-class session focusing on a specific letter. When teaching children about the letter *c*, the teacher gave each child an object. They had to choose to jump into one of two hoops, depending on whether their object started with a *c* or not. This lively session was followed by a range of activities to reinforce the letter sound and its shape: painting at an easel, writing letters in sand, making plasticine letters and writing on paper. Most children are enthusiastic early readers who enjoy sharing books regularly, both with their teachers and with their parents at home.
69. Every aspect of this area is enhanced by the teaching staff's attention to detail and the systematic introduction of new and pertinent vocabulary. The children acquire a love of language as they learn.

Mathematical development

70. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and are on course to meet or exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is very effective. No opportunity is missed to develop the children's awareness of number, pattern and shape, whether checking how many there are in the class or deciding whether the teacher has put out the correct number of scissors. Children use mathematical language naturally because it is constantly introduced into each activity – "Do we need more brushes?" "Can you make this tower taller?" "What shape is this potato print?" "Is this bigger?"

71. Most children are comfortable handling numbers up to ten and in counting on by one or two accurately. This was demonstrated during a number game when children had to count on two from numbers up to ten and then jump that many times. They thoroughly enjoyed this activity, shrieking with delight when someone chose a higher number and had to jump 18 times. Using their fingers, sorting toys and cubes, most children associate counting numbers up to ten with the correct number of objects
72. Through carefully prepared practical activities, children are developing an awareness of shape. When making prints with potatoes, many offered an appropriate name for the shapes produced, such as 'round', 'long' or 'square'. When printing with a carrot, one child described the prints as "carrot shaped"! Knowledge of shape is well supported using a computer program, where children have to use the mouse to select, drag and drop squares, circles and triangles to the appropriate position on the screen. Early notions of money are reinforced by 'shopping' activities in the role-play area.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Most children bring a range of experiences to school as well as an appetite for new ones. Teaching takes this into account and provides many situations in which children can develop their knowledge and understanding of the known and the unfamiliar. They make good progress and most are on course to meet the early learning goals, particularly in exploration and investigation.
74. The level of children's interest was obvious when they were using their senses to explore materials that were hidden in yoghurt pots. The teacher had carefully prepared the activity, clearly focusing on the Foundation Stage stepping stones in this area. The pots contained such materials as jam, chutney, herbs, fruit and vegetables. The teacher, nursery nurse and the chair of governors (a regular helper in school) provided very good support, guiding children's learning effectively and extending their vocabulary. Children's understanding of the five senses was developed well through open questions such as "What do you think...?" The teacher ensured that the children were thinking carefully by gathering them together to review progress and reinforce ideas. When she asked "What are we trying to find out?" one child replied "We're using our hands, ears, eyes and mouth to find what's in the pots". The way in which the teacher structures such activities, giving children the opportunity to make suggestions and to test things out for themselves, is carefully nurturing their curiosity and enabling them to begin to organise their ideas. Planning to enable children to find out about past and present events in their own lives shows an equally imaginative approach.
75. Early design and making skills are developed as children investigate construction materials such as large blocks and interlocking plastic cubes. They are learning to handle classroom tools such as scissors safely when making models from re-cycled material. Most children are reasonably confident when using the computer; they use programs which develop their knowledge and understanding of pattern, similarities and differences – for example, when sorting pictures of fruit and vegetables.
76. Later in the term, children will visit a wood in order to observe, find out about and identify features of the natural environment. Opportunities for learning in this area are plentiful in the leafy school grounds but the reception outdoor area is too small and sparse for this kind of learning to be part of children's everyday experience.

Physical development

77. Children come to school with average attainment in this area. Good teaching ensures that pupils have ample opportunities to develop skills in the manipulation of tools and in using construction toys. Regular weekly time in the hall provides good opportunities for running, jumping and using a range of small and large equipment but the space outside the reception class provides limited room for pupils to move with confidence and to develop an awareness of the space around them, controlling wheeled vehicles and playing with small apparatus. During the brief time that children were observed using the outdoor space, they played well together and moved with confidence. However, this space does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to experience climbing, balancing, sliding and swinging and it lacks large construction apparatus. This means that learning in this area tends to be limited to formal occasions and children have little chance to adopt a more independent approach. Although most pupils are likely to achieve the early learning goals in physical development, they lack the rich variety of activity that is expected in the Foundation Stage.
78. Children have many opportunities to handle tools, objects and malleable materials with increasing control. Although some children have difficulty in cutting cardboard and plastic with scissors, they persevere and try hard. Most control pencils, crayons and paintbrushes quite well; they take care when setting out tabletop activities and when using plasticine and play dough.

Creative development

79. Children make good progress in this area and are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. Teaching staff are particularly successful in developing the children's imagination through role-play and in drawing out from them creative language; for example the teacher took part in a re-enactment of 'The Enormous Turnip' story, successfully encouraging dialogue as the story unfolded. This approach has a positive impact on children's communication, language and literacy skills. Their artistic skills are also developed in interesting ways. Paint is mixed thickly and colours are bold. Children are encouraged to experiment – for example, they were given a free hand to find out the right amount of paint to apply when printing. After some messy experiments, children refined their techniques.
80. Music often features in lessons. Pupils responded enthusiastically to number rhymes and songs such as the 'Billy Goat Song'. Although no lessons were observed that focused specifically on music, planning includes a good range of opportunities for children to explore sounds and rhythms and to sing a variety of songs.

Summary

81. It is hard to imagine that the teacher is new to the school this term and that the children have just started their formal education. Supported very well by the auxiliary assistant, the teacher has established warm relationships with the children. Her detailed planning ensures that every part of the school day is focused on children's learning. The teacher is committed to providing opportunities for all children to progress, whatever their background and level of attainment. A delightful atmosphere pervades the reception class. Children are happy, secure and eager to take part in the activities provided by the teaching staff; in their turn, staff make it obvious that they enjoy the children's company. Provision for children of this age has improved since the last inspection. Teaching was previously satisfactory with some good features; it is now consistently very good and is the main factor in the rapid progress that children are making.

ENGLISH

82. Pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 and seven year olds achieve broadly average standards. The rate of learning accelerates during Years 3 to 6 and attainment at eleven is clearly above the national average. The impact of the literacy strategy and of the availability of new resources has been considerable. The present Year 6 shows high levels of attainment in written work and in reading and the overall trend is towards an improvement in standards. The work produced by boys is often good and they achieve well. The standards observed in reading during the inspection were good throughout the school and written work is generally at least sound, despite some errors in the basic skills of punctuation and spelling. Pupils are both confident and articulate and they express their ideas well orally and in writing.
83. The development of language work is well planned and pupils quickly begin to work in a way that will help them to progress. In all year groups, speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion activities and pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in class and in assembly. Younger pupils generate ideas in 'brain storming' sessions, for example with Year 1 pupils contributing well on the subject of cats. Literacy lessons foster the development of skills in speaking, and other subject areas, including history, make a valuable contribution. Listening skills are variable; some pupils follow instructions well and can listen very carefully but the progress of some pupils is affected by a failure to concentrate on the spoken word. They do not listen carefully enough to the sounds of words or to the structure of sentences. By Year 6, oral work is of a high standard and the majority of pupils can discuss character studies with real confidence.
84. Standards in reading are good or better for most pupils. Most pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. They also produce detailed and structured reviews of their reading. The majority of younger pupils use a variety of strategies to support their reading, including the use of phonics and picture clues. However, some pupils need more support with the use of these strategies in reading unfamiliar words. In the majority of lessons, a support teacher or other adult is present and this helps pupils to make good progress. Older pupils are encouraged to use books that are appropriate to their ability level, usually chosen by themselves. Parents make a valuable contribution by hearing pupils read in school and at home. Pupils enjoy a close study of fiction and non-fiction texts. By the end of their time in the school they have experienced a rich variety of literature including a wide range of poetry.
85. Library skills are well developed despite the small size of the school library, which provides limited opportunities for pupils to develop skills in research. Many pupils have very good reading standards and they are encouraged to make extra progress because of the challenging activities provided in most lessons. The use of poetry texts was particularly successful during the inspection week. Some pupils with special educational needs have difficulty in reading but they are well monitored and make good progress when they work with support teachers. There is also support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and they do well. Higher attaining pupils have good skills in researching for information. Pupils of average attainment are able to read and enjoy a variety of books and have well-established reading strategies to help them decode unfamiliar words. Some older pupils are not clear about the difference between fiction and non-fiction or about the use of an index. Individual pupils are now also developing the use of computers, usually at home, to further their skills in some aspects of reading and research and they understand that valuable information is available on the Internet.

86. Written work is often presented well, with most pupils using joined up writing, as this is introduced early. However, when older pupils use pencil rather than pen this can affect the presentation of their work. The higher attaining pupils write about and illustrate their ideas very well and many produce pieces of extended creative writing. There is evidence in the classrooms displays and in discussions with individuals that pupils are encouraged to concentrate on spelling and punctuation. Pupils are clear about the use of capital letters and the spelling rules when asked. However, individual pupils do not always follow the rules that they have been carefully taught. They often fail to copy spellings or punctuation accurately and or to spell correctly, partly because they do not listen to the sound of the word. The range of written work is good with evidence of really creative and imaginative work and of writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. Pupils also write and illustrate their own stories and poems. Work on display in the hall provides a vivid record of the residential visit to the Scilly Isles. However, at present pupils have insufficient opportunity to use word-processing and desktop publishing skills to improve and illustrate their written work. The potential for extended writing and the development of skills in reading comprehension in other subjects is also underdeveloped.
87. Pupils respond very well to work in English and are prepared to experiment and to think for themselves. They work well in pairs and groups and they take an active rather than passive role in learning. Teachers promote participation and inclusion through the sharing of ideas. As well as working individually, pupils take part in group and whole-class activities and this promotes effective learning for all.
88. Learning is effectively monitored and pupils make good progress. The subject makes a good contribution to the social, moral and cultural development of pupils because it encourages discussion on a variety of issues and provides many examples of different kinds of literature and creative activity. Effective systems of assessment and recording of information about individual pupils are used in the planning for groups and activities within the class. There is usually a good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils and this helps them to progress well. However, classes are sometimes only divided into three groups and this does not always ensure that all pupils are given the most suitable resources and tasks. Pupils with special educational needs are given good individual support that enables them to make good progress. By the end of Year 5, pupils understand how to use reference books to access information. They enjoy research work and creative writing and they are being well prepared for their work in secondary school.
89. Class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the teaching of English and they are confident in teaching the basic skills in all aspects of reading and writing. Teaching is effective in small groups and with the whole class. The teaching of creative writing is good; teachers have high expectations and usually provide work that challenges even the higher attaining pupils. In the most successful lessons, pupils make very good progress because of the pace and rigour of the work, the high quality of questioning and the exciting range of activities. In some very successful lessons, the focus is on creative work in poetry and pupils learn to understand rhyming patterns by studying such poems as 'The Land of Counterpane' by R L Stevenson. In others there is a clear focus on the use of non-fiction texts about the rainforest. In a few lessons the time available is not used well enough and pupils are not kept firmly on task. Sometimes photocopies of texts are used when real books or the use of an overhead projector would provide greater stimulus and enjoyment for pupils. However, overall planning is good and the literacy strategy has been implemented effectively. Work is marked frequently, comments are helpful as well as encouraging and teachers use the assessment procedures well.

90. The subject is well managed. The literacy hour has been fully implemented and the monitoring of all aspects of work in English is now well established. Good progress has been made since the last inspection; planning, teaching and assessment have improved and new resources have been provided. This has contributed to the standards of attainment at Key Stage 2 and in literacy across the school.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards are average by the age of seven and above average by the age of eleven – similar to those being achieved at the time of the previous inspection. Test results have been variable in recent years and have been affected by differences in the capabilities of different year groups as well as by a number of changes in staffing. However, standards in classrooms are now improving rapidly because of the school's sharp focus on teaching mathematics well. Most pupils, including those with physical or learning needs, make rapid progress because of the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Boys usually do as well as girls by the age of seven and by the age of eleven.
92. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning over time and are supported well by teaching assistants in the classroom and in withdrawal groups. Those few pupils who use English as an additional language make good progress. Their good progress in learning to speak and write English enables them to understand mathematical concepts more easily. In Key Stage 1, some of the more able pupils do not learn as quickly as they might because the work is too easy for them. Most more able pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with suitably challenging work.
93. In Key Stage 1, pupils sort, match, and sequence numbers correctly and are beginning to recognise patterns, including odd and even. They can count a set of objects and understand that if the objects are rearranged then the number stays the same. They add and subtract simple numbers with growing confidence. Many pupils identify and name a small range of two-dimensional shapes with confidence. They handle data, sort objects using various criteria, and display results with simple graphs such as bar charts.
94. In Key Stage 2, pupils reinforce and develop further their number skills using the four rules. They recognise patterns and are beginning to use them in their calculations when developing paper and pencil methods. Their understanding of decimal place value is developing well and older pupils handle monetary calculations accurately. They also recognise the link between decimals and fractions. They can order a set of decimal fractions correctly and round them to the nearest whole number. In number work, they are usually able to find the median number in a list. They can measure, tally and estimate as necessary. Most pupils can collate data, and draw and analyse graphs based, for example, on a class questionnaire or a local survey. Although these results are not often recorded using spreadsheets, a few older pupils use this computer application to automate their calculations and produce graphs. Older pupils gain a good understanding of angles, co-ordinates and symmetry. They can recognise and name a range of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Most pupils can tell the time accurately.

95. Pupils' ability to calculate mentally is reasonably good, as a result of the daily opportunities their teachers give them to practise. Their knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables is usually good, as is their ability to use their mathematical skills in problem-solving situations. Pupils' mathematical vocabulary is well developed and, as a result, they can use mathematical language accurately to describe their reasoning. They understand the meaning of terms such as partitioning, frequency, mean and mode, and can double numbers exponentially to 5,120. This is because teachers place a good emphasis on using mathematical words in lessons.
96. Pupils show interest in their mathematics lessons, and are well motivated. Many pupils concentrate for sustained periods of time and groan loudly when they are told the lesson is over. They co-operate well with each other in pairs and groups. The teachers encourage an atmosphere of teamwork when they give their young mathematicians short amounts of time in which to discuss the possible answers to arithmetical calculations. Pupils use these opportunities well.
97. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. When teaching is effective it possesses a number of features. Teachers start the day, for instance, with quick-fire mental arithmetic sessions. As a result of this business-like start, pupils respond more quickly, and the overall pace of lessons can become fast and furious. Teachers ask open-ended questions well and make sure many pupils have the chance to respond. They give pupils clear guidelines such as "Keep the digits in line when using the column method." In the best lessons, teachers show a very good, intuitive understanding of how learners learn, knowing how and when to step up or slow down the pace as necessary. Classroom assistants are helpful and sympathetic in prompting and guiding those with special educational needs. The assistants have a good knowledge of their pupils' special needs and are prepared well for lessons by the class teachers, as well as through the individual education plans. They also complete written feedback sheets on pupils' progress for the teachers. This keeps a dialogue going which records how well pupils have understood and enables planning to be amended as necessary. When pupils provide verbal answers, teachers hesitate and double-check the accuracy in front of the class. In this way, they encourage pupils, by example, to check their own answers and evaluate their own progress. The way mathematics has been developed provides a good model for other subjects. Although teachers have not challenged pupils to use mathematical skills enough in other subjects, they are doing so more and more.
98. Most teachers have very good knowledge of mathematics which means they can extend pupils' understanding in interesting and appealing ways. Some classes have fun with numbers and develop a sense of wonder at the possibilities. Pupils are becoming more confident in tackling more complex calculations. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to talk about mathematics and to explain their thinking in reaching answers. They use open-ended questions and emphasise an investigative approach to encourage mathematical thinking. Teachers make good mathematical resources available, such as the individual whiteboards in Year 5, and pupils use these resources regularly. Pupils do not get to use computers, though, as often as they should.
99. **The mathematics curriculum is broad and well balanced. Teachers make formal assessments of pupils' attainments regularly. The school conducts an analysis of results and is set to increase the use of such analysis to inform future planning. Mathematics is led and managed very well. The subject co-ordinator and the headteacher monitor, support and evaluate teaching positively and**

thoroughly. The school has invested heavily in the improvement of teaching and learning in mathematics and this investment is paying off this year. Progress has been good since the last inspection given the rapid improvement in provision over the last two years, and the strengthening in the leadership of the subject.

SCIENCE

100. Standards are above average. Seven and eleven year olds achieve good results in national tests and this is reflected in the work they do in class. This is due to careful planning and consistently effective teaching. Much improvement has been achieved since the previous inspection when attainment was broadly average and teaching, although satisfactory, had some significant weaknesses.
101. Throughout the school, there is an increased emphasis on learning through enquiry and practical investigation. This means that all pupils, including those who are less confident in reading and writing, can have the same opportunities to learn science. The 'hands-on' approach is clearly evident during lessons and features strongly in pupils' books. In Years 1 and 2, practical work on seeds means pupils learn about plants; they know that plants need soil, water and light to grow and record the results of their investigations carefully on pro-forma. Through experiments with ice, they learn to observe changes closely and make predictions. Practical work enables most pupils to develop a good understanding of electrical circuits. All pupils gain from such investigations; pupils with special educational needs benefit especially from trying things out for themselves, and higher attainers are often challenged. For example, one pupil in Year 2 wrote, "I think that when we use two bulbs there isn't enough electricity in the battery to give us a very bright light". Pupils who have English as an additional language make the same good progress as others, and boys and girls do equally well
102. In a very successful Year 2 lesson, pupils were finding out about forces. They were enthusiastic and keen to contribute – a feature of all the lessons observed. Skilfully guided by the teacher, they suggested ways in which toy cars could be propelled down a slope. They were quick to point out how the test could be made fairer by ensuring that the slopes were at the same angle and that the cars started from the same position. Pupils' good levels of understanding and skills in measuring and recording were evident during the subsequent group work. Each of the five groups had adult support, which greatly enhanced their learning. Pupils remained focused throughout and the adults encouraged a scientific approach, insisting that pupils measured accurately and recorded their results carefully.
103. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2. Their books reflect a varied and stimulating curriculum. Through practical work with plants, they build on earlier work to learn about photosynthesis; detailed diagrams of the human eye show clear understanding of the function of each part and closely observed experiments indicate a good understanding of which materials are soluble in water.
104. The three lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were very good. In each case, the teachers' own knowledge of the underlying scientific principles meant they could respond to pupils' questions confidently and move their learning forward. As a result of this consistently effective teaching, pupils work at a high level; they develop above average knowledge and understanding, and learn much about key scientific ideas and

processes. During a carefully structured lesson in Year 4, pupils offered lots of ideas about what might affect circuits: “Lots of batteries...knots in the wire...too many crocodile clips for the electricity to flow”. Prompted skilfully by the teacher, they refined these early ideas and devised their own tests. Throughout the lesson, the teacher gave pupils time to think and rephrase their comments. They showed a very good understanding of fair testing, suggesting which factors should be constant to allow only one aspect of the test to vary. Using the common format adopted throughout the school to record investigations, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of scientific methods and processes.

105. Pupils understanding of more theoretical aspects of science is also good. This was evident in a Year 5 science lesson on nutrition. Using her excellent motivational skills, the teacher created a real ‘buzz’ in the classroom. Learning moved on briskly as pupils worked in groups to produce balanced diets, drawing on their good understanding of various types of food. The tasks were adapted according to pupils’ existing level of knowledge and understanding and some pupils received individual support from a learning assistant, which meant all were included in the scientific enquiry. The study of forces undertaken in earlier years is given an increased level of sophistication through Key Stage 2. Pupils showed a very good understanding as a lesson in Year 6 progressed. The teacher skilfully elicited ideas for an experiment to compare forces on objects while in air and water. Pupils discussed possibilities with a level of maturity not often seen at this age. Whilst setting out their plans in notebooks, a spontaneous discussion took place across the room: “You could...but what about...I think...How come when...”. The teacher let this dialogue flow, sensibly encouraging independent ideas. Subtle differences in the task or the reference materials meant all pupils could tackle the problem at their own level. The pupils’ good level of understanding of how the principles they were investigating applied to real life was illustrated by comments such as, “When you’re in the water you float more” and “I can pick my dad up in the water”.
106. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills in science. They record investigations using charts, labelled diagrams and tables, and use scientific terms frequently in their spoken and written language. They use a range of measuring instruments, such as rulers, scales and Newton meters, and understand the need for reading scales accurately. Although some teachers incorporate ICT occasionally, it is generally underused. There is more scope for the use of sensors to log changes in temperature, light and sound and for recording results using databases.
107. Improvements since the last inspection have been very successfully managed by the co-ordinator. Careful analysis of test results and a thorough review of the curriculum have led to more effective teaching and learning, and improved standards.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Few lessons were observed during the inspection and none was observed in Key Stage 1. Judgments are therefore based on discussions with teachers and a detailed consideration of the displays and portfolios of pupils’ work. The quality of work observed in classrooms and displayed around the school shows a sound level achievement in many aspects of art including collage, drawing, painting, printing and the use of colour. Three-dimensional work seen was mainly ceramics but again standards are sound and clay figures produced by pupils show that they have the appropriate skills in this medium.

109. Younger pupils produce illustrations of characters from stories including a very colourful collage illustrating a book, 'Handa's Surprise', which is set in Africa. They also make self-portraits and this skill is developed further when pupils later work on portraits of themselves as important figures in Tudor history. Continuity and progression in the development of skills is a clear feature of work in art. Pupils develop techniques in painting, drawing and in observational work, for example, in drawings of leaves or other objects that are then used as part of a complex drawing, painting and printing activity which aims to produce a picture in the style of Andy Warhol. Younger pupils can talk about colours and how to mix them. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6, pupils are competent in a range of styles and media. Pupils in Year 6 were observed working on ink washes to produce well-crafted portraits in the style of Victorian photographs, as part of work in history. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the acquisition of skills in practical tasks.
110. Pupils learn well because creative work is closely related to other subjects. Pupils show a clear enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to attempt a variety of activities in art as they progress through the school. They also talk about their work and relate it to other learning. They consider the design skills of William Morris and compare his work with that of Claude Monet. Pupils are able to learn effectively because of this kind of experience which links words, ideas and practical activities. They are also given the opportunity to experiment and make mistakes. Pupils engaged in ceramic work learn that if they do not follow instructions then their piece will not survive the firing process.
111. Many teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they are able to promote a good quality of learning. Pupils are taught to use sketchbooks appropriately and there is a real focus on the teaching of skills. They are encouraged to look carefully and then copy the techniques used, thus extending their own skills. Art is planned so that it meets the learning requirements of all pupils. Those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported and the frequent availability of support staff and parents improves the learning experiences of all pupils. Work is well mounted and displayed and because of this pupils are encouraged to value all aspects of creativity.
112. Basic materials and equipment are readily accessible and a range of art books, posters and prints are available. Some effective use of art-related computer software was observed during the inspection. These resources are used well to ensure that the curriculum in art is rich and varied and that it makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils. However, the subject is not well resourced and the pupils are not able to engage in activities such as silkscreen printing or fabric painting which the co-ordinator would like to introduce. The school does not have a kiln but uses local commercial facilities. The local area is also a rich resource that is used very well. A visit to St Ives has inspired pupils to produce a whole-school installation in the style of *Field* by Anthony Gormley.
113. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has enormous enthusiasm for the subject and a clear vision of the way forward. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the planning and management of the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Only three design and technology lessons were taught and observed during the inspection, in Year 2, Year 3 and Year 6. Evaluation of standards is also based upon a scrutiny of previous work, and discussions with the subject co-ordinator, other teachers and pupils. Most pupils attain satisfactory standards. Currently, pupils are achieving soundly in relation to their prior attainments. Since the school has focused upon raising standards in literacy and numeracy in the last two years, this subject has not been a priority. Therefore, although the quality of learning is satisfactory, some pupils do not yet achieve as well as they could. This is also due to the uneven allocation of time devoted to the subject in different classes. Most pupils, including all those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress with the development of their making skills. Some of the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and they do not achieve enough.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to make structures using tools and to combine components in a few ways. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils have made glove puppets using felt. In the lesson seen, they were observing and drawing the parts of toy vehicles. In some classes, pupils' design skills lag behind their ability to make. Some pupils think that the design phase is merely an opportunity to draw a picture without any further refinement. Most pupils are very enthusiastic about their work but would like to use a greater range of materials, such as plastic, metal or wood, rather than just card and paper. In Key Stage 2, pupils can use pencils to draw around templates, cut out card shapes carefully, and combine elements to make a six-sided box. In Year 6, pupils have made a good start on their innovative and sometimes quirky designs of slippers. They are articulate at explaining their thinking in plenary sessions.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. When occasionally teaching is very good, teachers are skilled at making timely and relevant interventions to guide pupils towards producing better quality manufactures. Teachers have also developed wholesome, respectful relationships with pupils and this is significant in building confidence. As a result, pupils make honest contributions to debate and are not afraid to make mistakes knowing their efforts are valued. Planning is good, being based on the scheme of work produced nationally. Teachers manage pupils well. Pupils respond enthusiastically and concentrate hard. They enjoy making things and have positive attitudes, as was seen in an assembly when a pupil declared publicly that design and technology was "the subject I like the best". Similarly, in Year 3, when the teacher explained a concept particularly well, a pupil exclaimed, "Ah, now I get the picture!"
117. The headteacher provides teachers with exemplar guidance in lessons and a governor with specialist knowledge has observed lessons. The school has started to build a portfolio of pupils' work. Teachers do not use ICT enough but plan to do so when equipment is upgraded in the near future. Resources are now plentiful. The school has improved since the last inspection in this regard and in the quality of planning. Given more training for teachers, an increase in the use of ICT and a review of the time allocation, the school is set to improve standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, in Year 2 and Year 4. Evaluation of standards is based upon those as well as a scrutiny of previous work. Standards are average by the age of seven and also by the age of eleven. Most pupils, including those with higher and lower prior attainments, make satisfactory gains in their learning.
119. Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to gain some basic geographical knowledge. For example, they can identify physical features of places, such as houses, roads and shops. Although pupils develop a few geographical skills, most are uncertain when identifying simple features on maps. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop geographical skills satisfactorily. Their mapping skills, though, remain only adequate with many pupils displaying a lack of confidence in reading features on maps or in naming towns, countries and sea areas, either in the United Kingdom or in other parts of the world. Some pupils in Year 4 can identify successfully the effects of human life on the environment, and express concern for the problems of the South American rainforests. Pupils do not engage in geographical enquiry sufficiently, although some have conducted a few surveys in the local area.
120. Attainments are average mainly because the time allocated to it is rather low. Also geographical resources are unsatisfactory. Although the school possesses a good stock of video tapes, there are no class sets of maps, few large maps, no weather station, and little geographical software.
121. The quality of the little geography teaching observed was satisfactory but teachers generally do not use ICT within geography enough. The school uses national guidelines for its scheme of work. The co-ordinator has introduced and amended this scheme of work but has not yet been able to monitor teaching much. The outcomes of teaching are only evaluated at the end of the year. Few formal assessment procedures are in place to judge how well pupils have done at the end of a term or a year. However, teachers and assistants make informal observations to assess how well pupils are getting on in the short term. There is little evidence that work in geography enhances pupils' cultural awareness. The progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory at best.

HISTORY

122. Standards at age seven are as expected of pupils of similar age nationally and achievement is sound. Pupils in Year 6 show a good level of understanding of the role of key figures of past centuries and of how historians find out about the past. Standards, by age of eleven, are above the national average and pupils achieve well.
123. The process of understanding change over time begins with the sequencing of simple stories and continues with the study of some aspects of life in the past through a focus on significant people such as Florence Nightingale. The work of pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that most pupils are able to understand that life in the past was different and they can compare aspects of life today with life then. The highest attaining pupils are aware of how historians find out about past events from a variety of sources including eyewitness accounts. Work on Ancient Egypt and Mexico helps pupils understand that valuable historical evidence can be found in the ground and to understand some of the ways in which archeology helps the investigation of the past.

It is clear that pupils are being introduced to a sufficient variety of sources of evidence although lessons during the inspection were too dependent on photocopied material and pupils were not seen handling objects that would help them to more directly experience life in the past.

124. Work in history at Key Stage 2 is good, with the best work being very well presented and illustrated. Work on the Tudors shows that pupils understand the importance of portraits and also that they understand the key events of that period. Year 6 studies of the Victorian period are particularly good in that pupils are able to use evidence from Truro to find out about everyday life and the impact of change brought by the railway. The highest attaining pupils produce detailed drawings and balance factual information with intelligent guesswork to reach sound conclusions. All pupils are able to talk about Queen Victoria in the context of family life and to understand that houses and clothes were different from those of the early 21st century. Most pupils can clearly explain the difference between primary and secondary sources of evidence.
125. Learning is well managed. Pupils were seen to learn well, when they were given the opportunity to make deductions about the past by looking at evidence. In the lessons observed in Year 6 it was clear that the subject is taught in a way that ensures that pupils are able to progress at their own level and use information in an accessible form. The lesson was an enjoyable and memorable occasion because of the use of a real and very beautiful Victorian photograph album. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress and enjoyed talking about what they knew about the everyday life of the period. However, some lessons are too dependent on printed information, some of which is too difficult for pupils in the class, either because of the detail or because of the vocabulary used. The use of ICT to enhance work in the subject is underdeveloped and at present younger pupils do not have enough opportunities for independent research.
126. Teaching is good overall. Individual teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and they are developing a skills-based approach to teaching in Key Stage 2. Pupils enjoy the study of history and benefit from a variety of visits, for example to local National Trust properties. Resources are satisfactory because, although the school has few resources of its own, it makes good use of the library and museum loans services. Links with other subjects such as art are good but the subject is not used sufficiently for developing skills in extended writing.
127. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in standards, planning and teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

128. Most seven year olds meet the standards expected. The oldest pupils are very confident when using computers and do very well when using ICT for communicating. However, because other important elements of the curriculum are not taught systematically, eleven year olds cannot meet the expected standards. There is an urgent need for older pupils to develop skills in control technology and in using sensors to monitor and record changes in the environment, such as changes in temperature and light. The spreadsheet programs the school does have are underused, which means pupils' experience of this aspect of modelling is limited. Standards at the time of the previous inspection were in line with those expected at seven and eleven. A shortage of resources has meant that eleven year olds have not been able to meet the increased demands of the revised curriculum.

129. Pupils in the infant classes regularly use word-processing programs to draft ideas and edit text. In Year 1, pupils write letters using a word processor, for example, their letters to the local authority about safe road crossings. They produce bar charts from the information from surveys of hair and eye colours and transport to school as part of their science and geography work. By seven, most pupils can edit mistakes, change the appearance of the text and print out their work independently. Teachers are confident in the subject, which means they can plan opportunities to include ICT in day-to-day work. This is evident in Year 2, when pupils have the opportunity to compare conventional painting methods with a graphics program. They transfer pictures in their sketchbooks to the computer screen using the *autoshape*, *spray can* and *fill* facilities. Activities with a programmable floor robot introduce early ideas of control as pupils enter a sequence of commands, such as *Forward 2*, *Right 90*, *Forward 1*, to send the robot along a pre-determined route.
130. Pupils' general skills are extended well in the junior classes. Most are confident enough to work independently. For example, pupils in Year 3 use CD-ROM resources to search for information about Egypt. Higher attaining pupils can copy pictures into a word processor, add their own text, save and print. Year 4 pupils use this technique to select *clip art* to illustrate their own poems. During a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils rapidly recalled their work in the infants with the floor robot. They quickly learned more advanced programming techniques and were thoroughly absorbed, using the *repeat* function to make the robot 'dance'. This level of enthusiasm was evident in a very successful lesson in Year 5. Pupils had produced patterns during their study of artists such as William Morris. They scanned their pictures into the computer and produced repeating patterns of the same design. This integration of art and ICT is a good example of the school's approach. Pupils are encouraged to think about when the use of ICT is appropriate and when it is not – an important aspect of the ICT curriculum. This was also illustrated during a Year 6 science lesson when pairs of pupils were entering data into a spreadsheet in order to record and illustrate the effect of forces in air and water. This highly appropriate use of ICT to enhance work in art and science is less evident in other curriculum areas such as geography and history.
131. Teachers have a growing confidence in ICT and the direct teaching observed was very effective. They increasingly use it at their own level for writing reports, planning and record keeping. There are some examples of teachers in Key Stage 2 introducing the more complex aspects of the subject, such as spreadsheets, but pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about data handling or to develop skills in using sensors to monitor changes in the environment. Older pupils do not know how to construct a simple database or to set up a sensor to automatically switch on a device – for example, a pelican crossing sequence.
132. The subject co-ordinator has managed well the many changes that have taken place in the curriculum during the last two years. Following observation of lessons and a curriculum audit, she has organised the up-grading of computers and the purchase of new software to fill the gaps described above. A whole-school assessment system has been introduced which provides teachers and pupils with a good guide to the development of skills from year to year. As a result of this hard work, the school is well placed to improve attainment and progress.

MUSIC

133. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and contributes to pupils' rich experience. Seven year olds achieve standards appropriate for their age and eleven year olds exceed them.
134. Due to timetable arrangements, no class lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, but other evidence indicates that teaching is satisfactory. A portfolio of previous work contains samples of pupils' early composition. Using their own marks and squiggles, they had made good attempts to record the sequences of sounds and rhythms graphically, in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. During assemblies and singing practice, pupils sang reasonably tunefully but many of the songs and hymns are pitched too high for young children, especially at the beginning of the year, when Year 2 voices are still at an early stage of development.
135. Three music lessons were observed in Key Stage 2; all were taken by music specialists and were very effective. Year 3 pupils responded well during a lesson on pulse and rhythm. The chant 'Caterpillar Custard' provided them with an entertaining insight into the difference between pulse and rhythm and pupils joined in accurately when the class was split into two parts. Most pupils knew the appropriate technique for playing percussion instruments. They had some good ideas when asked to add their own rhythmic phases to another chant. The way this early work is developed through the school was illustrated during an excellent lesson in Year 6. Pupils were composing two contrasting *motifs* to provide a musical picture of local places, such as the Eden Project. Prompted skilfully by the teacher, they recalled musical terms such as 'contrast', 'tempo', 'dynamics', 'timbre', 'texture', and 'layers' and were fascinated as the teacher illustrated timbre by scrunching a dried leaf. The teacher's expertise was used to good effect as she played the opening bars of Beethoven's 5th Symphony to illustrate a simple but highly effective two-note motif. Pupils worked productively in groups, co-operated and concentrating well. Their initial attempts were of a high standard and the teacher provided valuable feedback to help pupils further refine their compositions the following week. When asked to record their work on paper, pupils showed a good level of musical knowledge as many of them used standard musical notation when this was appropriate.
136. A further indicator of the good standards in music is the number of pupils learning an instrument; weekly tuition takes place for string and woodwind instruments, and staff and governors join pupils in the school orchestra. A specialist voice coach takes each junior class briefly each week and leads a choir practice. The quality of singing on these occasions is good, in contrast to whole-school singing in assemblies which is approached with less enthusiasm.
137. All pupils are involved in school productions, which are very well supported by parents and much appreciated. The musical life of the school is enhanced by other performances, such as the annual summer concert and the leavers' service. The school was a runner-up in the national 'Song for the Millennium' competition.
138. Music makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have opportunities to make a personal response to live and recorded music; choir members and instrumentalists have to make important decisions about priorities and commitment; mixing with different adults and children in and out of school develops social skills; and cultural development is enhanced by the variety of music pupils encounter.

139. The subject has been managed very well by the co-ordinator who is handing over to a new member of staff. Very good improvement has been achieved since the previous inspection, which identified weakness in planning and a lack of opportunities for performing. Very good guidelines have been introduced and more resources have been acquired; more importantly, the profile of music has been raised significantly; this has led to improved standards and has more widely benefited the school community. The main issue for the new co-ordinator to address is the use of ICT in the subject, which is required by the recently revised curriculum orders.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

140. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only gymnastics at Key Stage 1 and gymnastics and swimming at Key Stage 2. Standards in the activities observed were appropriate to pupils' ages. Swimming is a strength of the school.

141. During a good Year 1 lesson, pupils set out mats in pairs, co-operating well. There was a buzz of excited anticipation and pupils were keen to practise jumping and landing on the mat in various ways. The teacher demanded more controlled movements as the lesson progressed, often using pupils to illustrate particular points. A child with limited physical movement was very well supported by a learning assistant, which enabled her to be fully included in the activities. Several pupils controlled their movements well and had a good awareness of the space around them; overall, the quality of movement was in line with that expected at the beginning of Year 1.

142. The gymnastics lesson observed in Year 3 was mainly about setting out apparatus safely. During the brief period when pupils were using the apparatus, they worked well, taking note of the teacher's guidance about refining their movements and landing safely. Most pupils moved with reasonable control, broadly meeting the expectations at this early stage of Year 3. The lesson was satisfactory, but the time available was a little short for pupils to benefit from a sustained period of exercise. In contrast, the time at the swimming pool is used well. At the beginning of a very good lesson with Year 5, pupils were keen to start and they worked well throughout the lesson. A very good pace was maintained and pupils made very good progress. They listened carefully to instructions and concentrated throughout. A Year 4 games lesson was cancelled due to rain but the teacher had sensibly prepared alternative work relating to physical education.

143. The good range of sporting extra-curricular activities, which are valued by parents, enhances the curriculum. They are open both to boys and girls and include competition with other schools. School teams have been particularly successful in netball and running. The school has good resources for physical education. The hall is a reasonable size for indoor activity, and the school field and outdoor hard areas allow for a good range of activities. The subject plays an important part in pupils' moral and social development. They learn that rules must be followed if games are to be fair, members of teams develop reliability and loyalty, and many sports activities call on their social skills. As all pupils are included through extra help or special equipment, pupils learn to be tolerant of others' disabilities and often offer their own support where they see a need.

144. Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Under the effective leadership of the co-ordinator, the curriculum is now organised to ensure all aspects of physical education are covered, resources have increased and older pupils make better progress. Future plans, such as the development of a manageable assessment system, are appropriate and the school is well placed to develop the subject further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. Pupils' attainments are average by the age of seven and above average by the age of eleven. By the age of eleven, most pupils develop an understanding of Christianity, as well as of other world faiths such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

146. In Year 2, pupils learn the special words relevant to different faiths such as 'parable'. Others recognise words like 'meanwhile' that they remember from literacy sessions. They enjoy opportunities to discuss the ethical issues arising from stories such as that of the Prodigal Son. In learning to know themselves more deeply, Year 4 pupils show some perception, describing bravery for example, as being able to 'face your fears'. They are honest in discussing fear and talk openly about being frightened without their friends close to them or 'scared' or 'terrified' on a theme park ride. Teachers are skilled at using language as a key to deeper self-awareness.

147. In Year 5, pupils know that the early Christians used the sign of the fish when the Church had to remain a secret, 'underground' organisation while it was persecuted by the Romans. Many can explain in some detail about the story of Abraham and Isaac. They are fluent in their use of religious vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils know much about the Five Ks, which govern the conduct of Sikhs. They can refer easily to clothing such as the turban but know much more than this. They discuss and explain the symbolism of aspects of Hinduism such as the Kesh and the Kara, knowing that the latter represents the one God with no beginning and no end. Even more perceptively, they describe the parallels between the leaders of world faiths such as Jesus Christ and Guru Nanak, realising that both went into the wilderness to be with God, and that both started in one faith and initiated a new faith. When asked about the hierarchy of religious organisations, pupils describe this as "how high people are up the pecking order".

148. The overall quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching in upper Key Stage 2. Where teaching is effective, lessons are well organised. The school deploys a specialist religious education teacher to take lessons in Year 5 and Year 6 and this does much to enhance teaching and learning there. Teachers generally match the work carefully to the abilities of different groups. They help pupils to reflect upon life, and to develop a greater understanding of themselves. In both key stages pupils are given time for quiet reflection. During such times pupils come to terms with themselves, with their beliefs, their feelings and their aspirations. Teachers could make more use of local Jewish and Muslim communities and the buildings of different denominations. The school has strong links now with the local church and the minister is a regular visitor.

149. Staffing changes have restricted the opportunities for the subject to be given strong leadership in recent times, but the school is in a good position to improve matters. The school now uses the new Cornwall Agreed Syllabus effectively to provide a good basis for teachers' planning. However, assessment is at an early stage of

development. Lesson periods are often rather short. This can be frustrating for teachers and pupils who get their teeth into a particular aspect of religious education only to run out of the time needed to develop it more deeply.

150. The artefacts used to assist religious education are adequate but could really do with being enhanced. The strongest element of the school's provision for religious education is in the way teachers and pupils show a quiet respect for each other. This may not be stated explicitly in a policy document but it is a visible part of the life of the school. The school used to teach religious education merely through assemblies at the time of the last inspection. This was clearly inadequate and provision has been improved a great deal in the last four years. The main areas for development now are: the time allocated to religious education to be reviewed; resources to be enhanced; and, for a proper system of assessment to be introduced.