

INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Bodmin

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 112020

Headteacher: Mr Tony Doyle

Reporting inspector: Rob Crompton
7230

Dates of inspection: May 20th - 23rd 2002

Inspection number: 194754

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barn Lane Bodmin Cornwall
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robert Maher
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and achievements</i> How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13874	Jane Chesterfield	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?
8089	Phillip Braide	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23412	Alvin Jeffs	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History	
27720	Peter Way	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This voluntary aided Roman Catholic school for boys and girls has 296 pupils aged from three to eleven. Forty-three of these children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Most children live locally but several come from nearby parishes. Pupil numbers have remained similar over the last four years. A new head teacher was appointed three years ago and the deputy head has been in post for one year. As they start school, many children lack social skills and their language and mathematical development is below that usually found at this age. An average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. All pupils are white and of UK heritage. Classes are organised in year groups with the exception of a support class for children from reception and Years 1 and 2 who are taught together. Fifty-five pupils have special educational needs. The majority demonstrate a range of difficulties with language and reading development. A small number have difficulties relating to behaviour, visual and auditory impairment. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need which reflect the severity of their learning difficulties. Overall, the total number of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, although the school frequently has a high level of pupils with statements as a result of the good quality support it provides.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards have improved over the past three years and are now in line with those achieved in other schools. The quality of teaching is good. The headteacher and governing body work in close partnership and provide good leadership. Relationships are very good; all staff pull together and support one another. Pupils are well motivated, behave well and try their best. The school's aims and Catholic ethos are reflected in the strong sense of community and mutual respect. Parents hold the school in high regard. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good quality teaching and learning is leading to improved standards
- The nursery provides an excellent start to children's education
- The head teacher provides good leadership and is supported well by all staff
- The school's ethos and provision for spiritual, moral and social development contribute very well to pupils' academic progress and personal development.
- Relationships are very good; pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy school
- The school's inclusive approach means that all children, including those with special educational needs have equal opportunities to do well
- The school's partnership with parents contributes much to pupils' learning and social development.

What could be improved

- Higher attaining pupils could be achieving more, particularly in mathematics
- The impact of subject managers could be strengthened by placing more emphasis on their role in promoting high standards, and monitoring teaching and learning

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has moved forward considerably since the previous inspection in 1997. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, especially in science and information and communication technology (ICT) where there were significant weaknesses last time. Standards have improved in these subjects and have been generally maintained in others. Most of the recommendations in the last report have been addressed successfully. The role of the deputy head has been clarified, support staff are deployed more effectively and library facilities have improved. The management role of co-ordinators has been extended but there is still room for improvement. A marking policy has been introduced but there are some inconsistencies in practice. Overall, improvement has been good.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	D	D
Mathematics	D	D	D	D
Science	C	C	B	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

As they enter the nursery, most children have under-developed social, language and mathematical skills. Due to very good teaching in nursery and reception, most children are progressing well and are on course to achieve the targets set for this age group.

As the table indicates, eleven-year-olds have not done as well in national tests as those in other schools in recent years. The results of seven-year-olds were similar, with those in writing being well below average. However, from a very low point in 1999, the test results of seven-year-olds have risen sharply. Similarly, the results of eleven-year-olds rose significantly from 1998.

The inspection confirmed that standards are now improving. Pupils are now making steady progress in Years 1 and 2 and seven-year-olds are attaining average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards are good in science but attainment in writing, although improving, is below average. Progress in English in Years 3 to 6 is good but progress is too slow in mathematics, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Pupils are progressing well in science and art, achieving above average standards at seven and eleven. They make at least satisfactory progress in other subjects and attain the standards expected at both these ages. Progress in ICT has improved recently and pupils are making rapid gains in the subject and attaining standards that are broadly in line with those expected at seven and eleven.

The school is aware of the need to set appropriately challenging targets. It set ambitious targets for 2002, aiming to increase the number of eleven-year-olds reaching the expected levels in English and mathematics by around ten per cent. The tests have been taken but the results are not yet available. The standard of work seen during the inspection indicates that the targets will be achieved.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. As pupils progress through the school, they develop a mature and questioning approach to study. Pupils are also eager to get involved in the other opportunities offered by the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are aware of the high standards of behaviour expected of them by the school and do their best to meet them. They move around the school sensibly, co-operate over tasks and follow instructions without fuss.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils feel respected and are ready to respect others. Pupils know how to react to those in the school who are different from themselves, though they lack awareness about cultural diversity in the wider world.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory. Most absence is caused by illness, although there is a significant amount of holiday taken during term-time. Most pupils arrive on time each day, so that lessons can begin without interruption.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the teaching in the school is good. Three quarters of the lessons observed were good or better, with around one in five being very good or excellent. Teaching in the nursery is consistently outstanding and that in the mixed age infant class is consistently of high quality.

Meticulous planning in the nursery ensures all aspects of the curriculum are covered in depth. The teaching team has created an excellent learning environment both in the classroom and outside. Children respond extremely well to the wealth of experiences provided. Good teaching in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 enables pupils to build on previous work and make steady progress. Teachers are good at managing lessons; they plan carefully so that time is used productively and lessons move at a brisk pace.

Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. Effective teaching of English, science, ICT, art and design and history means pupils make good progress in these subjects. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school, although teachers often under-estimate the potential of higher attaining pupils, which restricts their progress.

Literacy skills are taught effectively, both in English lessons and through other subjects, such as history and science. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory, although some work lacks sufficient challenge and there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate skills in other subjects.

The school meets the needs of the majority of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and boys and girls have the same opportunities. However, higher attaining pupils, with the exceptions of in art and some aspects of science, are insufficiently challenged.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A broad curriculum enables pupils to experience a wide range of activities. Lessons and extra activities combine to provide a stimulating learning environment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Well-organised and effective provision enables most pupils to make good progress. Teachers provide suitable work in lessons and work closely with the knowledgeable and effective support staff.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. It is at the heart of the strong ethos; the foundation for everything the school does. Pupils are well supported in spiritual development and provision for social and moral development is very good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Staff know children well and treat them with care and sensitivity. Procedures for child protection are adequate. Pupils' academic progress is regularly assessed but this information is not routinely used in lesson planning.

There is a good partnership with parents and they view the school very positively. The school works hard to involve parents and successfully encourages them to contribute actively to the life of the school. There are ample opportunities for parents to consult teachers who are always willing to offer advice and support. The prospectus is welcoming and helpful, but the governors' annual report to parents omits a number of items required by law.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy head and key staff. Subject managers work hard and organise the curriculum and resources effectively but there is insufficient emphasis on their role in improving standards by monitoring teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their statutory duties well; they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are beginning to play a fuller part in shaping its direction
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff carefully analyse test results to provide governors with a picture of how well the school is doing and where improvement is needed.
The strategic use of resources	Funding is used appropriately to meet priorities and specific grants are used effectively. Financial control and administration are good, however, the complex nature of the school development plan inhibits strategic planning.

The school is effectively led and managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors successfully promote the school's aim to create a family community based on Gospel values where all children can flourish. The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that it gets the best value from the available resources. It has a good number of teachers and support staff whose skills are well matched to the roles they undertake. The accommodation is adequate and there are sufficient resources.

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, behave well and make good progress. • Teachers are very effective and expect pupils to work hard. • The school keeps parents well informed about how their children are doing. • The school is open and welcoming and works in close partnership with parents. 	<p>There were no common issues. A few parents raised concerns about the provision for extra-curricular activities and homework, and the information they receive about their children's progress.</p>

The inspection supported parents' positive views. The concerns expressed by a few parents are only partially justified. The range and quality of clubs and visits are good, and arrangements for homework are similar to those found in most schools. Parents have a good number of opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff, but written reports are not always as clear as they could be.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage¹ because the teaching is very good overall. By the end of the reception year most are on course to meet the early learning goals² in each area of learning. Their social skills are developing well and most children are using their early communication skills with increasing confidence.

2 The results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds have been below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in recent years and have not matched those in similar schools. From a low in 1999, when standards were about a year behind those in other schools, results have risen steeply. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds have lagged behind national averages since 1998 but, again, results have improved each year. Although results in 2001 were still a little below those achieved by other schools, standards seen during the inspection indicate that improvement has continued. Seven and eleven-year-olds are now achieving standards in reading and mathematics which are broadly average. Although the standards writing achieved by seven-year-olds are improving, they are below average.

3 Science results have kept pace with those in other schools and pupils are now achieving above average standards at seven and eleven. Higher attaining pupils have achieved at least as well in English and science as those in other schools but have not done as well in mathematics. This was reflected in the level of work seen during the inspection, where there was insufficient challenge in much of the work set, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Although they read well, the range of books available does not fully extend the more advanced readers.

4 Standards in ICT are improving throughout the school because new resources have been acquired and teachers have grown in confidence through training. Art and design remains a strength of the school. As a result of effective teaching, pupils produce lively paintings, bold designs and carefully crafted three-dimensional work. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations for seven- and eleven-year-olds.

5 Over recent years, girls have achieved better results than boys in English – especially writing – and in mathematics tests for seven- and eleven-year-olds year olds. However, no significant differences in standards were evident during the inspection. Pupils with particular gifts or talents are helped to develop further. For example, pupils have opportunities to develop musical talents through instrumental tuition, skills in public speaking are developed through participation in local festivals and pupils with a flair for sports are encouraged to join teams run by the school and outside organisations.

6 A number of pupils in each year group experience considerable degrees of learning difficulty in some basic reading skills and, often, have problems in coping with writing and mathematics. The high quality of the support provided in reading means that the progress of these pupils is always good and sometimes very good. Although many pupils continue to find problems understanding complicated ideas and writing down their thoughts, they develop a greater confidence in participating in classroom activities, speaking to adults and working in groups. They develop well in reading and language skills and this assists their ability to complete tasks in other subjects.

7 The school takes care to track the progress of individual pupils and uses this information to set year group targets. These naturally vary from year to year but increasingly contain an appropriate element of challenge. This is helping to raise teachers' expectations. In recent

¹The Foundation Stage is from the child's third birthday to the end of the reception year.

² Early learning goals describe the level most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage in six areas of learning,

years, the targets have been mostly achieved. The level of work seen during the inspection suggests that the targets set for the current Year 6 will be met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 The school has successfully maintained high standards in this area of its work since the time of the last inspection. Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and to the school. In nursery, the children enjoy every moment of their session and find learning a thrilling experience. As they watched different objects coming out of the 'sounds machine' at the end of one afternoon, for example, they were utterly absorbed in anticipating what would happen next and wanted to be the first to name the object. As pupils progress through the school, they keep their love of learning and develop with it a mature and questioning approach to study. Pupils are also eager to get involved in the other opportunities offered by the school. Those who were interviewed spoke warmly of the many clubs and visits available to them, and the level of participation in activities is always high.

9 Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils are aware of the high standards of behaviour expected of them and do their best to meet them. They move around the school sensibly and settle quickly in lessons, so that teachers have to spend little time establishing order. They co-operate over tasks and follow instructions without fuss. At lunchtime, pupils eat together sociably in the dining hall, and share the space outside amicably. Games of skipping and football run alongside one another, for example, without argument. Pupils are trusted to be indoors at lunchtime, reading or playing board games, and they live up to the trust that staff have in them not to misbehave. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

10 The school has a strong commitment to inclusive education which allows pupils with special educational needs to be well integrated within classrooms. This also means that there is no stigma attached to receiving additional help. The good resources provided, the sensitive support and the high quality of adult-pupil relationships mean that pupils enjoy the support work and, as a result, there is a secure atmosphere for learning for these pupils.

11 Pupils respond well to the very good opportunities the school offers them for personal development. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the very good relationships which exist throughout the school. Boys and girls get on well together, and older pupils are happy to help with the younger ones. Year 6 pupils take it in turn to help out in the nursery at break, for example, and in the dining hall at lunchtime. Both boys and girls were seen looking after infants, opening their flasks and their crisp packets. Younger children, in their turn, are confident about turning to older ones for support. This contributes to the family atmosphere which pervades the school. Pupils on the school council take their responsibility very seriously and recognise their duties to others. Year 6 council members, for example, keep a log of issues raised by their peers so that nothing is forgotten in meetings, and are careful to report back on decisions made. Pupils are proud to be consulted on matters such as the revision of the behaviour policy, and know that their views count as part of the school community. They feel respected and are ready to respect others. Pupils know how to react to those in the school who are different from themselves, though they lack awareness about diversity in the wider world.

12 Pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Although attendance levels have declined in the interim, the most recent figures for the year 2001/2 show that attendance has improved and is now slightly above the national average. Most absence is caused by illness, although there is a significant amount of holiday taken during term-time. There is virtually no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good. Most pupils arrive on time each day, so that lessons can begin without interruption.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13 The quality of teaching is good and promotes a purposeful atmosphere for learning and positive attitudes and behaviour amongst pupils. This confirms the views expressed through the pre-inspection questionnaires where almost all parents thought that teaching was good. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection; the proportion of good, very good and excellent lessons has increased and no lessons were less than satisfactory. Support staff are always carefully briefed and make a valuable contribution to teaching. Teaching is of consistently high quality in the nursery and the mixed age infant class.

14 There are several reasons for the effective teaching, many of which relate to all classes 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.

15 In the nursery and reception classes, teachers plan the curriculum effectively, setting clear objectives to promote the six areas of learning. The teaching teams provide a well organised, stimulating range of activities with an appropriate balance between free choice and more structured teacher-led activities. Relationships are excellent 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.

16 Throughout the school, teachers use interesting methods to gain pupils' interest and promote their learning. Tasks are purposeful and keep pupils fully occupied. When teachers provide a good range of resources, as they do, for example, in art and science, this adds considerably to pupils' understanding. Clear instructions ensure that pupils are fully engaged in learning. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour consistently, which means that time is not wasted because of poor behaviour and lack of attention.

17 Teachers plan carefully in literacy to ensure that most lessons are well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. Planning for numeracy is not as good and some of the work lacks challenge. In the most successful lessons, teachers share the lesson objectives with pupils at the beginning and review these at the end to make it clear what they want them to achieve.

18 Very good use of questioning is an important factor in the best 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 history lesson in the mixed age infant class, the teacher, very well supported by the teaching assistant, generated great interest and enthusiasm as she prompted questions about a 'treasure box' of artefacts.

19 Where teachers use stimulating resources, pupils respond very well and learn quickly. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, a video which compared ancient Roman and British society was used to very good effect and brought the subject to life. Pupils in Year 6 were equally fascinated as the teacher used a microscope linked to a computer to project images of pollen on a large screen.

20 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. The good range of assessment information is not used as well as it could be to determine the level of work in lessons. As a result, pupils sometimes mark time by doing work they find easy. Although pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by being given easier work than the rest of the class or by direct help from a teaching assistant, higher attaining pupils are sometimes given work which is insufficiently challenging. This is especially evident in mathematics.

21 Pupils who have significant learning difficulties are taught well in areas relating to literacy and speaking and listening. The work within the classroom and in small group settings on reading is good. Those with the greatest difficulties receive teaching of high quality from

teachers and teaching assistants who are very experienced, sensitive and have a good professional knowledge of special educational needs. Class teachers give these pupils appropriate tasks and use language and questions well to ensure understanding. They also provide clear and consistent boundaries for pupils who display problem behaviour. This provides a secure and happy environment, which assists learning for pupils with special educational needs. There has been less training relating to specific difficulties in numeracy so pupils do not progress as well as they do in literacy.

22 The development of a small support class for pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 has been a great success. Within this class, pupils receive focused teaching that is informed, individualised and set within an overall context of enjoyment. Both teacher and teaching assistants provide support and challenge for pupils that is a model of its kind.

23 In lessons where teaching is satisfactory but with some weaknesses, 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, pupils were tackling problems involving the 2 and 5 times tables but knew the 6 and 7 times table facts and, without prompting, said that they found the work very easy. Information and communication technology is taught well but, although there is a good guide to the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects, this is not a feature of many lessons.

24 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 pupils and parents are often unclear about what is expected.

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

25 The school provides a good breadth of curriculum opportunities for pupils. Effective whole school planning helps to ensure that learning objectives are clear and skills taught progressively in most subjects. Since the last inspection, good progress has been made in planning investigative work science and planning for ICT has improved greatly. The school has adopted inclusive principles and values in line with its equal opportunities policy. The school largely meets the needs of all pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. There are weaknesses in the curriculum for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and some aspects of reading and science.

26 An appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics ensures that pupils receive a solid grounding in these subjects. This is consistent with the school's planning and reflects the commitment to improve standards in key subjects. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are well established in all year groups. Teachers have a good grasp of the importance of this work and show good knowledge and understanding when teaching these areas. Science has also been given attention to ensure that pupils gain a better understanding of scientific processes through conducting and recording experiments. Improving results in science are testament to the success of this work. The other subjects in the curriculum are planned and taught appropriately although there is currently limited use of ICT across all subjects.

27 A good range of out of school clubs offer an interesting balance of sporting, cultural and academic themes. Children like to attend these clubs and work seen in art and verse speaking was contributing positively to their development and self-esteem. Access to school clubs and teams is open to all and pupils are encouraged to join regardless of gender, skill or ability. Activities outside lessons contribute to the quality of relationships between teachers.

28 Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Assemblies provide sufficient time for reflection and there is sufficient opportunity in lessons for spiritual development and for pupils to think about special moments in their lives. In science, art and music, teachers encourage pupils to reflect on the wonders of the natural world and the creative achievement of artists and composers.

29 Moral values are strongly promoted and provision for social development is very effective. Behaviour is well managed and the school's mission statement is regularly reinforced to ensure that values of personal awareness and worth are maintained. The school council provides a valuable experience in developing initiative, social responsibility and citizenship. In class, pupils develop social skills when they work in pairs and groups. These skills are also promoted when pupils go on visits and when they welcome visitors into school. The high quality relationships between staff provide excellent role models for pupils.

30 Cultural aspects of the curriculum are developed well in the Foundation Stage, and through work in geography, art and music. The school takes children to the cinema and is involved in cultural events such as verse speaking, an activity where pupils have gained considerable success. The dance club is popular with pupils and work with a local drumming group has been well received. There is a lack of provision, however, for raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.

31 The school has an effective policy on health education and has achieved the Healthy Schools Award. Work in children's files shows a growing knowledge and understanding of health related issues. The school has developed a sound drug education policy, which is enhanced by visits from the local community police officer. Some understandable dissatisfaction was expressed by parents regarding the school's lack of provision for sex education last year. However, the school has done its best to put this right, so that pupils will now receive appropriate sex education before they move on to secondary school.

32 Initiatives to develop pupils' understanding of their community and citizenship are successful through participation in heritage day, local parades and carnivals. The choir has sung in local care homes and the school has hosted visits from artists and poets. Year 6 pupils benefit from taking part in the local community college induction processes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33 The school's Catholic values and the very good relationships support a caring environment, where staff know the pupils well and do their best to guide and support them effectively. Teaching assistants play an important role in this. The school is currently reviewing its policies, procedures and staff handbook in order to establish an up-to-date framework for consistent practice to underpin its ethos. It has made a good start with the recent revision of the behaviour policy. The involvement of the school council in this process indicates the school's commitment not only to pupils' welfare, but also to consultation and inclusion of all parts of the school community.

34 Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory, and meet legal requirements. Staff understand the procedures they have to follow, and pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe. The premises are well cleaned and maintained, and systems for monitoring health and safety issues are satisfactory. However, there are currently concerns about the site and daily routines which require attention. Firstly, the pond in the environmental area is not enclosed and so poses a risk, as pupils could access it unnoticed by adults. Secondly, the way in which midday supervisors are organised when the weather is too wet for pupils to go out at lunchtime

is not adequate. It means that many pupils are not directly supervised by an adult for significant periods of time.

35 The school maintains discipline well. The new guidelines and rules for behaviour are being implemented smoothly. Any instances of bullying or other unacceptable behaviour are taken seriously and handled firmly by the school. Pupils who were interviewed were unanimously confident that staff would quickly sort out problems such as these. Procedures for monitoring and chasing up absence are satisfactory. The school plans to introduce computerised registration systems shortly in order to make this process easier.

36 The school provides security for pupils who experience learning difficulties. The procedures for assessing their needs, reviewing their individual education plans and providing realistic targets are good. The school has very good relations with external support staff in health, education welfare, educational psychology and social services. Pupils who experience behaviour and emotional difficulties receive good personal support and this also has a very therapeutic effect.

37 The school has set up very effective systems for recording pupils' individual progress in order to set targets for each year group. A wealth of information has been gathered and filed systematically. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator use the data to identify those pupils who are not doing as well as expected and to take effective action. Booster classes and additional support groups are set up using this information. The school identifies those pupils who are doing particularly well and keeps records. However, there is so much information that it is often difficult for teachers use it effectively so they do not always have regard to pupils' prior attainment when planning lessons. As a result, although lower attaining pupils are generally well supported, others are set work which lacks challenge. The school has recognised this issue and the deputy head is to be allocated time to synthesise the data so it can be more accessible to teachers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38 Since the last inspection, the school has successfully maintained and built upon the good relationships with its parent community, which were evident at that time. The school works hard to involve parents and encourage them to contribute actively to the life of the school. The school's inclusive and open approach makes all parents feel welcome, and those who are not Roman Catholics say that they feel very much a part of the community. Links with parents are good. Parents' forums, for example, enable parents to come and find out about the curriculum and other experiences available to their children, while regular working parties give parents a chance to help maintain the fabric of the school. Nursery staff are particularly skilled in making the most of parents' talents and expertise for the benefit of the children. During the inspection week, for example, the nursery children had an unmissable opportunity to create their own frames out of driftwood with a parent who is a trained carpenter. Teachers are readily accessible to parents at the beginning and the end of the day, and are always willing to offer advice and support. One teacher, for example, took the trouble to liaise with a parent on the phone about practising a child's skills in physical education, because he was feeling discouraged about what he had achieved in a lesson that day.

39 Information for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus is welcoming and helpful, but the governors' annual report to parents omits a number of items required by law. Letters from the school keep parents up to date on events and administration. There are good plans to introduce a system of regular newsletters with contributions from staff, parents and pupils in order to celebrate the achievements of the school community. Some teachers send out good, helpful information about the work pupils will be covering in their classes, but there is no consistent, co-ordinated system for this throughout the school. Reports to parents on their children's progress are satisfactory. They are detailed and focus appropriately on what pupils can do. However, they do not give parents a clear enough picture of how well their children are doing for their age or what they need to do to improve further. This means that parents are not able to use reports effectively to help their children do better.

40 Close contact with parents is very beneficial for pupils with learning difficulties. The school provides good advice for parents seeking to support their children. It also provides a 'listening ear' when there are problems or concerns. Excellent parental contact is maintained by class teachers and the SENCO. Every opportunity is taken to involve parents in the reviews of progress and in providing additional help at home. Where parents availed themselves of the support and advice offered by the school, their children made good progress.

41 Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school and to their children's learning. Many hear their children read at home regularly, and ensure that homework is completed. A good number are able to play an active part in the school's daily work. They carry out a variety of useful tasks, such as supporting groups in class, hearing readers or making resources. Others raise funds through the thriving Friends' Association, or offer their services to the working parties and the premises group. The school is very grateful for their involvement, which adds to the sense of unity and team spirit within the school community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42 The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership. The headteacher has a clear vision of future developments and has improved many aspects of the work and management of the school since his appointment in 1999. He has the support and respect of staff and parents. There is now a strong senior management team. Their skills, expertise and experience complement each other very well. The new deputy, following an appropriate settling in period, has a clear view of the school's priorities and is playing an increasing role in management. Many positive and necessary changes have taken place in response to the last inspection report. Subject management has been strengthened, although there is still insufficient emphasis on the role of co-ordinators in improving standards by monitoring teaching and learning. Improvements in the teaching of science and ICT have been managed well. A feature of the school is the unity of purpose and teamwork in all parts of the school. Teaching and support staff work very closely together and this is of real benefit to all pupils.

43 Special educational needs provision receives very good support from senior management and the governing body. The link governor works in the school and has a very clear and incisive understanding of the pupils, their families and the ways in which the school assists. She provides regular and well-informed support for staff working with pupils who have learning difficulties. Money has been made available to provide good quality resources, training and a good level of teaching assistants. The headteacher, as coordinator, provides good leadership in this field, particularly with regard to regular management and professional development meetings with teaching assistants.

44 The school's aims to raise standards and improve the quality of education are reflected in its day-to-day life. Pupils' progress is recorded effectively and the school has begun to track individual progress and monitor overall performance. Targets are set for improvement, and areas of relative weakness, for example in writing, have been identified and appropriate strategies are being adopted to bring about improvements.

45 Governors fulfil their statutory duties well; they give full support to the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept well informed and are beginning to play a fuller part in shaping the school's direction.

46 The school uses its funding appropriately to meet its priorities. Financial control and administration are good and, thanks to the expertise within the governing body, the school has successfully steered its way out of financial difficulties in recent years through prudence and restraint in spending. One example of this was the decision to do without a deputy head for a while in order to maintain the level of staff supporting children in the classroom and to ensure that accommodation and resources were adequate. The school is now in a good position to target its money more closely at its most pressing areas for action. However, the complex nature of the school development plan makes it difficult to do this in practice, and the school is still working on making this link achievable. Good use is made of additional grants which benefit

the areas for which they are intended. Funds for reducing infant class sizes, for example, have been imaginatively used to create an additional mixed age class where children thrive and make good progress. Careful budgeting allowed the school to bring forward a significant proportion of its funds into the current financial year in order to improve ICT and library facilities further. The surplus will be considerably reduced this year. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied in the school's work. In particular, the school's inclusive approach to decision making means that all members of the school community, from pupils to governors, are regularly consulted over issues which affect them.

47 The school has a good number of teachers and support staff whose skills are well matched to the roles they undertake. The key issue from the previous report concerning the use of support staff has been tackled well. They now make a significant contribution in lessons, working closely with teachers and particularly helping pupils with special educational needs. The school's philosophy of valuing and developing individuals is reflected in the good arrangements for performance management. This is available both to teachers and support staff, and helps to build up the sense of team spirit and unity which is such a strong feature of the school. The recent Investor In People award has recognised the school's success here. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers are similarly good. As a result of the good provision for professional development, staff are well motivated and keen to do their best for the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48 In order to improve standards, the school should:

Improve the progress of higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics (paragraphs 3, 20, 37 and 81) by:

- synthesising assessment information into a more accessible and immediately useable form;
- supporting teachers in planning lessons that are more securely based on pupils' prior attainment;
- monitoring the work set for higher attaining pupils.

Strengthen the role of subject managers (paragraphs 42, 73, 80 and 103) by:

- placing more emphasis on their role in promoting high standards;
- allocating time for them to monitor and support teaching and learning in classrooms.

In addition to the points above, the school should consider the following minor weaknesses.

- Annual reports to parents need to give parents a clear indication of how well their children are doing for their age and what they need to do to improve further (paragraph 39).
- Provision to enhance awareness of cultural diversity needs to be improved (paragraph 30).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	4	24	11	0	0	0
Percentage	11	9	55	25	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 more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	233
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	55

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	6.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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
	2001	11	22	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	9
	Girls	17	19	20
	Total	23	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (64)	76 (64)	88 (75)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	9
	Girls	18	19	20
	Total	24	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (68)	79 (75)	88 (75)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
	2001	14	19	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	15	15	18
	Total	25	26	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (77)	79 (74)	94 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	16	14	18
	Total	25	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (84)	76 (81)	91 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	253
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)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	227

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	43
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	480435
Total expenditure	442846
Expenditure per pupil	1838
Balance brought forward from previous year	40196
Balance carried forward to next year	77785

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0

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	250
Number of questionnaires returned	111

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	33	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	37	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	50	10	1	8
The teaching is good.	66	32	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	42	6	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	33	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	45	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	68	31	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	35	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	40	10	2	19

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

49 Most children enter the nursery class on a part-time basis at the beginning of the term in which they will be four. Most children move into the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they will be five, although some move to other schools.

50 As they enter the nursery, most children have poor social and language skills. Many can concentrate only for brief periods and use few words when they speak. The consistently outstanding teaching enables all children, whatever their stage of development, including those with special educational needs, to develop good learning habits, to progress very well and to make the most of their time in the nursery class.

51 The teaching team makes careful assessments during the first few days and weeks of nursery and make sure that daily plans take account of the stepping-stones³ towards the early learning goals. Meticulous records are kept. For example, children's first efforts at writing and drawing are selected, together with photographs of significant events. This provides an excellent record of progress for teachers and is much appreciated by parents.

52 The nursery classroom and outdoor learning areas are models of provision. The teacher and nursery nurse work closely together to ensure that children have every opportunity to learn. Each area of the classroom provides a different stimulus for children. There are quiet areas for reading, a very well designed kitchen area and spaces where children can engage in imaginative play. Attractive displays remind children of recent practical work and invite their further investigation – for example, labels encourage them to 'Remove the cover from the wormery carefully to see what's happening'. Outside, children benefit from a very good range of resources, including pedalled vehicles, two play-houses and a raised garden.

53 By contrast, the reception classroom is small for the number of children but best use is made of the limited space. Although there is provision for sand and water³ play and a small role-play area, opportunities for learning outside are too restricted because special arrangements have to be made for use of the nursery outdoor area.

Personal, social and emotional development

54 Children start school with personal and social skills which are below those of their age group. They make 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. Teaching staff, in both nursery and reception, 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'.

55 Each nursery session includes times when children sit as a class with the teacher or nursery nurse, tasks to which they 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 were totally absorbed when playing in the 'submarine' - complete with a realistic control panel and working periscope - and were quick to warn visitors that, "The fish might bite!" in the 'undersea' area. Children show a good understanding of the routines and have no trouble in making up their minds; some 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. This was demonstrated when children proudly demonstrated their knowledge of letter sounds, shrieking with delight as they correctly identified objects beginning with the letter 'b'.

³ There are three 'stepping-stones' towards each early learning goal. Teachers use these to plan lessons and to assess children's progress.

Positive attitudes to learning were evident also in the reception class when children were keen to explain what they had learned about how plants grow.

56 All 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. Children, particularly in the nursery, take good care of their classrooms, 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

57 Excellent teaching builds strongly on the rather low level of confidence in language that children have when they join the nursery class. All children are making very good progress, 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 skilfully read 'Mariana and the Merchild'. She introduced the story very effectively, drawing on children's observations, comments and predictions; she provided excellent opportunities for speaking and listening, engaging the children at every turn of the page with her enthusiasm. 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 with familiar phrases. The quality of children's discussion was very much better than is usually found at this age.

58 Children's reading and their knowledge of books - such as the contents and index pages, and glossary - is developed through good teaching in the reception class. In a well organised lesson centred on a book about plants, two teaching assistants worked with the younger children, guiding their reading, while the class teacher supported older children as they wrote sentences about sunflowers. Building on their earlier 'pretend' writing, children gradually learn to write conventionally through systematic teaching. Well-structured literacy lessons in reception help pupils develop appropriate handwriting skills and a good proportion are beginning to write independently.

59 Most children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy through the Foundation Stage. Currently some children are still at an early stage of speaking and listening, whereas others – about a third of the class – converse well and have made a good start on reading and writing.

Mathematical development

60 Children make good progress in their mathematical development and are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching is very effective in the nursery where no opportunity is missed to develop the children's awareness of number, pattern and shape. Children use mathematical language naturally because it is constantly introduced into each activity

61 Good teaching in reception helps most children to become confident in handling numbers up to ten and in counting on by one or two accurately. The level of children's mathematical development is related to when they join the reception class. Most who had entered the class at the beginning of the spring and summer terms could count sets of coins up to 10, although the youngest children needed much support. A group of six children who had been in the class for almost the whole year were more advanced; recognising the value of coins and sorting them according to their shape and metallic colour.

62 Using their fingers, sorting toys and cubes, most children associate counting numbers up to ten with the correct number of objects. Action songs, such as 'Five little Buns in the

Baker's Shop', reinforce this understanding. Through carefully prepared practical activities, children are developing an awareness of shape. This was clearly evident from the repeating patterns that nursery children had produced. 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 areas.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63 Good teaching and the rich variety of experiences that children enjoy in the nursery clearly extend their knowledge of the world beyond their immediate experience of home and school. During the summer term, children plant seeds in the raised garden, regularly water them and record their growth using a digital camera. They also grow watercress and harvest it to make sandwiches. They learn about the life cycle of a butterfly, closely observing caterpillars and consulting well-illustrated reference books. A wormery provides very visual evidence of how worms move around and affect changes in soil.

64 A major strength of the provision in the nursery is the way that children are introduced to cultural diversity. Role-play areas have dolls and costumes representing a wide range of cultures, every apron portrays a different country and various religious and national festivals are marked. For example, a display of photographs and artefacts celebrated the Chinese New Year.

65 The role-play area gives children an insight into the world of work and to other places. It was recently set up as a travel agency; children made their own passports, issued tickets, luggage labels and boarding cards. In order to develop a sense of change over time, they were taken to the local shops by taxi and compared the present day shops with those in old photographs. They visited a newsagent and compared it with their own newspaper shop that had been set up in the role-play area. The trip included a visit to a café, where children had to order their own refreshments. This very worthwhile activity typifies the approach taken in the nursery where every opportunity is taken to extend children's learning through real experiences. In reception, children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developed more formally through work in science, ICT, history and geography.

66 By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children know far more about the world than they did as they started school. Most comfortably achieve the early learning goals in this area. For example, during an effective lesson on growth, children remembered that plants need earth, water and sun and knew that sunflowers grow in hot countries.

Physical development

67 Very good teaching ensures that children have ample opportunities to develop skills in controlling everyday objects such as pencils and scissors. Although some children have difficulty in cutting cardboard and plastic, 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. Exceptionally for a nursery class, children also learn to use hammers, saws and drills. Under the close supervision of a parent volunteer, they use driftwood to construct frames for their own pictures. These are displayed in the classroom and children are justifiably proud of their achievements.

68 Although most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in physical development, reception children lack the rich variety of activity that is expected in the Foundation Stage. Nursery children have ample opportunities to develop an awareness of space around them and skills such as balancing, pedalling and steering wheeled toys in the outdoor learning area. Reception children do not regularly benefit from these activities, although regular weekly time in the hall provides good opportunities for running, jumping and using a range of small and large equipment. During an effective lesson, the teacher used a

pre-recorded tape to successfully develop children's awareness of space. They responded very well to the instructions and music, showing a good understanding of curling and stretching as they emulated the movement of butterflies. This lesson provided a further example of the teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants at the Foundation Stage. The teacher made very positive comments and the classroom assistants worked alongside the children, providing good models for the various movements.

Creative development

69 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 extending creative language; for example, children were thoroughly absorbed when playing the role of captain or passengers during a 'journey' in the class submarine.

70 Children's 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 with fish shapes cut from sponge. After some messy experiments, children refined their techniques. A display of well-produced shape designs showed that children had benefited from looking at Mondrian's techniques.

71 Music often features in lessons. Nursery children, supported by the teacher, had composed a number song, 'Five Little Mermaids', and sang it very tunefully. They have access to a very good range of percussion instruments in the classroom and regular music sessions in the hall. During an excellent lesson, the nursery nurse, a trainee nursery nurse and a volunteer parent supported the teacher. While preparing to perform a song about the seaside to parents the following week, every child made a good contribution. As a result of the sensitive approach by the teacher and encouragement from the other adults, children handled instruments carefully, played them with the correct technique and produced a range of sounds to accompany the song. These included seagull sounds using voices, rain using a 'rain stick' and thunder using an 'ocean drum'.

72 No art or music lessons were seen in the reception class, but displays around the classroom and the quality of singing in assemblies indicate that most children are likely to reach the early learning goals in creative development.

ENGLISH

73 The upward trend in standards relating to all aspects of English continues. Pupils at seven now meet national expectations in speaking and listening and reading skills. Performance in writing still requires more attention, but there are clear signs that pupils are on course to meet national requirements in the near future. By the end of Year 6, national expectations are met in all aspects, including writing, where good progress is made between Years 3 and 6. Pupils are above national requirements with regard to speaking skills by the time they leave the school. Leadership in the subject is good. The Literacy Hour has been well established, well resourced and reviewed. There are good and very good teaching strategies used throughout the school. However, teachers' plans and records are not adequately monitored with a view to sharing and developing English teaching still further.

74 A large number of pupils enter Year 1 with limitations in speaking and listening. However, by the age of seven pupils meet national expectations in this aspect of English. As they move through the lower school, their attention improves and they are increasingly able to weigh up different points of view and generally have a very thoughtful response to stories, questions and discussions. Thus, a very good Year 1 English lesson started with a discussion of alliteration. It was clear that half of the class were at home with the technical words required;

'alliteration', 'consonant blend' and 'long and short vowels'. Those who were not using the terminology were able to demonstrate an understanding by providing appropriate answers or signalling 'long' and 'short' with their hands. The central part of the lesson saw five groups working on different tasks according to ability. Some used dictionaries; others worked on early phonic units, while other groups were able to identify alliterative word pairs contributing to a 'visit to Australia'. When the class came together, the teacher used a puppet well to emphasise and consolidate the skills of alliteration and rhyme. Pupils paid close attention throughout the lesson and all demonstrated good progress within that short space of time.

75 The strong emphasis placed on the development of speaking and listening in all classes continues and pupils meet, and in many cases, exceed national expectations in this by the age of eleven. Teachers set good standards in their use of language. They pose questions that challenge pupils, wait for answers and are rigorous in further questioning if answers are vague or inaccurate. The tradition of verse speaking, one that wins many prizes for the school and involves many pupils, contributes well to the enhanced skills pupils exhibit when they leave. Confidence in talking in a mature and appropriate way is a characteristic of all pupils in the school.

76 By the time they are seven, pupils do not yet meet national expectations in writing, although there is a distinct improvement compared with the last inspection. Teachers in all subjects place an increasingly strong and effective emphasis on writing skills throughout Years 1 and 2. The technical vocabulary of subjects such as science, mathematics, ICT and history are emphasised and key words displayed around the classrooms. All teachers are developing a consistency in their approach to writing and this is beginning to show results. However, ICT is not used as often or as effectively to develop word processing skills. The technique of covering and visualising words is used effectively in some classes, but this and the use of targets for writing are not sufficiently common practice to complement the very good skills that all pupils develop in using the sounds of letters to read unfamiliar words.

77 By Year 6, pupils do meet national expectations in writing. They have developed considerable confidence and competence in writing. Their written vocabulary is vivid and appropriate. Letter formation, handwriting and presentation in general are good. The reason for this lies in the consistency and quality of teaching within English in the upper part of the school, particularly the emphasis placed upon written presentation in most subjects. All pupils have clear targets for their writing, such as 'Use more speech marks', 'Always finish work' and 'Write a minimum of half a page of tidy writing', which they consciously refer to while they are writing. Consistency of marking and expectation, with attention to detail and accuracy, were observed in Year 3 work, thanking a local author for a visit and during a Year 5 lesson developing individual brochures for a seal sanctuary. Pupils benefit from the consistent standards set across all classes.

78 All pupils show an interest in books and respond well to stories in class and to the opportunities presented for reading individually and in groups. Many enter Year 1 without a full repertoire of reading skills. Sometimes the lack of a rich vocabulary means that predicting in reading and fully understanding texts is difficult. However, as the result of co-operation between the English co-ordinator and the SENCO and the very focused work by the teaching assistants, considerable improvements are made at all levels of the school. The library is well run and provides a regular and informed point for pupils to choose books and widen their knowledge of both fiction and reference materials. Reading records show that all pupils take books home and most teachers report good parental involvement in hearing their children read. The literacy hour format has been introduced well and staff have had good training to allow them to maximise the benefits it offers. Teachers make good use of the shared text sessions, providing good models of intonation and pace in reading. They match all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to appropriate group tasks and use the final summary session to highlight what has been learnt and where to go next.

79 A very good English lesson for Year 6 pupils exemplified the good standard of English teaching and the high level of pupil motivation within the subject. The lesson started with pupils being presented with an evocative picture from the Second World War. They were familiar with

this subject from their history work. The teacher used their knowledge to label the picture with phrases supplied by the class. This activity gradually built to a clear and effective demonstration of how to develop complex sentences in writing. The demonstration on the overhead projector became a model for group work, when the class worked well and in a very focused way to label their own pictures. A final summary session saw all pupils bursting to provide contributions. One pupil provided his complex sentence "The man, gaunt and mesmerised, looked up at me with a face that matched my feelings". This demonstrated the standard reached by most pupils within the class, where words such as "devastated", "intoxicating", "alliteration" and "simile" were used regularly as a working vocabulary.

80 Pupils show enthusiasm for reading and are comfortable reading silently, reading to adults or simply browsing in the library area. They have an informed understanding of a wide range of books, including different authors, poetry and instructional material. A combination of good teaching, stimulating resources and well planned lessons contributes to effective progress for all pupils as they move through the school. Pupils who experience learning difficulties make good progress in all classes and this has assisted in the raising of reading standards in general. Higher attaining pupils do not always have access to materials which provide them with an appropriate challenge.

81 The subject is well co-ordinated by staff at both key stages, supported well by the special educational needs co-ordinator who ensures that support for all aspects of English is provided within every class. There is scope for further collaboration between the two English co-ordinators to ensure that the strategy to develop writing skills is coherently followed throughout the school. The records are detailed, but do not always provide a clear and timesaving basis for lesson planning for individual pupils. This is an area for development, as is the monitoring of teaching now that staff have settled to their new classes and the English curriculum is well established.

MATHEMATICS

82 The standards achieved by seven-year-olds have steadily improved since 1998 and attainment is now broadly in line with the national average. Attainment at eleven has also improved significantly but the higher attaining pupils are not doing as well as they should and the progress they are making throughout Years 3 to 6 is not sufficient. Nevertheless, the school has done well to make the recent improvements in teaching and learning which provide a firm foundation for the next stages in developing the subject.

83 Many pupils display a good range of strategies for mental calculations. Knowledge of multiplication tables is generally very good throughout the school. In much of the number work in Years 3 and 4, pupils rarely use large numbers. They often make calculations with very simple one and two digit numbers and teachers need to raise their expectation of what they can manage. More challenging work is given in Years 5 and 6 and the pupils respond well to this. When given the opportunity, pupils devise methods and make calculations to solve problems, but there are generally too few opportunities for them to investigate number relationships and to explore mathematical concepts. The use of small books with squared paper in Years 1 and 2 hampers pupils' recording and does not give them the opportunity to record their jottings as they work through problems. These resources are hindering an important aspect of mathematical development.

84 Teaching seen is generally satisfactory and sometimes good. Support staff frequently make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The national numeracy strategy is being followed to ensure that pupils cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. Teachers' weekly planning documents almost always clearly identify what is to be learnt and the resources which will be required. Planning does not sufficiently distinguish between the differing needs of the pupils. Consequently, work for many pupils in Years 3 to 6 is not well matched to their needs. When looking through pupils' books, it is apparent that most in the same class are doing the same work and there is very little evidence of pupils with different levels of attainment doing

significantly different tasks.

85 Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly adequate, but some unnecessary confusion was seen in lessons when explanations were over complicated or teaching resources were not well used. The marking of pupils' work ranges from very good, with examples of written dialogue taking place and significant pupil involvement in reviewing their learning needs, to books which have scarcely seen a teacher's pen and where the feedback to pupils is quite inadequate. Some good summary sessions were seen at the end of lessons when pupils were able to review what they had learnt. Teachers are working hard to teach numeracy but there is too little account taken of the pupils' prior attainment and too many find much of the work unchallenging and not requiring intellectual effort.

86 The co-ordinator is well qualified, enthusiastic and has a very clear view of what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise pupil attainment. She has drawn up an action plan to monitor and develop teaching and learning throughout the school. Many strategies have been established already, such as tracking pupils' attainment, setting targets for different groups of pupils and encouraging teachers to make regular assessments but there has not yet been sufficient time for these to have an impact. An assessment scheme has been introduced but has not yet led to curriculum modifications.

SCIENCE

87 Seven and eleven-year-olds achieve above average standards. Higher attaining pupils do well, with a significant proportion reaching the higher levels of the National Curriculum in Years 2 and 6. The school has set about improving the practical aspects of the subject ensuring that pupils are given opportunities to actively learn through conducting experiments and working through scientific investigations. Since the last inspection, the school has invested in staff training to develop the teaching of scientific enquiry. New materials have been introduced to secure provision for this approach for pupils in all year groups. The national guidelines have been adopted ensuring adequate coverage of all aspects of the subject. These strategies have made a positive impact to the teaching of science and pupils' learning is enhanced through an increased range of practical experiences. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

88 By the end of Year 2, pupils talk about their work knowledgeably, describing with accuracy things they have learned. With help, they make suggestions about how to find things out. They know the difference between living and non-living things through characteristics of movement and growth. They make observations of common objects and processes and communicate these using appropriate language. They are developing a good understanding of scientific language supported by good use of reference materials. Through practical investigations, they develop key skills of how to follow through a scientific investigation. Pupils made predictions when carrying out an investigation into waterproof materials, being keen to contribute to group discussion about what they had discovered. They also distinguished similarities and differences of plants and recorded their findings in a systematic way. The class teacher had planned very effectively to support learning, using additional help from teaching assistants and parents.

89 By the end of Year 6, pupils work co-operatively in groups to complete practical experiments. They make predictions, observe changes, measure accurately and draw conclusions from findings, showing understanding of the use of fair tests. They have a good knowledge of plants and name parts such as stamen and stigma. Recording in pupils' books is systematic and clear with good use of annotated diagrams, charts and tables. Pupils have undertaken work on circuits and understand the role of switches and the components of a circuit. They know about forces and motion and understand the relevance of classification. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good and pupils are building on the effective foundation in Years 1 and 2. In one lesson, an electronic microscope was used to display pollen onto a large screen. This captivated pupils' interest and brought to life the microscopic world. There is, however, little use of ICT overall.

90 Teaching is generally good. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and teach the basic skills well. Assessment is effective, expectations are high and teachers use a variety of methods to engage pupils in their work. Management of pupils is good and support staff are used very effectively to enable variations in group work. The majority of pupils enjoy science; they are keen to participate and enthusiastic about the investigative work they do. They work well in groups and are familiar with the elements of prediction, observation and recording. Pupils are keen and eager to respond to teachers' questions and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding well. Pupils work well independently and are attentive to teacher explanations and demonstrations.

91 The co-ordinator leads very well and has good strategies for the continued improvement of science. She is aware of the strengths of the staff and has included specific support strategies. The co-ordinator monitors samples of work each half term to ensure that all aspects of science are covered and that pupils are actively engaged in experimental work. Monitoring of planning generally ensures sufficient scope and challenge in lessons, although planning to meet the specific needs of higher attaining pupils is not yet sufficiently established. Resources are good and effective use is made of the school grounds as a learning resource. The school pond⁴ and surrounding hedgerows add context and relevance to science education.

ART AND DESIGN

92 Two lessons of art were observed in Years 3 and 6. Other evidence was drawn from pupils' work, displays around the school, the art co-ordinator's portfolio, discussions with staff and pupils. Evaluations of school policies and teachers' planning were also undertaken. This evidence indicates good teaching across the school.

93 Work in Years 1 and 2 is good or better overall and seven-year-old pupils achieve high standards. They use a wide range of media including paints, print media, pencil and paper. Pupils are keen and eager in art; they apply themselves enthusiastically and take particular care with their work. Young pupils showed strong levels of concentration creating high quality observational drawings from coral and shells. These drawings demonstrated a willingness by pupils to look carefully at their subject. Teaching had effectively supported this work with quality items and expert layout showing high expectations for pupils to succeed.

94 In Years 3 to 6, pupils were practising their observational drawing skills using the school site as a stimulus. The quality of drawing was well developed with pupils recording accurately in three dimensions. Work in folders and on display shows that pupils experience a rich variety of materials and learn techniques in pottery, printmaking and textiles. They continue to make progress in art and the quality of work produced by the end of Year 6 is well above expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection. An after school art club has proved to be increasingly popular and has been the stimulus for some very high quality pottery, painting and batik work.

95 The organisation and management of the subject demonstrates the very good subject knowledge of the co-ordinator who offers inspiration to other staff. She makes effective use of varied and good quality resources to support children's learning and leads the development of art very well. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development through their study of famous artists and visits by local artists. Assessment is linked to National Curriculum standards, which helps teachers to build on pupils' prior attainment as they move through the school.

⁴ Note the concerns in paragraph 34 about the accessibility of the pond
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DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

96 Two lessons of design technology were observed in Years 1 and 6. Other evidence was drawn from pupils' work, displays around the school, the co-ordinator's portfolio, discussions with staff and pupils. Evaluation of school policies and teachers' planning were also undertaken. The school has maintained and developed a sound approach to design and technology since the last inspection. Teachers have developed the subject through adopting national schemes of work and there is a good range of materials and equipment available to enable pupils to try things out. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are involved in lessons and make good attempts at practical work. They work well together in most circumstances and are prepared to help each other with their work. They show enthusiasm and try hard to do well.

97 Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and seven-year-olds attain standards that are above expectations for their age. Year 1 pupils had designed roofs, which took account of size, shape and a capacity to be waterproof. Emphasis was rightly laid on the design process to ensure pupils were becoming familiar with what good design entails. Pupils learn and practise skills through evaluating their work as they go. They use well-created design sheets to develop their ideas and are encouraged to think through the processes for making their models. Pupils are receiving a good grounding in the technical language of the subject and the school successfully aligns the study of design and technology with science in Years 1 and 2.

98 There are good opportunities in Years 3 to 6 for experimentation with different types of materials. In Year 6, pupils actively evaluated their recent project on shelters. They were confident to take part in critical analysis of each group's model although criticism was hard for some to take. Pupils are developing making skills, which require a precise fit between different materials and are involved in carrying out effective quality tests to measure performance and design success. By the end of Year 6, pupils clearly know and understand the design process and can make informed decisions about how materials are selected and formed into products. Achievement overall is in line with what is expected nationally.

99 Monitoring of the subject is carried out by evaluating planning and checking display work. The co-ordinator does not observe classes to check on pupils' skill development or the requirements for staff training. As yet, the school does not have a portfolio of examples of work at different levels of attainment, making it hard for teachers to be consistent when assessing pupils' work. The co-ordinator is committed to ensuring that DT is an interesting part of every pupil's experience and has an effective plan to develop the subject further.

GEOGRAPHY

100 The standards achieved by seven and eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with the national expectation, with some pupils in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5 achieving high standards. The curriculum plan shows good coverage and a balance of local, contrasting and distant places. The range of work planned is adequate to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum although some aspects are much more developed than others. Very good use is made of the local environment and this is a strength throughout the school. In Years 3 to 6, the range of work on other parts of the world, wider world issues and in particular the study of an economically developing country are not so well covered. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall.

101 In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about simple maps and mapping, they study the school's immediate locality and become aware of local environmental issues. They study the seaside, an imaginary island, and learn about distant and different places through some very good work on *Barnaby Bear's* travels. The pupils are keen to learn and discuss geographical issues and have a good understanding of vocabulary such as environment, park, island, north and travel. They show some understanding of man's impact on the environment and the need to plan carefully to ensure the best use of resources. Mapwork and the use of photographs enhance

the geographical understanding of the pupils and provide a good foundation for later work. The pupils work with enthusiasm and take care with the presentation of their work.

102 Some very good work has been done with pupils in Year 3. They have studied man's impact on the landscape which has included accessing information from the Internet, good sketch maps, a field trip and lively written work. This good quality work is built on in Year 5 where the pupils have produced a good piece of work on a contrasting locality, which has included overlay map work, charts, comparisons and written descriptions. Year 5 are currently making a study of Fore Street in Bodmin and debating whether this should be closed to traffic. This work has involved the pupils in good local fieldwork techniques, which includes questionnaires for the general public and traders, mapping, data analysis, viewing the problem from others' points of view and taking part in a presentation. Opportunities are provided in geography for developing literacy skills. Year 6 pupils, for example, have produced a tourist brochure about Padstow.

103 The co-ordinator is keen to promote the subject in the school and has planned full coverage of the national curriculum. There is an action plan, which has identified the need to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator and to review resources for each of the modules. Samples of work are being collected as evidence of attainment for each unit of study to provide reference material for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

HISTORY

104 Standards in history meet national expectations for pupils at the ages of seven and eleven. Through good teaching, all pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding in the subject. The good planning and teachers' enthusiasm for the subject help the pupils to develop an interest in history and an awareness of time and its implications.

105 By the age of seven, pupils have a good understanding of 'past', 'present' and 'evidence'. They are able to make informed guesses as to whether items are 'old' or 'very old'. This is encouraged by good and very good teaching, which places an emphasis on exploration, discussion and accuracy. Thus, in a good Year 1 lesson, pupils discussed artefacts from fifty to a hundred years ago that they had been studying all week. As each object was shown, the class was asked "Is it old or is it modern?". The answers were challenged and pupils asked to identify the materials from which each was made. In this way, pupils developed an understanding of similarities and contrasts between our own times and those of others. They also used their knowledge of science when considering what characterises modern developments in the use of, say, plastic or electricity. Within the mixed age infant class, it was impressive that when asked about a toaster, pupils were able to say that it was metal, probably fifty years old, worked by electricity, but not automatic. These unprompted views bore testimony to skills of investigation of a high order for seven year olds.

106 Teachers use resources very effectively and successfully develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills across the whole history curriculum. By the time they leave the school, pupils have experienced a range of activities, including studying the lives of famous people such as Mary Seacole and George Stephenson, and how people lived in Ancient Egypt, Tudor times and during the Second World War. They have also experienced well-planned visits to museums, hut sites and local 'stately homes'. Through all of these experiences pupils develop the ability to understand why people acted as they did and how our ideas have built on those of past societies and civilisations. In a very good Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils watched a video of a discussion between two couples at the time of the Roman occupation of Britain. The video, together with challenging questions from the teacher, that referred back to previous lessons and forward to a visit to Chysauster, made pupils think and justify their views. They also developed skills relating to note taking, expressing and supporting views and identifying areas for future research.

107 The success of history throughout the school relates to good planning, the very effective development of artefacts and other relevant resources and teaching that is built on

detailed knowledge and understanding of the past. Use is already being made of ICT in, for example, researching CD-ROMs and websites relating to World Wars of the twentieth century.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

108 Seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds achieve standards that are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils are confident when using computers. Most – including the younger pupils - open programs with ease. The oldest pupils have good skills. They use educational software confidently and understand how the *Windows* system works. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection due to a combination of factors. The ICT suite enables all pupils to have regular ‘hands-on’ experience, teachers have worked hard to increase their own expertise and national guidelines provide staff with a structured approach to the subject. Teaching is now good and teaching assistants make a significant contribution its overall quality. Pupils now have specific lessons in ICT, whereas no direct teaching was taking place during the last inspection.

109 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 regularly use word-processing programs to write simple sentences and edit them. In Year 1, pupils write and illustrate stories. For example, they selected teddy bear characters from a clip art file and combined these with word-processed text to produce an appealing class book. 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. Later, they build on this experience as they work with a screen logo program. Pupils’ understanding of data handling is developed well as they collect information for a database about ‘ourselves’. They are learning to search the data and to produce graphs of – for example – the proportion of children who have a particular hair colour. By seven, most pupils can use a painting program to good effect; they select from a range of ‘tools’ – such as *spray* and *fill* – to create pictures and patterns.

110 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are building on these early experiences and making good progress in most aspects of the subject. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were solving the problem of enabling a duck to ‘fly’. Using a simulation program, they had to choose the appropriate wingspan, body dimensions and beak by trial and error until they had the optimum configuration. As part of their work on habitats in science, Year 4 pupils used the Internet to search confidently for information about animals living in tropical rainforests, deserts and other regions. Data handling skills are extended in Year 5 when pupils present information from their study of the town centre, producing graphs to show the distribution of different types of businesses and shops. In Year 6, pupils were developing this skill as they recorded the results of activities in athletic lessons using a spreadsheet. They quickly learned how to enter formulae to automatically calculate averages and maximum and minimum values.

111 Each aspect of the curriculum is covered, but older pupils have limited opportunities to build on early control work or develop skills in using sensors to monitor changes in the environment. They have not yet learned how to set up a sensor to automatically switch on a device – for example, a model pelican crossing sequence.

112 The subject co-ordinator has effectively managed the many changes that have taken place in the curriculum during the last two years. All teachers have benefited from centrally funded training. Resources have been improved - particularly with the creation of an ICT suite - and new software has been acquired. The school is aware of the gaps in the curriculum and is addressing this issue to enable older pupils to cover all aspects of ICT by the end of the year. National guidelines have been used to produce a whole-school assessment system, although this is yet to be fully implemented. As a result of sustained effort and commitment, the school is well placed to improve attainment and progress.

MUSIC

113 Due to timetable arrangements, there were few opportunities to observe lessons. Two lessons were seen and children were observed singing in assemblies. The choir was heard practising and pupils were observed during a flute lesson. Recordings of recent composition work in Years 3 and 4 were reviewed. This evidence, together with discussions with pupils, indicates that seven- and eleven-year-olds achieve standards that are in line with expectations at these ages, and that teaching is at least satisfactory.

114 During a very good lesson in the mixed aged infant class, pupils sang with a sense of shape and melody. Because of the teacher's encouragement, they were fully involved and making a great effort to sing in tune and to alter the dynamics from loud to soft as directed. The brisk pace of the lesson enabled pupils to sing three songs and to reinforce their understanding of rhythm and dynamics, using terms such as beat, loud and soft. The combination of the teacher's expressive approach, her warm relationships and high expectations resulted in a very worthwhile experience for the pupils.

115 Ably led by their teacher, Year 5 pupils made a good attempt at singing in a round. Each of four groups was accompanied effectively by a pupil who provided an introduction and maintained the melody on xylophones and glockenspiels. After listening to a recording of their efforts, many pupils offered comments about how they could improve – for example, by adjusting the balance between the instruments and voices.

116 Music plays a significant part in the life of the school and makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During assemblies, pupils sang enthusiastically and expressively, indicating a sensitive and reflective interpretation of the lyrics. Pupils have opportunities to make a personal response to live and recorded music. Mixing with different adults and children in and out of school – for example, when taking part in productions and local festivals - develops social skills. Cultural development is enhanced by the variety of music pupils encounter. An after-school recorder club run by a parent provides opportunities for pupils to play together; those with particular talents are encouraged to learn an orchestral instrument. Twelve pupils are learning the flute and this contributes to the overall standards because they bring their developing skills and musical understanding to classroom lessons.

117 Standards have been sustained since the last inspection, although ICT is not yet used as an integral part of the music curriculum, a weakness identified in the previous report. In order to raise standards further, emphasis needs to be given to helping teachers build more systematically on pupils' previous achievements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

118 Pupils experience a good range of opportunities and by the ages of seven and eleven are achieving standards in line with expectations, and beyond the expectation in swimming. There is good access to all aspects of PE for all pupils and a range of extra-curricular activities in which they can participate. Pupils also have the opportunity to represent the school in teams taking part in local inter-school matches and in the district cross-country competition. Swimming is taught throughout the school with outdoor and adventurous sports opportunities provided during the Year 6 residential visit to Porthpean.

119 Teaching and learning are generally good. Teachers make good use of pupils' performances to explain teaching points. Lessons are well planned, using national guidelines and begin and end with an appropriate warm-up and cool-down activity. Pupils work well together and are willing to co-operate to improve their skills. They understand the need to warm-up and cool-down, and can describe the effects of physical activity on their bodies. Opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to observe the performance of others and to evaluate and refine their own performance. They understand the need for safety in physical

activity. They are generally enthusiastic and display good attitudes towards the subject.

120 During the inspection, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were receiving high quality dance teaching from a visiting teacher as part of a six-week programme. This is a good example of the way in which the school ensures access to excellent opportunities. The school has participated in the Top Sport scheme, which has provided pupils with experience in a wider range of games and sports. There is a strong emphasis in the school on a healthy approach to living and this is reflected in initiatives such as healthy eating and playtime exercise.

121 The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen to provide support for other members of staff. She maintains good links with local schools which increases pupils' PE opportunities. The school's indoor and outdoor facilities are adequate for teaching all aspects of the curriculum and the indoor swimming pool is in use throughout the year. Resources are sufficient and properly stored and maintained. The subject development plan indicates a future focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. There has recently been a successful bid for lottery funding in order to significantly improve facilities for athletics in the school.