

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. GERMANS PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Germans, Saltash

LEA: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111982

Headteacher: Mrs. Carol McGlinchey

Reporting inspector: Mr. Chris Warner
20935

Dates of inspection: 21-24 May 2001

Inspection number: 197414

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lower Fairfield St. Germans Saltash Cornwall
Postcode:	PL12 5NJ
Telephone number:	01503 230378
Fax number:	01503 230378
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr. Richard Pipe
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20935	Chris Warner	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Science; Mathematics; Art; Music; Physical education; The foundation stage.	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1311	Barry Wood	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13307	Robert Hancock	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Information & communication technology; Art & design; Design & technology; Geography; History;	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Germans Primary School serves the village of St Germans and its surrounding communities. There are 76 pupils on roll, which is well below the average size for primary schools nationally but is a significant increase on the last inspection, when there were 46 pupils. The school is expected to continue to grow. Over half of the pupils travel to the school from outside of the village. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds, and the percentage of them entitled to a free school meal is about average for primary schools. There are similar numbers of boys and girls in each year, except in Year 6, where all the pupils are boys. The percentage of pupils on the special needs register has increased a lot since the last inspection and accounts for about a third of all the pupils, though the number varies a lot between year groups. Seven pupils have statements of special educational need and this is well above average for schools of this size. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly typical of that found nationally, but varies greatly from year to year. In the past year, a lot of children have joined the school from other schools. This is particularly significant in Key Stage 2. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Germans is an improving school that gives all its pupils a good standard of education. It is popular within the local community and nearly all the children enjoy coming here. Except for a few, mainly older pupils, children have positive attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons seen, and pupils make at least sound progress. Standards achieved by pupils are improving. Overall, standards are satisfactory in all year groups except the current Year 6, where there is an unusually high proportion of special needs. The school is well led and managed, and the staff work together as an effective team. There is a positive ethos for learning. The governing body gives strong support to the school's management, and shares in the staff's commitment to raising standards further. The school provides sound value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The headteacher gives good leadership and works closely with a supportive staff in improving the school.
- Staff carry out their delegated duties effectively.
- The governing body contributes well to the management of the school.
- Teaching for the reception children is very good, and it is at least satisfactory elsewhere in the school.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with one another and with the staff.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- There is a very strong partnership between the school, parents, and the local community.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Teaching, to be of a consistently high standard.
- The attitudes of some pupils to learning, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Resources for children in the foundation stage.
- The unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality of some pupils.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Many improvements have been made since the last inspection in September 1997. The most important issues facing the school have been tackled in a determined and effective way. The quality of teaching has significantly improved, particularly in Key Stage 1 and for the reception children. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and a higher percentage of teaching was good or better. Staffing changes have been successfully made. The subject co-ordinators have strengthened their contribution. A good start has been made to develop their monitoring roles so that the school knows what works well and what needs to be improved. As a result, standards in mathematics and science have improved in Key Stage 1. In information and communication technology, design and technology, and religious education, standards have improved throughout the school. Significant improvements have been made in assessing pupils' progress. A range of strategies has successfully been introduced to make sure that assessment is closely linked to planning. Since the last inspection, St Germans has developed into a popular school, well placed to continue its improvement.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests in 2000:

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	*	*	B	B	<i>well above average</i> A
Mathematics	*	*	B	A	<i>above average</i> B
Science	*	*	D	D	<i>average</i> C
					<i>below average</i> D
					<i>well below average</i> E

* The results for these years are omitted as they relate to a cohort of less than twelve pupils, and are therefore, considered unreliable.

The results of the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in the Year 2000 showed that standards in English and mathematics were above the national average, and below the national average in science. When compared with those of similar schools, standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in English, and below average in science. The school exceeded its targets for 11 year olds in 2000.

The school's results in national tests need to be treated with caution. Comparisons between years are difficult because of the small cohorts (never more than twelve and as few as six pupils). The very different numbers of special needs pupils in each year further complicates this. Hence the fluctuating results between year groups.

The current Year 6 group includes a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. A scrutiny of pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 2 shows that standards in English and science are below those expected of 11 year olds, and average in the case of mathematics. However, when the progress made by individual pupils is considered, nearly all of them made at least sound progress.

Standards for seven year olds in the national tests in 2000 were average in reading and mathematics, well above average in writing, and below average in science. The percentage gaining the higher, Level 3 was well above average in reading, about average in writing and mathematics, and below average in science.

Most of the children under the age of five in reception reach the early learning goals set out for their age, except in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Here, their learning is hampered because they do not have good enough access to resources to support learning.

Throughout the school, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress. Their literacy and numeracy skills help them to tackle work in other subjects with increasing confidence. More able pupils are given sufficient challenge to ensure that they make at least similar progress to that of other pupils. The inspection found no evidence of any significant difference in the standards achieved by girls and boys.

In information and communication technology, religious education and design and technology standards throughout the school have improved and are in line with those expected nationally. In all other subjects, standards are about the same as those seen nationally, except in art, where they are above those expected nationally.

The inspection found evidence of rising standards throughout the school, but especially in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1. In subjects where standards were below average in the last inspection there have been significant improvements. The school is aware of the need to continue to strive for higher standards, and for this reason gives particular attention to further improving the quality of teaching and learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Overall satisfactory, but with a few reluctant learners in Key Stage 2. Most pupils are keen to learn, but a few need a lot of support and encouragement. At times, their indifferent attitude affects their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good for most pupils in lessons, and in and around the school. Pupils are mostly open, friendly and polite. A few pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, find it hard to concentrate, and distract others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships among pupils and staff are good. Pupils willingly take responsibility in the classroom and around the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Below average attendance is partly because a lot of holidays are taken in term time. Although most pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly, a few pupils arrive late and miss out on their learning.

The school has worked very hard to foster positive attitudes and good behaviour. Although the efforts have gone a long way towards creating a good climate for learning, the work needs to continue for this goal to be secured.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
28 lessons	Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is much better than at the last inspection, because there is no longer any unsatisfactory teaching. Seventy-two per cent of teaching is good or better. Of all the teaching seen, 28 per cent was satisfactory, 40 per cent good, and 32 per cent very good.

Teaching in the foundation stage (for children in reception) is consistently very good. All the teaching in Key Stage 1 is at least satisfactory and much of it is good. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and some of it is good.

Throughout the school, numeracy and literacy are taught well. Pupils gain a good grasp of basic skills. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and this helps them to plan lessons confidently. Teaching assistants work well to support learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs. In the best lessons, teaching is purposeful and lively and pupils are involved and keen to learn. Satisfactory teaching could be improved by involving pupils more in their learning, by using assessments more effectively to challenge different needs and abilities, and by improving teachers' questioning skills

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets all the statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced and meets the needs and abilities of all pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. In the foundation stage, a lack of resources restricts the range and quality of learning opportunities, especially in the afternoon session.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There are sound procedures for identifying needs and monitoring progress, and pupils are well supported both in and out of the classrooms.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Opportunities to develop pupils' moral and social development are good. The provision for cultural development has improved and is satisfactory, because greater attention is given to different cultures. Pupils' spiritual provision is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know the children well and take good care of them. The many pupils new to the school soon feel secure and part of a community. Links with external agencies are good. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress are good. Information from tests and assessments is properly analysed and put to good use to monitor pupils' progress and to set individual targets in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED?

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The headteacher's purposeful leadership gives clear educational direction to the work of staff and governors. They know what needs to be done to improve. A good structure for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is in place and is increasingly being linked to pupils' performance.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils all its statutory duties. Governors are clear about the most important issues and have developed effective ways of supporting the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors are committed to continue to raise standards. A good start has been made in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the school's resources. Decisions about spending are based on a good awareness of the needs of the school, and every effort is made to ensure best value.

The school has a good team of well-qualified teachers and teaching assistants. Together, they meet the range of the curriculum and the needs of pupils, including those with special needs. Resources for children in the foundation stage during the current term are unsatisfactory because of the temporary arrangements to accommodate them in the afternoon sessions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Pupils make good progress. • The quality of teaching is good. • Pupils are well behaved. • The close partnership between the school and parents. • The way the school helps their children become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>There were no significant issues of concern.</p>

The school has a very welcoming ethos. The very favourable view of the school expressed by parents is in sharp contrast to the picture at the last inspection. Although more needs to be done to secure the improvements that have been made, the inspectors agree overall with parents' positive comments.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school has made a good start to raising pupils' achievements, mainly because it has improved the quality of teaching and learning. Although there remains scope for further improvement, standards overall are satisfactory. This is to the school's credit given the considerable increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements.
2. There are big differences in the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and in the nature of their needs between the small year groups. This leads to considerable difference in the achievements between years.
3. Since the last inspection the school has grown from 48 to 76 pupils:
 - Children currently in the reception class have mostly started at St Germans, and their attainment on entry is broadly typical for their age.
 - A significant number of other children have joined the school in 'older' year groups. Of pupils currently in Year 2, some have not been in the school very long.
 - A high proportion of the children joining from other schools have special needs. Several of the children joining Key Stage 2 have special needs that affect their attitude to learning. The attainment of this group, on entry, is below average.
4. Children, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress in the foundation stage and this continues throughout the school.
5. The school's results in national tests need to be treated with caution. Comparisons between years are difficult because of the small cohorts (never more than twelve and as few as six pupils). The very different numbers of special needs pupils in each year further complicates this.
6. Standards for seven year olds in the national tests in 2000 were average in reading and mathematics, well above average in writing, and below average in science. The percentage gaining the higher, Level 3 was well above average in reading, about average in writing and mathematics, and below average in science.
7. The current Year 2 group includes fewer pupils of higher ability and more with special needs than took the tests in 2000. The inspection found that the children have made at least sound progress, including those with special needs. Standards are broadly in line with those expected for seven year olds in English, mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics and science have improved, compared with those at the time of the last inspection. There has been no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in the past four years.

8. The school's commitment to raising standards, and its response to increased numbers of children, is seen in the opening of a separate afternoon reception class. The intention is to avoid an overly large class and to enable teachers to better focus on the needs of children at different stages of development. The inspectors found that the move is beginning to pay off, mainly because the quality of teaching in both the morning and afternoon sessions is very good. However, because resources have to be shared between the classes, the full range of opportunities is not yet available, and progress is restricted. Now that the school knows it can go ahead with plans for one class for the reception children, this shortcoming is being dealt with.

9. Most of the children in the foundation stage achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, and mathematical, physical, and creative development. Their progress in all of these areas would be better with improved resources. The children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in much of their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because although planned opportunities are good, the lack of resources restricts opportunities for children.

10. Pupils of all abilities are consistently making good progress within lessons in Key Stage 1. A good start has been made to getting the best out of more able pupils. This is particularly apparent in lessons for literacy and numeracy, where the structure of the national strategies has been adopted with good effect.

11. The different numbers of pupils with special needs in each small year group makes it difficult to draw conclusions from trends over time in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, the school has introduced a system for following the progress of individual pupils. This, together with teachers' knowledge of the pupils in their class, enables the school to set realistic and sufficiently challenging targets. Target setting and careful tracking of pupils' progress is helping to raise standards.

12. Pupils make at least sound progress in Key Stage 2 because the quality of teaching is consistently at least satisfactory. Results from the national tests for 11 year olds in 2000 were above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. With the exception of 1999, when there was a very high proportion of pupils with special needs in a very small cohort, the school's results over the last four years have been consistently high. The higher results in English relate to the particularly high proportion of pupils gaining Level 4. Also, the difference in the results in the tests in 2000 can be attributed to the varying achievements of pupils with special needs between subjects. For example, two special needs pupils gained the expected Level 4 in English and science, but did not quite do so in mathematics. In 2000, the school exceeded its overall targets for 11 year olds in English and mathematics.

13. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 6 are below those expected nationally in English and science, but average in mathematics. There are three main reasons for the lower achievement of the current Year 6 group as compared with that of the 2000 cohort:

- The cohort has a very large proportion of pupils with special needs, some of whom joined the school in the last two years.
- Some pupils are not as keen to learn as others, in spite of the school's effort to engage them.
- Poor attendance and punctuality affect the progress made by some of the pupils.

14. The difference between year groups is seen in the higher achievements of pupils in the current Year 5. This is reflected in the school's higher targets for 2002.

15. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, and design and technology have improved throughout the school, in comparison with those at the time of the last inspection, and they are now satisfactory. In history and geography, music and physical education standards remain, as at the last inspection, in line with the expectations nationally. Standards in art are above those expected of seven and 11 year olds because the curriculum is particularly well planned and taught.

16. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are suitably assessed, and tasks are planned to match their prior attainment. An analysis of their work, and observation in class, shows that they make sound and often good progress in relation to their prior learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The school has very high expectations of the attitudes and behaviour of all its pupils. The improved quality of teaching has contributed to a more positive and welcoming ethos than was noted in the last inspection report. This is a high degree of confidence among parents in what the school is doing. The attitude of nearly all pupils to those with special educational needs is a very positive feature of the school. However, although a lot of progress has been made, further work to be done to improve the attitudes of some pupils to learning.

18. The reception class provides a secure and encouraging learning environment. Children quickly settle into the routines and respond very well to the consistent expectations of the staff. Behaviour is very good. The children want to join in activities and get on very well with each other and with the staff. Children gain quickly in confidence and independence. They adapt well to the routines between the morning and afternoon sessions. They clearly enjoy being at school, and have a lot of fun with each other and with the adults.

19. In the main, the positive picture of children's attitudes, behaviour, and personal development continues into Key Stage 1. Pupils listen well to their teacher and to one another, are responsive to the various activities, and concentrate well on what they are doing. They are determined to 'have a go', as when mixing paints in art, or in producing action models in design and technology. Overall, their attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good, so that they co-operate through caring and sharing, and work together well. They are gaining a good foundation for their later school lives.

20. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 are interested in learning and respond well to it. A few pupils in each class are not so positive. Often, their reluctance is related to their specific special educational need. The school has done a lot to support and improve attitudes, but the work needs to be continued. There are times when the indifferent attitude of a few pupils detracts from their learning.

21. Pupils' behaviour in the classroom mirrors their attitudes to learning. Behaviour is often good at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, most children behave well. However, the behaviour of a few pupils hampers their learning and distracts others.

22. Pupils' behaviour around the school is usually good, and leads to a calm, happy, and friendly environment. Pupils respect the authority of the staff, even when being corrected. The school has kept unacceptable behaviour to a minimum by reducing the length of the lunchtime break. No bullying, racial incidents or swearing were evident during the inspection, and this is a perception shared by parents.

23. There has been no need to use exclusions to counter poor behaviour in the last three years, though a small number of pupils have been supported with behaviour management courses.

24. The quality of relationships, at all levels, is good and supports pupils' learning. Pupils have a lot of trust in their teachers and support staff, who represent very good role models. The school places a high value on raising pupils' self-esteem and mutual respect and this helps them to feel confident in their relationships. In the classroom, pupils are developing their listening skills, and they increasingly value each other's opinions and qualities. They usually cooperate in groups to achieve a productive outcome, and they are quick to applaud one another's successes. Boys and girls eat and play well together. Older pupils look after younger ones at lunchtime. Pupils are inquisitive and welcoming to visitors. They are keen to make contacts and relationships with other children from around the world, using the Internet. For example, the sporting exchange with a French school leads to many rich opportunities for friendships, sport and study.

25. The personal development of the pupils is good throughout their time in school. The school recognises that several pupils need to build up their self-esteem and to become more confident. This strategy is further promoted by the quality of the formal personal, health and social education and of assemblies, with such themes as 'how our actions affect others.' The school consistently promotes positive role models, through good teaching and the contribution of visitors.

26. Pupils help around the school, particularly at lunchtime, and there are whole school routines for the older ones. Those in their final years take on office duties and run the school tuck-shop. Their growing sense of moral and social awareness is seen in the quality of their e-mail ideas for the development of the school's links with its local school 'cluster'. Pupils maintain the environment of the site well, without litter or graffiti. They respect the school's resources and keep their classrooms and cloakrooms tidy. Pupils are involved in fundraising for a good range of charities and raise significant amounts of money for others around the world and locally.

27. The school's attendance rate and level of punctuality are unsatisfactory and have a detrimental impact on the progress made by a significant minority of pupils. The school has actually improved attendance levels during the last four years and there is no unauthorised absence, but authorised absence is still higher than the national average level. This is partly because holidays are taken during term time and partly because a few pupils miss a lot of occasional days throughout the year.

28. There is a very high incidence of lateness for the morning session, and this interrupts the start to the school day and very much affects the learning of pupils arriving late. Punctuality throughout the rest of the day is satisfactory. There are no known instances of truancy.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

29. In the last inspection, teaching in one in four lessons was unsatisfactory, and a key issue was to improve the quality of teaching. The last inspection found teaching to be at least satisfactory in Key Stage 2, but unsatisfactory for children under five and in Key Stage 1. Significant progress has been made in tackling this important issue, partly through a change of staffing, to the extent that all the teaching is now satisfactory or better, with 72 per cent judged to be good or very good.

30. Of all lessons seen, 28 per cent were satisfactory, 40 per cent good and 32 per cent very good. Teaching for children of reception age (in the foundation stage) was always very good. Teaching for pupils in Key Stage 1 is at least satisfactory and often good. This is also true of the teaching of Year 2 pupils when they join older pupils for literacy and numeracy with another teacher.

31. Teaching for pupils in Key Stage 2 is at least satisfactory and includes some good lessons.

32. The quality of teaching for children in reception is very good. This is a notable improvement over the position in the last inspection. Both in the morning session, when the children are with the Year 1 pupils, and in the afternoon, when they are on their own, the teachers display a good understanding of how young children learn. They are particularly skilled in talking and listening to the children and know when to intervene to support and extend learning. The children feel valued and soon grow in confidence and independence. They deal very well with having different teachers in the morning and the afternoon because the teachers and ancillary staff work well together and have consistent expectations.

33. The school has only recently extended its provision for reception age children in response to a significant increase in demand for places. Within lessons, the strength of the teaching makes the learning effective. However, until the reception children get their own classroom in the autumn term, learning opportunities are limited, especially in the afternoons, because they do not have access to the full range of resources. Through conversations and observations, staff get to know how the children are getting on and are increasingly using these assessments to plan the next step in learning. Relationships are good, and every opportunity is taken to keep parents informed of their child's progress and of ways in which they can be supported.

34. Teaching for pupils in Key Stage 1 is good, which represents a significant improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection. This judgement includes the lessons each morning in literacy and numeracy, when Year 2 pupils join older ones in another class. Teachers have a good grasp of the curriculum, especially in numeracy and literacy. The national strategies are used well and provide a helpful structure to teaching the mixed aged classes. Teachers plan their work well and have clear objectives for each lesson. As a result, lessons proceed with good pace and direction. There is a fair balance between discussion, task, and review of what has been learned.

35. Pupils in Key Stage 1 usually make good gains in knowledge and understanding during lessons, because they are given enough practical activities and are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. Most of them concentrate well in their learning because they understand what is expected of them and are usually interested in the work. The greatest challenge for the teachers is in making sure pupils are given work that is matched to their different abilities. On the few occasions when pupils are not fully challenged, it is because not enough account is taken of the assessments made during lessons, to plan the next stage in learning. Teachers' assessments of how pupils are getting on are particularly effective in numeracy and literacy, because they get the pupils to discuss their work and to respond to well-framed questions. In a numeracy lesson, the teacher repeated and re-worded her questions, so that pupils had a good chance to think about and work out their answers.

36. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, with some good lessons, notably in numeracy and in science. When lessons are being introduced, teachers question pupils well to find out the level of their understanding. The satisfactory lessons could be improved if pupils were given further opportunities to reflect, think, and explain in greater depth. In the best teaching, pupils are asked to explain their ideas and work. For example, when pupils demonstrated their directional route to the class, it not only helped everyone's mathematical thinking, but also developed their speaking and listening skills. Basic skills are taught thoroughly, and pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise and to review their learning. In the more effective lessons, teaching is well organised and incisive, so that pupils have a full understanding of what is required of them. When the objectives of the lesson are clearly explained to pupils, as is usually the case in literacy, numeracy and science, then evaluations in the final plenary are usually more effective. Satisfactory teaching could be improved if the lesson had a clearer structure and purpose, and if pupils were more fully involved through a greater level of discussion.

37. Throughout the school, teachers strive hard to give pupils work that has enough challenge and interest. In most lessons the teachers succeed in getting pupils to sustain concentration and to think and learn for themselves. Children in the reception classes respond particularly well, because the teachers work hard to make sure that new learning builds on earlier experiences. They make it clear to the children what they are expected to learn. As a result, nearly all of the children are keen to learn and to improve their work. However, a number of pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, have specific learning needs that include developing more positive attitudes to learning. Some of these children have joined the school from other schools, while others experienced unsatisfactory teaching for much of their early education in St Germans, as noted in the last inspection report. Teachers manage pupils effectively in most lessons, but there are times when it becomes difficult to sustain everyone's attention.

38. In both key stages, homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Throughout the school the home/school reading partnership is effective in promoting pupils' reading skills and interest in books. In Key Stage 2, where older pupils receive a suitable amount of homework to prepare them for secondary school, work is properly set and marked. The homework often helps these pupils to practise and develop known skills, especially in English and mathematics.

39. In most lessons throughout the school, teachers ensure that support staff are aware of the aims of the lesson and how these can be achieved. The consistent and hard-working approach of the support staff is a real asset to learning throughout the school. The good effect of relevant training opportunities for support staff is particularly apparent in the way most of them are fully involved with the teaching and learning during a lesson. This ensures that their time and skills are used to good effect to support the class and individual pupils, including those with special educational needs.

40. Literacy and numeracy are given a high priority at both key stages, and teaching in both English and mathematics is good. Pupils' progress is assessed rigorously in both subjects. Teaching was good or better in almost all the English lessons seen. The skills of literacy, including phonics, are taught effectively. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and adhere well to their planning, so that the pace of teaching and methods they select enable pupils to make good progress.

41. Teaching is good in mathematics. Pupils learn the skills and operations of number work thoroughly, and teachers use questioning well to determine pupils' level of understanding. In the school year, teachers have given more attention to setting tasks which offer pupils more frequent opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills. Basic skills, including mental mathematics, are well taught, and teachers make good use of suggested national strategies.

42. While teaching is always at least satisfactory, and much is better, there remain elements within lessons that could be improved:

- The purpose of the lesson should be clearly stated and referred to.
- The work should be better matched to the varying abilities of pupils.
- There needs to be an increase in the use of questioning and the level of discussion to assess pupils' learning.
- Assessments should be used more to help plan the next stage of learning.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their learning need to be extended.
- Pupils need to be more actively involved in the lesson, by way of questioning, explaining and demonstrating.

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

43. The curriculum is suitably broad and includes all relevant subjects of the National Curriculum. Provision for religious education (RE) and information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly improved since the last inspection. The school now fully meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus for RE, and ICT is beginning to be used effectively to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. The school has successfully implemented the literacy and numeracy strategies and this is helping to raise standards in these subjects.

44. The last inspection noted that not enough attention was given to plan work to challenge pupils' wide range of abilities in the mixed aged classes. Although considerable work has been done to tackle this issue, still more needs to be done so that standards can continue to improve.

45. Some lessons are either too short to fully support and extend pupils' learning, or too long, with the result that pupils find difficulty maintaining their concentration.

46. Appropriate provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. Sex education and issues of drug misuse are taught as part of the school's personal, social and health education programme and are supported by contributions from visitors, such as the school nurse and local police. The curriculum is further enriched by visits to local places of interest related to topics studied, and through a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development as well as to their learning in subjects.

47. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and meets all the requirements of the Code of Practice. Pupils with special needs have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. They work well when they are away from their own classroom in small groups and also in class, where ancillary staff give a good level of support. Pupils on the register for special needs have a suitable individual education plan that helps to meet their needs in each subject. Good provision is made in literacy and numeracy, while ICT is increasingly being used to support their different learning needs.

48. Good links have been established with the local community to support curricular opportunities. Ministers from the local churches come into school to lead assemblies, and members of the Women's Institute help with reading, art, design and technology and gardening. There are good relationships with the on-site private nursery and with the local playgroup. Constructive links have been developed with the local cluster school, both for pupils and for staff, and these include corresponding by e-mail and sharing visits to workshop activities.

49. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The good provision in moral and social development makes a significant contribution to pupils' good behaviour and relationships.

50. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted through daily acts of collective worship and in RE lessons. Collective worship is planned and takes place in a quiet and respectful atmosphere in the hall, when there is an opportunity to engage in prayer. Pupils appreciate the Christian values and have some opportunities to learn of other faiths as part of the Agreed Syllabus for RE. However, there is scope to increase the planned opportunities in other subjects for spiritual awareness through reflection, awe and wonder.

51. The school places high priority on equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values. They are taught to distinguish between right and wrong, through discussions, stories and assemblies. The school has developed successful behaviour management strategies, which contribute to pupils' moral development. Pupils are encouraged to be considerate to others, and they enthusiastically support a number of local and international charities. The staff serve as good role models, and pupils are encouraged to behave well, with appropriate praise and rewards.

52. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. They are encouraged to work well together in class and play with each other during break times. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is popular with pupils and contributes a lot to their social development. Social development is also promoted in many visits organised to support pupils' learning and by various fundraising events organised by the Friends of the School.

53. Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. Pupils learn to appreciate their own culture through numerous visits to local places of interest, including theatre visits to Plymouth and to the Delaware Centre for a residential trip. Regular visitors come into the school to work with pupils, including a local author and an artist.

54. Pupils' understanding of other cultures has improved since the last inspection. A link has been developed between the school and a community in Tanzania, and another exists with a school in the Shetland Isles.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. Overall, the school provides well for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils, in line with its stated aims. This is a similar picture to the one reported in the last inspection. The pupils are treated as individuals and considerable efforts are made to support their learning, their personal development, and their growing maturity. By the age of 11, pupils are well prepared for the next phase in their education, and are on the road to becoming responsible citizens. Parents fully recognise the high quality provision, and many of them regard this as one of the main reasons for choosing St Germans for their children.

56. Induction procedures for new parents and their children are very good. In the entrance lobby there is a useful selection of information in the way of booklets, displays, and the prospectus. Most parents take up the invitation to visit the school and their child's classroom before the children join the school, and find this helps the 'settling in' period. Parents are similarly well supported when the time comes for their child's transfer to secondary school. The school receives updates from the secondary school on pupils' progress, and this helps it to evaluate its approaches to pupils' personal and academic development. Many of the past pupils from St Germans made return visits to tell younger children about how they are getting on in the next school.

57. There is a sufficient range of relevant and updated support, guidance and welfare policies. The staff handbook includes all policies and procedures, so that staff find it easy to put them effectively into practice. However, some policies rely on the local education authority policy, and would be more useful if related to the school's specific situation and needs. There are good links with outside agencies to support the pupils on a routine basis, or if there are specific problems. For example, a behaviour specialist helped the school in developing its present behaviour policy. The school nurse makes a valuable contribution to pupils' welfare and supports specific aspects of the curriculum, such as sex education and healthy eating. The education welfare service supports the school well and a local community police officer gives useful guidance on citizenship. When the local Methodist minister brought in his tortoise to an assembly, it helped to develop a moral theme and gave the children an enjoyable and very real 'hands-on' experience.

58. Child protection procedures are very good. The headteacher is experienced and well trained and has effectively passed on her awareness to staff.

59. Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good and reflect the school's commitment to develop pupils' responsibility for their own actions. Between them, staff and pupils have developed codes of behaviour for most aspects of school life. The simple but effective rules are prominently displayed around the school. The staff's expectations of pupils' behaviour have been raised since the last inspection, and parents agree that the attitudes and behaviour of most pupils have improved as a result of the school's efforts. Staff have a good understanding of procedures and put them into practice fairly and consistently. In spite of the improvements, further work is needed to develop the attitudes and values of a small minority of pupils, mainly in Key Stage 2.

60. There is an effective balance between sanctions and rewards. Rewards given in class build towards greater recognition throughout the whole school. Pupils are now used to setting and working towards behaviour targets and this is helping to improve behaviour. A good range of strategies is used to help keep unwanted behaviour to a minimum. The staff work consistently and fairly to handle any difficulties.

61. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory and have gone some way to improving attendance to just below national levels. Even so, further attention needs to be given to improving attendance and punctuality for a minority of pupils. Their absence and lateness affects their attitude to learning and, in turn, holds them back in their work. Although the school works hard to make parents aware of their statutory responsibilities, there are still some pupils who miss too much schooling and lose out in their education

62. The school is a safe environment for all pupils and staff, as indicated by an inspection of the facilities and the low accident rate. The minor health and safety points, which are very few in number, have been brought to the attention of the school. The potential hazard arising from an increased number of parents using the school car park is under review. Health and safety procedures are very good and benefit from the guidance of the headteacher and the involvement of a knowledgeable governor. Full site inspections are regularly carried out. The school gets very high safety ratings in the annual risk assessment undertaken by the local education authority.

63. There is a good complement of qualified first-aid personnel, and procedures are good. Pupils are being properly acquainted with health and safety principles in the home and at school, and through the school's personal health and social education provision.

64. Arrangements for assessing pupils' academic progress have significantly improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. The improvements are particularly effective in English, mathematics and science and contribute well to the drive for higher standards in these subjects. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils, including careful analysis of National Curriculum assessments and optional tests. The wealth of information collected is used well to set targets for individual pupils in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. Pupils understand how to improve their work because the assessments are shared with them. However, assessment is not used enough in the planning of pupils' work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

65. Sometimes tasks for individual pupils are either too difficult or too easy, which makes learning less effective than it usually is in English, mathematics and science.

66. Pupils' work is marked regularly with clear targets to help them improve their work. The school monitors pupils' academic progress well where subject co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science are released to monitor teaching and learning. The headteacher also monitors all subjects through regular classroom visits.

67. Procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. The co-ordinator, teachers and ancillary staff regularly monitor pupils' progress to ensure that work is matched to their individual needs. There are satisfactory arrangements for annual reviews where targets for future development are set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

68. The strong partnership between the school and parents reflects the school's improvement since the last inspection. Parents are very supportive of the school and have a lot of confidence in what it does for their children. St Germans is now benefiting from its improved reputation in the community with an increased number of pupils on roll.

69. The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. Most parents are keen to play a part in their child's education. They contribute a lot to the work of the school, and to their children's learning in school and at home.

70. The involvement of parents is reflected in their high level of interest in the attending the inspection meeting and returning the parents' questionnaire. From this response, and from the substantial number of conversations with individual parents, it can be seen that parents' level of satisfaction is far higher than at the last inspection. Overall, there is a minimal level of dissatisfaction, and no significant areas of concern to note.

71. The contribution of parents and the local community has a positive impact on pupils' learning. All principal documents and displays organised by the school make it clear that parents are welcome, and are valued in the education process. There is an open door policy, and parents are encouraged to play an active role within the school. A good number of parent volunteers provide additional help and resources both inside and outside the classroom. Some parents regularly help run the many sports clubs, contributing to the school's considerable success in small schools' competitions. Members of the local community give

additional enthusiastic help in the classrooms. The three parent governors have been competitively elected, and play knowledgeable and significant roles. The 'Friends of St German's School Association,' is vibrant within the school and the local community, and is well supported by parents.

72. The quality of information for parents is very good. A 'welcome' booklet reinforces the school prospectus. Along with the annual governors' report to parents, all principal documents for parents are of very high quality, contain all the points of statutory information and indicate that the school values its parents.

73. The various policies and procedures represent the school well, and parents would benefit from their display and easy access.

74. Other written communications are issued weekly. They are of good quality, sufficient, and respectful to the role of parents, and give them enough time to respond. Parents are especially appreciative of the weekly newsletter. It contains a good insight into the school, and allows pupils, parents and the community to contribute.

75. Parents feel that staff are very approachable, both at the start and the end of the day. The staff are committed to parents having prompt access to discuss any concerns or to pass on information. The annual reports to parents on their child's progress are satisfactory. They include good opportunities for pupils to appraise themselves, and for parents to contribute with their own comments. However, reports would benefit if there was a greater consistency in the noting of targets for children's improvements.

76. The educational partnership between the school and most of the parents has developed well. All have signed the home-school agreement, though not all of them are fully supportive in working with the school to improve attendance and punctuality. The termly, formal meetings between parents and their child's teacher are well attended. Popular workshops for parents are regularly held on topics such as the national tests and assessments, and on the literacy and numeracy strategies.

77. Most parents approve of the present homework arrangements and feel clear as to the expectations. Each class has a useful display of information including topic work, which parents can easily read.

78. There is a close collaboration with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents work with the teachers to produce individual educational plans, with targets that contribute to at least satisfactory progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

79. The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear educational direction for the improvement of the school. Parents, governors and staff agree that this is a positive and rapidly improving school. There is a strong sense of purpose in the way everyone involved with the school goes about their work. Although further work still needs to be done, the school is well on the way to seeing its efforts lift standards of pupils' achievements. The headteacher earns the respect of everyone in the school community for her commitment and the way she works with people in managing the school.

80. The school has faced up to the weaknesses identified in the last inspection and has built on its strengths. Serious shortcomings in the quality of teaching have been addressed to very good effect. Teaching for children in the foundation stage and Key Stage 1 has been turned around. Weaknesses in the curriculum have been tackled. Parents' confidence in the school has dramatically improved and is very supportive.

81. Teaching staff take their management roles seriously and understand what has to be done to improve different aspects of provision. There is a clear agenda for the development of each subject, enabling staff to carry out their duties with increasingly good effect. The improved provision for ICT, design and technology and religious education has led to improved standards.

82. A new co-ordinator for special educational needs has recently taken up her part-time post. The existing management of special needs is sound, and teachers are supported well by their assistants in meeting the pupils' wide-ranging needs. The seven pupils with statements of special education need receive a good level of support and their programmes are managed well.

83. The governing body has significantly improved its role so that, while it continues to be supportive of the school, it is actively involved in working with staff to raise standards. The governors are very effective in carrying out their statutory responsibilities. They contribute well to directing the development and work of the school and have played an important part in ensuring that the school has moved forward since the inspection. By working closely together, the headteacher and governors ensure that the school is well placed to continue with its improvement.

84. There are effective procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. The headteacher and governors all have monitoring roles and carry them out well. The results of national tests and assessments are properly analysed, presented and discussed with governors. The recent release of the headteacher from much of her class teaching responsibility gives the subject co-ordinators an opportunity to develop their monitoring roles in the core subjects. The school needs to ensure that the increased level of monitoring and evaluation leads to the continued improvement of teaching and learning.

85. The monitoring and evaluating of teaching includes a sound programme of support for newly appointed staff and the effective implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.

86. The school's clearly stated aims and values give equal emphasis to meeting pupils' pastoral and academic needs. This is reflected in much of the work in the classrooms and around the school. It is important that recent improvements are carried forward so that those pupils who are more reluctant about learning find continued encouragement and success.

87. The school has identified the most important issues for improvement in its very clear school development plan. Targets in the plan give high priority to improving standards of pupils' achievements. It is important that the improved monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is closely linked to targets for pupils' performance.

88. Very good financial planning supports the school's educational priorities. The school secretary attends the finance committee meetings and makes sure that there is a good flow of relevant information between the headteacher, finance committee and full governing body. Secure administrative procedures are in place and the governors exercise an appropriate level of financial checks and controls.

89. The strategic use of resources, including specific grants and other funding, is good. As a result, initiatives have been successful. There are plans to increase resources when children in the foundation stage have their own classroom in the autumn term. The school is aware of getting best value in important areas and seeks to ensure value for money by monitoring the effectiveness of important initiatives.

90. St Germans is staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced teachers who are very committed to the school. Support staff work hard and are very much members of a team. Where staff have taken up the good opportunities for professional training, this brings an added benefit to pupils' learning. With the increased provision for reception children and the recent introduction of the curriculum for the foundation stage, it is important that all staff have received relevant training for this age group.

91. The accommodation is very good and allows most aspects of the curriculum to be taught effectively. Although the younger children have their own, secure outdoor area, it has not yet been developed into a space for children to learn by working in a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors. The buildings and site are well maintained, and stimulating displays of pupils' work considerably enhance the learning environment. The school makes good use of new technologies, and staff are increasingly confident in using them.

92. Resources for learning are adequate. The school has reasonable resources in all areas of the National Curriculum, including ICT, literacy and numeracy. However, resources for the children in the foundation stage are unsatisfactory. Limited resources for the afternoon group of reception children restrict their learning opportunities, and make the high standard of teaching less effective.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

93. In order that the school can build on its success and further raise the standards pupils achieve, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Continue to improve the consistency and quality of teaching by:**
 - * ensuring that pupils are involved in the lessons (asking questions, giving explanations, making predictions, drawing conclusions, making evaluations);
 - * using continuous assessments to help plan work to meet the needs of pupils of different ability within the class;
 - * ensuring that the established monitoring programme leads to specific improvement and professional development.

- **Improve the attitudes of pupils by:**
 - * reviewing the school's mission statement, and its aims and values, to produce a policy which is clearly understood by all;
 - * ensuring that teaching provides pupils with sufficient interest and challenge in their learning.

- **Improve the resources for children in the foundation stage by:**
 - * completing an audit of resources in relation to each area of learning;
 - * planning the curriculum around both indoor and outdoor opportunities for learning;
 - * ensuring appropriate training to promote the foundation stage curriculum.

- **Improve the attendance and punctuality of pupils by:**
 - * closer analysis of information on attendance;
 - * making parents clearer as to their responsibilities for attendance and punctuality;
 - * devising measures to promote and reward better attendance and punctuality;
 - * monitoring its efforts to improve the attendance and punctuality.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	28
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	32	40	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	76
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR-6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	24

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.2

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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	3	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	9	6	8
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	12	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	100	75	92
	National	75	72	85

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	83	83	83
	National	70	72	80

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	79
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)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	22

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	178551.00
Total expenditure	173775.00
Expenditure per pupil	2633.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	9833.00
Balance carried forward to next year	14609.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

76
35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	80	17	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	60	29	6	3	3
The teaching is good.	94	3	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	86	11	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	94	3	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	89	11	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	80	17	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	86	11	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	91	9	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	43	6	0	6

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

94. There have been considerable improvements in the provision for children in the foundation stage (reception age) since the last inspection, when much of the work was judged unsatisfactory. The teaching, which is very good overall, is having a positive impact on children's learning.

95. Children enter the reception class full-time in September if their fifth birthday falls before the end of December. Those with later birthdays can enter school on an afternoon-only basis from September before becoming full-time at the start of the term in which they have their fifth birthday.

96. Although there is a range of attainment on entry to the class, what the children know, understand and can do is typical overall of the levels expected for this age group. This is confirmed by initial 'baseline' assessments carried out for all of the children.

97. At the time of the inspection, there were 16 reception children (14 full-time). The older, full-time children spend the morning with the Year 1 children for numeracy and literacy. In the afternoon the reception children are together in an adjacent classroom with another teacher. This is a temporary arrangement for the summer term only. The school is aware that the current provision has two shortcomings which restrict the quality and range of learning opportunities in the afternoon session:

- The range and quality of indoor resources for learning is unsatisfactory in the interim period before a new class is established;
- The outside area has not yet been developed into a space in which children can to learn by working in a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors.

98. Now that the school knows it can go ahead with plans for one class for the reception children, this shortcoming is due to be addressed. The very good teaching is not as effective as it would be if resources were more plentiful and accessible. All areas of learning are affected in some way by the inadequate afternoon resources. Children's progress in important aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world is considerably restricted.

99. The close working relationship between the staff and children in the two classes supports a smooth transition from the foundation stage into Key Stage 1, where the National Curriculum is followed. The recent review of the curriculum takes on board the latest national guidance and represents an improvement on the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

100. As a result of very good teaching and carefully planned experiences, the children are likely to achieve all the early learning goals in this area by the end of the foundation stage. The children relate well to adults and to one another. This is because teachers and support assistants provide very good role models and have consistently high expectations. They help

the children to become aware of their own behaviour. A calm, secure and encouraging atmosphere prevails, so that the children feel valued as individuals. They settle quickly into the class and get to know the routines, such as lining up and getting changed for games.

101. The children are growing in independence, and learning to take responsibility. They enjoy tidying up and putting things away. They listen well to stories and join in songs, action rhymes and games. They are keen to learn because most activities, although limited by resources, do have enough challenge and interest. Staff understand the importance of role-play in helping children to make sense of their world. In the 'Chinese restaurant' children learn to take turns ordering food. The staff are particularly good at giving less confident children enough time and support to develop at their own pace. All the children, including those with special needs, feel included.

Communication, language and literacy

102. By the end of the reception year, nearly all the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals. However, although the children benefit from the high quality of teaching, inadequate resources for reading, writing and role-play hamper their progress, particularly in the afternoon session.

103. The adults know how best to support children in different activities. The children know that what they have to say is valued, and they feel confident in expressing themselves. The teachers help the children to talk and write about their ideas and feelings, as in circle time. Children listen well, both in structured activities, such as talking about different fruit, and in imaginative activities, such as role-play in the 'garden centre'.

104. The morning focus on language and literacy is an adapted literacy session based on the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. The use of language for reading and writing is developed particularly well through telling stories and sharing books in a clear and lively way. Children listen to and join in well-known rhymes and stories. They like to recall the main plot of a story and describe a character. They know how a book 'works' and enjoy suggesting how a story might end. However, the children do not have the chance to browse, choose and 'read' from books in a quiet and properly resourced setting.

105. Children's understanding of writing as a means of communication is not as developed as it should be. There are good planned opportunities for writing, led by the teacher, but not enough for more spontaneous writing, such as sending messages and making lists. Children are keen to have a go at writing for a purpose, such as labelling their drawing of plants growing in the classroom.

106. Nearly all the children are already confident in identifying at least some initial sounds. The gradual introduction of new letters helps children to build up their knowledge and understanding in a measured way. Most of them can name sounds in words they use a lot. Nearly all of the full-time children recognise and write their names.

Mathematical development

107. This area of learning is well provided for in the daily numeracy session. Nearly all the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In addition to the numeracy session, there are planned activities in the afternoon which pick

up on particular needs arising from the assessments made of the children. At the time of the inspection, the afternoon focus was on sorting activities. The staff are increasingly aware of the value of using a range of opportunities, such as sand and water play, to get children to think and talk mathematically. However, limited resources do narrow the quality of learning opportunities. This makes it difficult for children to develop a mathematical understanding related to everyday situations.

108. Most of the children recognise numbers up to ten and most of the older children are familiar with higher numbers.

109. In a planned session, the children looked at the features and value of different 'real' coins. They ordered and paid for food in the 'Magic Lantern Restaurant'. Support staff encouraged them to predict and to draw conclusions: 'I think I can afford a chicken noodle soup' and 'I didn't have enough money for everything' were typical of the responses.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

110. The children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in important aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because, although planned opportunities are good, the lack of resources restricts opportunities for children to:

- make things, and choose suitable materials and tools for themselves;
- use a computer and other technological resources to support learning;
- engage in activities which encourage them to ask questions about why things happen and how things work, and suggest and try their own ideas.

111. Even so, through a series of well-prepared topics, such as 'how things grow', boys and girls of all abilities develop a good understanding of plants. They recognise and can name different fruits and talk about some ways in which they are the same, such as 'they grow under the ground' and some ways they are different, such as 'they are not the same colour'.

112. In other topics, the children learn about themselves, their families and where they live. They find out about their immediate environment through visits and observations, such as going to the parish church and to the health centre. They develop their idea of places, direction and maps by following 'Freddy's diary' of his travels.

113. By celebrating traditions, feasts and special days, the children are introduced to different cultures and beliefs.

114. In talking about their families, the children are beginning to see the differences between family members, helped by the teacher sharing family photographs. They see and talk about changes and growth when growing plants from seed. A child explained the height of one beanstalk with 'its tall because it wants to get to the window in the roof'.

115. The opportunities for children to learn through activities need to be extended, so that they can experiment and try things out. Better use needs to be made of the outside area. The school is aware of these shortcomings and improvements are being planned.

Physical development

116. Although the immediate outdoor area provides limited opportunities for physical activity, the children do have regular access to the school hall for physical skills such as dance, jumping, balancing, and climbing in space and on apparatus. These opportunities and the consistently very good teaching means that most are on course to achieve the early learning goals for this area.

117. The absence of an outdoor area for more adventurous activity restricts the extent of childrens physical development.

118. Children using the hall are very aware of their own space and move with growing confidence and control. They can run, jump, balance and climb, using the good range of equipment. Teaching in the observed session was of a very high standard. The children are given plenty of time and encouragement to explore their movements and to think and try ways to improve their efforts.

119. The children handle scissors, brushes and other tools safely and with a good degree of control. This is because they are encouraged to try things out and are given just the right level of guidance, often through example. They apply their skills to draw, paint and model with considerable independence, expression and skill.

Creative development

120. Most are on course to achieve all the early learning goals in this area because there are many good opportunities for the children to express themselves in creative ways. The children respond well in role-play, especially in the morning, when there is a good level of adult interaction around such themes as the 'Chinese restaurant' and 'grocery shop', They feel encouraged to express and communicate their ideas. They take on different characters, and older children explore and develop their roles and feelings to create their own settings.

121. There are good opportunities for the children to express themselves individually and by using a variety of media. They experiment with colours and a range of materials to make a collage. They use crayons and pencils to sketch their scientific observations of plants, learning how to create a different effect by shading. The children enjoy listening to and making music. They have a good sense of rhythm in chanting, using clapping, tapping and stamping. They sing enthusiastically and are beginning to pick up and join in the chorus of well-known songs and hymns.

ENGLISH

122. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds the school's results were very high in comparison with both the national average and with similar schools. Standards at the time of the last inspection were in line with those expected nationally. However, since that time the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has significantly increased. Currently, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national average, because half of the pupils in this small cohort are on the special needs register.

123. In the tests for seven year olds in 2000 the school's results were above average in comparison with both the national average and when compared with those of similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is broadly average.

124. Standards are likely to vary considerably in a small school, depending on the ability of a particular cohort. In fact, standards have steadily risen since the previous inspection owing to the successful implementation of the literacy strategy, because a much higher emphasis is placed on developing literacy. Steps to raise the expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are being taken by the setting of individual targets for pupils. As a result of target setting and the increased opportunities for extended writing, all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in their learning.

125. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in speaking and listening are average, but are below average among the current eleven year olds. In Key Stage 1 pupils listen carefully to their teachers and each other and are keen to answer questions and follow instructions.

126. Higher attaining pupils confidently join in discussions. Most of the older pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 listen to each other and to adults, although a significant minority find this a difficult task, which adversely affects their attitudes and learning. Many pupils give single words or short phrases for answers. They do not have the necessary vocabulary and are not confident enough to express their thoughts and ideas in detail.

127. Seven year olds attain average standards in reading. Some of them make good progress and achieve good standards through good opportunities to read at home. Higher attaining pupils develop fluency and confidence in their reading because they use a wide range of strategies to tackle new words. They identify the main characters in a story and express opinions about the main events.

128. Eleven year olds attain standards in reading that are below average, although the few higher attaining pupils read fluently and with confidence. Currently, there are a number of pupils who are unable to use context clues to read unfamiliar words in more challenging texts. A number of pupils, particularly boys, are disenchanted with reading and need material that really captures their interest. The library is timetabled for use throughout the school and pupils appropriately develop their library skills. However, older pupils do not have enough opportunities to use the library independently to access information, which restricts their learning of research skills.

129. Writing standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are average. The school has identified this as an area to develop by providing more opportunities for extending writing in many subjects. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can write logical, sequenced sentences in writing the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff', and when making their own books with appropriate punctuation and illustrations. Most pupils form letters correctly, often in a cursive style. Higher attaining pupils use punctuation, including speech marks, and have effective phonic strategies to support spelling.

130. At the end of Key Stage 2, the standards of writing among the current 11 year olds are below average. Many of them have limited vocabulary, which makes it hard for them to write imaginatively. They use a wide range of styles and write for a range of audiences and purposes, such as book reviews, journalist reports and story writing in chapters. In the best instances punctuation and grammar skills are in line with national expectations. Spelling is often weak, although most pupils try hard with handwriting and standards of presentation.

131. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes towards English and are attentive, listen to adults and take turns to answer questions. Behaviour is usually satisfactory. However, a few pupils in each class, but mainly in Key Stage 2, do not have positive attitudes to learning. They are reluctant to answer questions or to take an active part in lessons. This affects their attainment and progress and sometimes that of others in the class

132. However, most pupils settle promptly to tasks and have good relationships with each other and with adults.

133. Of the four lessons seen in English, the quality of teaching was good in three and satisfactory in the other one. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection when the teaching in Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory and no lessons were better than satisfactory.

134. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Planning is detailed and closely linked to the National Literacy Strategy framework, which ensures that all pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress in lessons. However, work is not always as well matched as it could be to challenge the needs of all pupils in literacy lessons. This is made all the harder where there are three different age groups and a great variation in ability levels in the class.

135. In the best lessons, learning is effective because pupils are well motivated and challenged by the tasks. Better-planned lessons have a greater sense of purpose, and proceed at a brisk pace. In the satisfactory lesson, expectations are not high enough and time could be better used.

136. Teachers make good use of assessment procedures to assess pupils' attainment and set targets for improvement. Support staff are well briefed, and considerably enhance the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

137. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the provision of English since the last inspection. She has had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. There has been a successful book week and a visit from a local author. A visit to the theatre helped to raise standards and support pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the needs of the subject and has identified the need for dictionaries and books for guided reading. The subject's action plan includes producing a drama and developing a library policy to support pupils' learning. Good cross-curricular links have been established in many subjects, including the use of information and communication technology. The subject is in a good position to continue its improvement.

MATHEMATICS

138. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain the standards expected for their ages in all areas of numeracy and mathematics. The last inspection found that pupils made unsatisfactory progress in mathematics because of important weaknesses in teaching for children in reception and in Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, a good start has been made to tackle the shortcomings. Although the improvement needs to continue, there is clear evidence of improved standards of pupils' achievements.

139. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000 were in line with the national average and with those of similar schools. All the pupils gained the expected Level 2 in mathematics. Taken together, the results from 1997 to 2000 were broadly in line with the national average. The school's cohort is small in size (never more than nine) and the proportion of pupils with special needs varies a lot from year to year. This means that care has to be taken with any comparisons between years. The inspection findings present a very similar picture of standards to that produced by the national test results in 2000.

140. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 2000 were above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. As in Key Stage 1, and for the same reasons as above, care should be taken in interpreting results. Taken together, the results from 1997 to 2000 were broadly in line with the national average.

141. The inspection found that 11 year olds achieved standards close to the results attained in the national tests in 2000. However, the inspection found that some of the group do not always have the confidence to do justice to their ability.

142. The inspection found no compelling evidence to suggest any difference in performance or opportunities between boys and girls at either key stage.

143. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. They know that the first digit is worth one hundred, and so on. Most of the pupils can quickly and accurately think of two numbers then add them to make a given total up to 20. They recognise relationships, such as $14 + 7 = 21$ and $7 + 14 = 21$. Some of them use this knowledge to tackle problems with larger numbers, for example turning 22 plus 200 into 200 plus 22. They see the relationship between addition and subtraction, and some of them understand that multiplication is a form of equal addition. They need more practice to develop their skills in tackling problems. They know some of the properties of "2D and 3D shapes and can measure with reasonable accuracy using a ruler. They use and have a reasonable grasp of mathematical terms, such as *right angle* and *rotation*.

144. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound grasp of place value and recognise number patterns, such as two and digit multiples of 10. They understand equivalent fractions. Most of them can work out $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{5}{10}$ and are familiar with terms such as 'common denominator'. They can work out mental calculations with reasonable speed and accuracy, and are able to calculate the difference between their predictions and measurements. They can calculate the capacity and volume of a cuboid and the area of irregular shapes. They use different strategies to solve problems. For example, pupils use their knowledge of place value to multiply by 1,000.

145. Of the three lessons observed in mathematics, the quality of teaching was very good in one and good in the other two. The weaknesses noted in the last inspection have been tackled, and the standard of teaching significantly improved, especially in Key Stage 1. Learning was purposeful and teaching lively and well paced. The lessons were well planned, with clear learning intentions. Pupils knew what to do and what was expected of them. They worked hard and felt encouraged to try out their ideas without being afraid of making a mistake. The adults, including support staff, helped pupils to learn from any errors and, in the best teaching, to take their learning further with a timely question or prompt. Well-prepared resources were used with good effect. The use of a 100 square board in Year 1 helped pupils to count in tens. Two of the three lessons ended with a useful plenary where the teacher recapped important learning points, and took the learning one step on. In Years 2

and 3, the teacher did this by relating rotation to compass points. In all the lessons, the teachers were most effective when they encouraged pupils to talk, explain and ask questions. Younger pupils in the mixed Year 4, 5 and 6 class were given the chance to be involved when the teacher invited one of them to explain his workings. As a result, pupils grew in confidence and were encouraged to 'have a go'.

146. There were good relationships between the pupils and the adults, and teachers made effective use of their time and skill to support learning. A few aspects of teaching could, however, be improved by a greater sense of purpose and, in some cases, a more sustained pace. Sometimes, pupils' hesitation and lack of a response to a question was too easily accepted and on some occasions the answer was too quickly sought at the expense of the method. While the teachers work hard to introduce and re-enforce learning, there could be more opportunities for older pupils to talk about their reasoning and methods.

147. Homework is given on a regular basis and makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. They are given positive feedback to show that their efforts are valued and to help them with any specific points for improvement.

148. The National Numeracy Strategy is making a good impact on teaching throughout the school and has helped teachers to give their lessons a clear and purposeful structure. The curriculum relates well to the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy and to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Where the strategy is most effective, the lesson is well structured, with a crisp beginning, a middle that sustains interest, and a well-rounded end. In such cases, the teacher has high expectations and pupils know what is expected of them.

149. The curriculum for mathematics has been strengthened since the last inspection. There are growing links with other subjects, such as science and information and communication technology, to contribute to pupils' mathematical development, often in a practical way.

150. Most pupils are keen to learn in mathematics lessons. However, some pupils in Key Stage 2 find it difficult to sustain their interest and motivation. Teachers work very hard to make lessons challenging, relevant and of interest. It is important that these efforts are continued so that better attitudes to learning are enjoyed by all pupils.

151. Mathematics is managed well by the headteacher. A well thought out action plan gives the subject with a clear direction for improvement. A secure curriculum is in place and assessment procedures contribute well to planning the next stage in pupils' learning. The numeracy governor provides a good level of support and interest in the development of the subject and plays an active part in monitoring it, especially through discussion with the co-ordinator. A determined effort has been made to involve parents more in their children's mathematical learning. A parents' workshop was well attended and judged a success by many of those who attended.

152. Good use is made of an analysis of test and assessment results to target specific weaknesses in pupils' performance. The inspection findings suggest that pupils need increased opportunities to think and talk about their work. Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning is carried out and is increasingly giving rise to ideas for improvement. It is important to continue this work as a contribution to the school's drive to push up standards.

153. The inspection showed that important aspects of the provision have improved and have begun to raise the standard of pupils' achievement.

154. The staff are aware that to secure this improvements they should:

- continue to help pupils to a better understanding of mathematical ideas by encouraging them to think and talk;
- strengthen the link between the monitoring of teaching and of pupils' performance, to see what works well and what needs to be done to improve.

SCIENCE

155. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the expected standards for their age. This an improvement on the last inspection, when unsatisfactory teaching led to unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve below the standards expected for their age, although they have made sound progress throughout Key Stage 2 in relation to their prior attainment in science.

156. The position has improved, to the extent that pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Although more needs to be done, a satisfactory start has been made in raising standards.

157. The results of the national assessments in 2000 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were below the national average, and the average for with similar schools. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the teacher assessments are likely to have underestimated the achievements of seven year olds. At Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 was above the national average, but the percentage gaining the higher, Level 5 was below average. With such a small cohort, care needs to be taken in interpreting results when just one pupil represents nearly ten per cent.

158. Inspection evidence shows that overall standards in science are improving. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Even so, the inspection findings do confirm that there is scope to improved standards.

159. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced a new scheme of work, following nationally agreed guidelines. This has improved the content and balance of the curriculum. More emphasis is placed on scientific enquiry, particularly in Key Stage 1, which showed a weakness at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching, which was unsatisfactory in the last inspection, has improved considerably. The school is committed to raising standards of attainment in science. It now looks carefully at each cohort to predict results, and is aware of the need to help pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 to achieve the required standard.

160. Standards in the current Year 2 are average. In their work on plants, pupils are challenged well, and most of them understand what plants need to grow, and can name the parts of a plant. They make comparisons and offer explanations based on their knowledge and understanding. For example, when growing cress in different conditions, pupils suggested that being near the window made some of the cress grow faster than others. An analysis of pupils' work shows that increased attention is being given to experiments and investigations. This is leading to improvements in pupils' enquiry skills.

161. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieve standards below those expected for 11 year olds. This is mainly because the few higher ability pupils are not fully challenged, and this reflects the results in 2000. Most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. They make reasoned predictions, accurately describe their observations and offer clear explanations. When carrying out an experiment on permeable materials, they know what makes a fair test. They have a reasonable understanding of scientific language but do not very often use the correct terms in their own discussions. They produce a lot of well-presented written, recorded work, but need more opportunities to talk about their work in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in science lessons, and make satisfactory progress.

162. Most pupils are enthusiastic about their science lessons, make good contributions to discussions, and show real interest when engaged in scientific enquiries. Pupils generally listen carefully to explanations given by their teachers, and are eager to answer questions or to discuss their findings. Most pupils work well co-operatively, sharing ideas and materials when they investigate, and this supports their learning. However, a small number of pupils are not so interested, find it hard to concentrate and are easily distracted. The school is aware of the importance of involving and motivating these pupils.

163. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and of the two lessons observed one was satisfactory and the other good. Teachers use the new subject guidance effectively to plan their lessons, sharing learning objectives with the pupils. They often show a good knowledge of science in their clear explanations, questioning of pupils, and the way in which they introduce scientific vocabulary into lessons. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson the teacher asked some telling questions to assess understanding of shadows. Good use is also made of available resources. Year 5 and 6 pupils were given flowers and magnifying glasses, to learn about the different parts of plants, through first hand observation. Teachers' planning shows how they are trying hard to involve pupils in more activities relating to scientific enquiry.

164. The recently adopted curriculum provides a balanced coverage of science content, with a stronger emphasis on scientific enquiry. The school has identified its need to develop the teaching of systematic enquiry skills, and has scheduled in-service training for all teachers during the current school year. Health and sex education topics are effectively integrated with work in science. However, more use could be made of information and communication technology to support work in the subject, for example to process the results of investigations.

165. Assessment procedures are being further developed to take account of pupils' progress in each topic, and the collating and analysing of this information. The co-ordinator has begun to get involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in classes. The science curriculum is sufficiently resourced, and teachers make use of the extensive environmental area in the school grounds to support and extend work in the subject.

Information and communication technology

166. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is broadly in line with nationally expected levels at the age of 11 and seven. Standards and provision have improved since the last inspection, when progress at Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory.

167. It was possible to see only one direct teaching lesson of information and communication technology during the inspection. Evidence of standards of achievement and provision for the subject was largely gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, and discussions with teachers and pupils.

168. Pupils are suitably introduced to computers from the start of Key Stage 1, and are encouraged to explore information technology through a combination of structured and free activities. By the age of seven many of them use the keyboard and mouse confidently to develop word processing skills and write their own sentences. Most can represent information of their eye colour graphically using a pictogram. They use the 'colour magic' program to make their own pictures of a car and can look up information from the internet as part of their study of Victorian houses. They can feed in commands to a floor robot so that it completes a journey without colliding with obstacles.

169. By the age of 11 most pupils can independently change print, size, font and colour and use their word processing skills to record their extended writing in many curriculum subjects. They can design their own Islamic carpet pattern, using symmetry and reflection. Older pupils can write a book with moving characters as a class project, based on the 'Adventures of the Water Droplet'. Many can move, rotate and resize graphic elements to produce their own snail in the style of Henri Matisse. Pupils are able to search information, and to receive and send e-mails to their cluster school.

170. Their control technology skills have developed well. They can plan a route for the controllable robot so that it completes a predetermined journey.

171. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning in information and communication technology. A number of pupils have computers at home and share information with their classmates. Most work well when sharing machines and behave sensibly when working in pairs. However, a few pupils lose concentration when waiting their turn, especially when asked to work in groups of threes.

172. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and devise well-planned activities to help pupils make good progress in their learning. However, many of the discrete teaching lessons are too short and the limited number of computers available restricts pupils' learning.

173. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and offers good support to staff. She organises a computer club for older pupils to support their learning and has improved resources, making good use of grants and voluntary contributions. All staff, including ancillary helpers, have received training to increase their subject knowledge and confidence. Good use is made of assessment to target individual pupils' learning and many good cross-curricular links are being established with other subjects. Information and communication technology is well used to support pupils with special educational needs.

Art and design

174. Only parts of lessons in art were seen during the inspection. However, through talking with pupils and staff, a scrutiny of planning, and analysis of work and displays, it is possible to make judgements on standards pupils achieve, although not on the quality of teaching.

175. The attainment of seven and eleven year olds is above that expected for their age in all aspects of the subject. Samples and displays of pupils' work show that by the time pupils leave the school a wide range of skills has been developed. The standards of work have improved since the last inspection, when pupils' knowledge and understanding of art was underdeveloped in both key stages.

176. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at both key stages. Younger pupils develop their skills in mixing colours, drawing from close observations and making patterns. The standard of weaving is high. Various displays of pupils' work show the development of their skills from simple 'in and out' weaving with paper to make lanterns, through to sophisticated work in 'warp and weft' weaving. A striking display of a bicycle wheel with weavings of coloured wool and other materials meets visitors in the entrance lobby. The work typifies the artistic standards achieved by young children and the value attached to art in the school.

177. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make good progress because their skills are developed in a systematic way. All pupils have their own sketchpad to record their observational drawings in pencil and pastels. They are familiar with the work of different artists. They talk about the life and work of Paul Klee and create their own ideas inspired by his paintings. Each term, pupils work in school with a local potter and this produces some high quality results. Last year, pupils made some inspiring pottery jugs in the style of Clarice Cliff. Their own paintings based on work by Australian Aborigines are of considerable flair and skill. They used the internet to find examples of Islamic rug patterns and then designed and carefully drew their own, using symmetry and reflection.

178. Pupils listen and take account of the teachers' guidance and the comments of classmates in improving their work. They are keen to talk about their work and are developing a critical eye that helps them to evaluate and improve their efforts.

179. The subject has a secure place in the curriculum, and it is managed well. The scheme of work takes account of the latest national guidance and provides a useful structure for the development of skills. Planning gives sufficient detail to help staff plan progressively more challenging tasks. There are some good links with other subjects, including work in history, religion and design and technology. Classrooms are adequately organised for artwork and resources are good. Pupils are introduced to artists and craftworkers from different times and cultures, although there is scope for this area to be developed further.

Design and technology

180. Pupils achieve standards in line with those expected for their age. Standards throughout the school have improved since the last inspection, where they were reported to be below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. During the current inspection it was only possible to see only two lessons, but observations are based on information from other sources, including previous work and displays.

181. Seven year olds successfully design and make their own model cars with axle and plastic wheels, using cutting, joining, gluing and painting techniques. Most pupils can successfully join and combine various materials to make a winding mechanism based on a nursery rhyme. Higher attaining pupils confidently explain how the model was constructed

and how the winding mechanism moves. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make their own sandwiches and biscuits as part of food technology and display a good awareness of health and hygiene issues. Older pupils design and make complex fairground rides with moving parts. They use a range of techniques and skills to join and assemble in accurate detail.

182. Pupils' attitudes to their work in design and technology are satisfactory. Most of them enjoy practical design and technology lessons, but a minority become disenchanted when either not actively involved or when they find things difficult. They tend to lose concentration and interest. Most pupils work productively together, sharing equipment and behaving well.

183. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use resources and equipment well. However, the tasks they set are sometimes over-prescriptive, with not enough opportunities for all pupils to experiment or to use and develop their skills. Although plans show what pupils will do, they do not always identify the skills and knowledge they are required to learn.

184. The management of design and technology is sound. The co-ordinator knows that assessment procedures are not yet developed enough to support pupils' future learning. The school plans to allow time for the co-ordinator to visit classrooms to monitor and support teaching and learning. Good cross-curricular links are being developed, especially with information and communication technology.

Geography and History

185. At the age of seven and eleven pupils achieve standards consistent with national expectations for their ages in geography and history. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection, it was not possible to see any geography lessons, owing to timetabling arrangements. However, three history lessons were seen. Observations are based on information from other sources, including policy documents, discussions, and examination of previous work and displays.

186. Seven year olds are developing an awareness of the ways of life now and in the past by comparing Victorian holidays with those today. They learn about the everyday life of famous people in the past, such as Florence Nightingale, and famous events, such as the Great Fire of London. In geography, pupils recognise different weather conditions and how it affects people and their surroundings. In Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge of daily life and customs of various periods in the past is extended by such studies as Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Romans and Tudors. In geography pupils can make a plan of a village, with symbols to represent geographical features such as hills, rivers and valleys. Older pupils consider local environmental issues by arguing for and against road improvements on the main Bodmin to Indian Queens' road in Cornwall.

187. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and show a lively interest in finding out about the past and learning of places in the world. Most pupils behave well, but a few lose interest quickly and find it difficult to concentrate.

188. Of the three lessons observed in history, the quality of teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other two. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and use resources well to capture pupils' imagination, and this has a positive impact on their learning, including those with special educational needs. A number of trips are arranged to support pupils' learning, including to the village and beach, and a trip to Plymouth museum.

189. Schemes of work have been suitably revised taking account of national guidance to help teachers plan their work. However, assessment procedures are underdeveloped and are not yet useful as a tool for future planning.

190. Co-ordination and management have improved since the last inspection, although the co-ordinators do not have enough chance to monitor and develop teaching throughout the school. Good cross-curricular links are being established in literacy and information and communication technology to improve the quality of pupils' learning.

MUSIC

191. Pupils throughout the school achieve the standards expected for their age. The contribution made by a part-time music specialist ensures that the provision is sufficiently demanding and interesting. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is a similar picture to that found in the last inspection.

192. Pupils are introduced to beat through clapping patterns in Key Stage 1, and this is effectively developed as they learn to control their performance with simple percussion instruments.

193. They handle instruments well and understand that the way they play them affects the sound they make. Younger pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They compose and perform simple pieces, using unpitched instruments, for example when making up sounds to accompany a story. Pupils sing with gusto and a growing awareness of expression from a good repertoire of songs and hymns. They responded well to a recording of music by Haydn, listening carefully and spotting the change in the beat.

194. Pupils in Key Stage 2 appreciate that music and the way it is played conveys moods and emotions. They talk about different types of music and express reasons for their favourite compositions, composers and artists. Eleven year olds sing well; in assembly they sang various hymns with control and responded well to the rhythm and beat of the music. They sing well together tunefully and with considerable expression. In Years 3 and 4, pupils used percussion instruments, to play compositions recorded in simple but effective 'pyramid' notation. Their compositions showed a range of sounds, including the more abstract use of sounds to create changing moods. Pupils' comments, such as 'we're going too fast', and 'we're not in time' demonstrated a reasonable ability to express musical ideas. They were appreciative of the chance to listen to a recording of their work, and some of their comments showed that they are developing a 'critical ear' for music.

195. The quality of teaching by the specialist music co-ordinator, working with different year groups is good. This includes teaching in both of the key stages. Pupils feel confident in what they are expected to do because planning builds on what they know and can do. The co-ordinator shows a good level of expertise and confidence which helps her lessons to move with pace and purpose. Both lessons had an emphasis on activity, and the most pupils were keen in joining in the actions and words. Resources for music are used well by the teacher to catch the pupils' interest and to involve them in a practical way.

196. The subject is suitably led and managed. The teacher knows the pupils well and uses her insight to follow and assess their progress. This avoids undue repetition and helps pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a systematic way. A strong feature

lies in the link between musical themes and topics being undertaken in other subjects, such as composing music centred on Romans. Overall, resources are adequate, and include a growing selection of recorded music from different cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

197. Standards in physical education (PE) are, as at the time of the last inspection, average at the end of both key stages. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject.

198. By the age of seven, pupils' physical control, balance, and co-ordination are in line with expectations for their age. They understand the need for a warm-up session and are beginning to relate exercise to health. They move safely and with care. They can control a ball with their hands and feet, and can throw, catch and bounce balls and beanbags. Most of them have a good awareness of their own space and a growing awareness of the space of others. They adapt their movements imaginatively. In games, seven year olds are developing a good understanding of rules and fair play. Pupils are keen and involved in the activities. Because they are encouraged to reflect and to offer views of their own performance and that of others, they are able to make improvements and reach their potential.

199. By the time they have reached the age of 11, pupils offer reasons for warming-up, such as to avoid a pulled muscle. They move with considerable fluency, showing a good variation in speed and direction. They run and jump with considerable effort and control. They have acquired a wide range of games skills, including accurately passing a ball and being able to dodge to find a space, and they work well on their own and with a partner. Pupils achieve well in games because they are taught skills in a systematic and encouraging way. Pupils show a reasonable level of interest and enthusiasm for physical education. Most offer constructive comments that help them to move forward in their work.

200. Although only parts of lessons were observed, what teaching was seen was good.

201. The lessons were planned well so that pupils knew what was expected of them. Teachers knew how to build on existing skills, and were aware of the need to respond to pupils' differing needs. They valued the contribution made by the pupils and gave them encouraging feedback. The best teaching was lively and allowed time for those with special needs to be fully involved, with opportunities to reflect on their performance and try to improve it.

202. The subject is suitably led and managed by a well-qualified co-ordinator. There is a soundly planned curriculum that satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum. A more formal assessment process is needed and is being developed. Resources are good and staff are sufficiently confident and competent in teaching PE. The school has suitable arrangements for pupils, including those with special educational needs, to learn to swim at a local pool. The subject is well placed for further development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

203. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with those expected within the locally Agreed Syllabus. In the last inspection, standards were found to be unsatisfactory at

the end of both key stages. Standards have significantly improved throughout the school. In addition to observations of lessons, evidence is drawn from teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussion with staff. Currently, there is a strong emphasis on teaching Christianity, and the teaching of World religions is less well developed.

204. Seven year olds develop a good awareness of Christianity and the Old Testament through stories, such as David and Goliath, Moses, St Paul, and Jesus in the temple. They know and talk about Christian festivals, such as weddings, and are familiar with the story of Easter. Pupils begin to understand customs and beliefs of different faiths by comparing the Hindu story of creation with the Christian view.

205. Pupils in Key Stage 2 study the Christian calendar and have the opportunity to visit the local church to learn of some of the symbols associated with Christianity. Through handling artefacts. Through handling artefacts, they know about the key beliefs and symbols associated with Judaism. Pupils learn of some of the values of Sikhism where they compare the importance of the Holy Granth with that of the Holy Bible. Older pupils have good opportunities to examine moral issues, such as racism, as they study how the life of Martin Luther King was influenced by his religious beliefs.

206. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes towards religious education lessons. A small minority of older pupils displayed indifferent attitudes and little motivation or interest in their work. However, the majority of pupils are interested in the stories they hear, although not all of them are confident in contributing their ideas. Most pupils behave well and treat books and artefacts with respect.

207. The quality of teaching in lessons observed was good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Most lessons are well planned and questions are used well to support pupils' learning. However, there has been no recent opportunity for training to support teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence to teach world religions, and this has an impact on pupils' learning.

208. The co-ordinator has worked hard since the last inspection to improve provision for the subject. She has purchased more resources and artefacts and has identified the need to extend these. She hopes to broaden pupils' experiences by outside visits to places of worship.

209. The co-ordinator is aware that assessment procedures need to be developed to give support to planning pupils' future learning. Worthwhile links are being established in literacy through opportunities to use religious education in extended writing. Overall, however, there are too few planned opportunities for reflection or for promoting spirituality across the curriculum. The subject has improved since the last inspection and is well placed to continue its development.