

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **CHARLESTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Carlyon Bay, St Austell

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111905

Headteacher: Ms Chris P Williams

Reporting inspector: Mr P Baxter  
25217

Dates of inspection: 4-7 March 2002

Inspection number: 197525

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Crinnis Road  
Carlyon Bay  
St Austell  
Cornwall

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs J A Martin

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25217	Paul Baxter	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Equal opportunities English as an additional language English Physical education Religious education	The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed?
9789	Leigh Barclay	Lay inspector		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?
31801	Yvonne Bacchetta	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Art and design Design and technology Information and communications technology	How well are pupils taught?
24891	Jackie Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Charlestown Primary school caters for pupils aged between four and eleven years and it is situated between the coastal communities of Charlestown and Carlyon Bay, on the outskirts of the town of St. Austell in Cornwall. Overall pupils come from social and economic circumstances that are more favourable than those found nationally, with an above average proportion of pupils coming from educationally advantaged backgrounds. The school educates several children from Charlestown though most of the pupils come from St. Austell or live further afield. The school is average in size with 205 full-time pupils of whom 99 are boys and 106 are girls. The Reception class also includes nine children aged under five attending on a part-time basis. Almost all the pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds; very few pupils have English as an additional language and all speak English fluently. Most children enter school with above average skills but this varies from year to year. Two pupils, (a below average proportion in national percentage terms) have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is below average and the percentage known to qualify for free school meals is well below the national average. The school has suffered instability in recent years due to the illness of key staff and a relatively high staff turnover. It retains 'Beacon Status' for early years provision as a model of good practice for other schools.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Charlestown provides a satisfactory standard of education and has done well in recent times to address areas of weakness and to re-establish effective provision through the school. Significant strengths, such as the teaching of very young children and the promotion of the pupils' very positive attitudes, have been maintained and other areas of provision are being improved. Under the careful and good quality leadership of a relatively new headteacher, learning is sustained by a caring ethos and by good teaching that is adapting well to the varying needs of the pupils. Most pupils now achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment because teaching is effectively planned and mostly offers an effective challenge. Current weaknesses in provision, particularly for pupils in Year 6, continue to reduce the overall effectiveness of the school. Nevertheless, staff, governors and parents are working together with increasing success. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Excellent provision and very good teaching in the Reception Class enables children to achieve very well.
- The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes and behaviour. They enjoy very good relationships and are ready to learn and make the most of their time at school.
- Pupils attain above average standards in English and swimming throughout the school, and standards in physical education by Year 6 are also above average, in response to good teaching.
- Provision for the pupils' moral development and the procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate bullying are very good, contributing to the very positive atmosphere for learning.
- The school's very good links with partner institutions help to add continuity to pupils' learning.
- The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and, with support from staff and governors, set a clear educational direction and share a good commitment to improvement.

#### **What could be improved**

- The current weaknesses in teaching and learning in Year 6 are hindering the pupils' achievements in subjects such as mathematics, science and religious education, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils.
- The standards reached by the pupils by the end of Year 6 in information and communication technology (ICT), music and design and technology are below average and there are missed opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Statutory requirements are not fully met in relation to the curriculum for ICT, the provision for sex education, and the information for parents in the school's prospectus.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory; the layout disrupts the pupils' learning and concentration.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in September 1997 is unsatisfactory. Uncertainty and instability stemming from ill-health and subsequent retirement of key staff and governors disrupted the effectiveness of the school. Management strategies lacked clarity, decisions were delayed and many parents lost confidence in the school, consequently the quality of provision and standards deteriorated. Key issues from the previous inspection were not fully addressed. However, under the good team leadership of the new headteacher, who commenced her duties in the spring term last year, effective management and effective teaching and learning, especially in literacy, are being restored. Following consultations with parents, confidence is returning and the school has a clear educational direction once again. Successful links with pre-school and secondary providers ensure progression in the pupils' education. Much remains to be done to reach the previously well above average standards but the school has set appropriately challenging targets for their pupils. Provision is improving and the school has a determination and a good capacity to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	C	C	D
Mathematics	A*	A	C	D
Science	A	A	C	E

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Variation in the pupils' performance occurs from year to year due to differing levels of prior attainment. Weaknesses in provision have resulted in standards in national tests for pupils in Year 6 falling behind the rising standards found both nationally and in similar schools in recent years. However, comparisons between the performance of Year 6 pupils last year with their performance when in Year 2 in 1997 show that most achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment and reached the school's targets. Inspection shows that standards are rising through most of the school. Current instability in staffing and provision in Year 6 restricts the pupils' attainment and the school's targets for pupils in Year 6 will not be met. Standards are broadly average overall. In response to improved teaching, standards in English and physical education are above average, but standards in ICT, music and design and technology are below average. Children achieve well in the Reception class and exceed expectations in all areas of learning. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 to attain above average standards overall by Year 2, especially in English and mathematics. By the time they leave the school all pupils achieve well in English and swimming but achievement is unsatisfactory in design and technology, ICT and music. Most pupils, except potentially higher attainers in Year 6 who could realistically achieve more in several subjects, achieve satisfactorily over their time in the school, as they did at the time of the last inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils really do enjoy being at school. They are happy and show very good attitudes to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are kindly and considerate toward each other and are supported by the fine role models of the adults working in the school.

Personal development and relationships	The pupils share very good relationships and accept responsibility very diligently but they could take more responsibility in their learning.
Attendance	Satisfactory, matching the national average.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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.*

Teaching and learning is judged satisfactory overall. It ranged from unsatisfactory to very good in the lessons seen. Teaching in Reception remains a strength of the school. Teaching was satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6 but with a high proportion that was good. Staff sickness and difficulties in retaining consistent supply cover have weakened the teaching and learning in Year 6, restricting pupils' achievement. Teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils, except in Year 6, where the level of challenge is often insufficient for potentially higher attaining pupils and this limits their learning. The teaching of English and literacy is good and it is raising the pupils' achievement in writing across the school. Teaching is also supportive in promoting the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Mathematics and numeracy skills are taught effectively, but there is scope to promote these skills further through investigation and problem solving. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the school's cycle of planning it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in religious education and music in Years 1 and 2 and in history in Years 3 to 6. The teaching is good in mathematics, design and technology, history and ICT in Years 1 and 2 and in physical education in Years 3 to 6. Swimming is also taught well. Teaching is unsatisfactory in music in Years 3 to 6 due to weaknesses in managing pupils' behaviour and in teachers' subject knowledge. It is satisfactory in all the remaining subjects where judgements are made. Teachers emphasise specific objectives and promote discussion well to extend the pupils' understanding. Except in English, there is scope to improve the quality of marking to move the pupils' learning forward. In the main learning is effective because most lessons are well planned and interesting.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory overall; very good for children in the Reception class and enriched by very good links with local pre-school and secondary institutions and by good extra-curricular provision. Weakened by gaps in the statutory curriculum for ICT, by an unclear stance in relation to sex education and by restricted time for some subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, matching the needs of individual pupils and promoting their achievement effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall; very good for moral and good for the pupils' social development. Satisfactory for pupils' spiritual and cultural development, but with scope to provide opportunities for the older pupils to show more initiative in their learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall with strong procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The staff show warmth and consideration in meeting the pupils' everyday needs.



The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents; following open consultations with parents, staff and governors are working positively to rekindle effective co-operation between home and school for the benefit of the pupils.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall, but good leadership by the headteacher and deputy is beginning to have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning throughout the school. By informing and involving governors and staff in the management of the school the relatively new headteacher is promoting improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall but significantly improving under the direction of the capable chair and vice-chair. Strong support for a clear educational direction and effective financial management but a few statutory omissions weaken an otherwise considerable contribution during a difficult time for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school increasingly evaluates its performance, using more rigorous strategies for monitoring and assessing effectiveness.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory in the main, but weaknesses in using ICT and library facilities are impeding the development of independent learning skills by older pupils.

The accommodation is unsatisfactory. In the absence of appropriate corridors, the hall and classrooms for pupils in Years 1, 4 and 5 act as thoroughfares and are subject to frequent disturbance as pupils and adults move through the school. Most pupils in the school also have difficulty using the library because of its location. These weaknesses limit the pupils' learning and restrict the effectiveness of the school. Although still occasionally weakened by delay, decisions are now based firmly on the principles of best value, and improvement is planned effectively. The school is staffed and resourced satisfactorily.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The children like school.</li> <li>• The children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of the information provided by the school about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• The extent to which the school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The quality of the leadership and management.</li> <li>• The homework given to pupils and the range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team support most of the parents' positive views expressed above but find that achievement overall is satisfactory. They agree that the provision of homework and the information supplied to parents in annual reports and in the school prospectus could be improved but consider the range and quality of activities outside lessons, although temporarily reduced by staff illness, to be generally good. Inspectors judge the leadership and management to be effective. The inspection team also support the introduction of the School Association and find that the school is now seeking to work closely and effectively with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Care must be taken when evaluating the pupils' performance in national tests and teachers' assessments since substantial variation can occur from year to year. However, weaknesses in leadership and management, in teaching and in specific areas of provision, such as the use of ICT and the library, have resulted in standards in national tests and teachers' assessments for pupils in Year 6 falling behind the rising standards found nationally over the past four years. Results in Year 6 for 2001 showed average standards in English, mathematics and science, and average standards overall. Girls outperformed boys in English, matching the national picture. When compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools, results were below average. These standards represent significantly lower levels of attainment than those of 1998 and 1999. However, comparisons between the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2001 with their performance when in Year 2 in 1997 show that most achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment and attained the relevant targets set for them. This indicates that the school is increasing its effectiveness once more. Inspection evidence also supports this view and shows that improvement in the quality of the teaching and the planning of the curriculum is now promoting pupils' achievement positively.
2. Results in national tests for pupils in Year 2, over the past four years, also showed variation and although standards in reading, writing and mathematics, when taken together, rose slightly over this period the rise did not match the increase in standards found nationally. An increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups restricted the overall standards. Even so, evidence also indicates that teachers' assessments were not used sufficiently to promote higher standards for potentially higher attaining pupils. The pupils' performance was above average in reading, writing and mathematics and was broadly average in science. Girls continued to out-perform the boys, with the latter forming the bulk of the pupils with special educational needs. Comparisons with similar schools were broadly average. The school's analysis shows that most pupils achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment.
3. Inspection evidence includes a consideration of the school's own baseline assessments of the children's attainments on entry to school. These are administered soon after children enter the Reception Class and children are formally tested in early language, literacy, mathematical and social skills. This year the results are slightly above the scores achieved by rising five-year-olds in other Cornish schools indicating that, when taken together, their attainments on entry to full-time education are above those found nationally for children of this age. However, variations occur from year to year.
4. Inspection now shows that standards are rising through most of the school. Standards in Year 6 are broadly average overall, reflecting to a certain extent, as last year, a lower attaining year group of pupils than is normally found in the school. Nevertheless, current instability in staffing and provision in Year 6 are restricting the achievement of potentially higher attaining pupils in this class, and these pupils could realistically be reaching higher standards in several subjects. In response to improved and consistent planning and teaching, standards in English are above average. Standards in physical education are also above average in Year 6. Standards in ICT and music are below average, and they are average in all other subjects. The vast majority of children achieve well in the Reception class and exceed expectations in all areas of learning. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and generally attain standards that are above those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2, particularly in English, mathematics, religious education and swimming. Standards match those expected nationally for pupils of this age in all other subjects where judgements are made. By the time they leave the school most pupils do not achieve satisfactorily in ICT and music, but all pupils achieve well in English and in swimming.
5. The school has strengthened its provision for pupils with special educational needs, and by implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies more consistently, more teachers

are improving the challenge offered to potentially higher attaining pupils. This is already raising standards in writing throughout the school. Overall standards have fallen since the last inspection, due partly to the differing prior attainments of the pupils from year to year but also due to weaknesses in provision. However, in response to continued strong teaching in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and improved teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5, most pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment.

6. In order to raise standards the school is increasing expectations of what pupils can achieve by monitoring and promoting effective teaching and learning and by analysing the pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments. The results of this analysis have been used in conjunction with the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to target and teach individual pupils more effectively. This is helping to improve the pupils' achievement.
7. Inspection evidence identified continuing differences between the performance of the boys compared to the girls. However, as a result of the well-focused teaching observed, the gap in performance is being addressed. The differences that remain are mainly related to the boys' lower levels of prior attainment and do not reflect significant under-achievement on their part. The differing numbers of boys and girls is a concern however, and the new headteacher is developing ways of meeting the pupils' differing needs more effectively.
8. Observations of lessons show that good teaching is promoting good learning overall, particularly in literacy and language, and most pupils are increasing their overall rate of progress. An insufficient number of computers for using ICT to enrich learning, and weaknesses in teaching music, are restricting the pupils' progress in these subjects, but in most other subjects, standards are generally rising in response to steadily improving teaching, especially in Years 3 to 5. The scrutiny of work revealed that pupils are challenged well in their writing in English but there is scope to improve the quality of marking and the level of thought-provoking work presented to the pupils in a range of other subjects and this is limiting their skills. Taken together, across the range of subjects, most pupils are now learning effectively in lessons.
9. The school sets appropriately challenging year group targets in English and mathematics for pupils to attain by the end of Year 6 and uses additional tests to evaluate the pupils' performance. However, the setting of targets for individuals or for groups of pupils, in order to raise standards, is at an early stage of development.
10. The teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy well. Writing skills are taught well in literacy lessons but, except in history and increasingly in science, writing is not utilised or promoted sufficiently across the curriculum and this is limiting the pupils' writing skills and their attainment in several subjects. For example, pupils have few opportunities to reflect about religious belief and practice in their writing and this is restricting their learning. Within most of the lessons seen, teachers have clear expectations that pupils should use and develop their literacy and ICT skills when using classroom books or the computer for research to extend their understanding such as, of forces or of the sun earth and moon system. Pupils in Year 3, for example, are provided with good learning opportunities to use the computer to generate graphs, but for older pupils the use of spreadsheets for modelling and the use of sensors to monitor external change such as temperature or sound are not evident, and this is a weakness that results in the pupils' below average skills.
11. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented effectively. The pupils' competence in numeracy is used satisfactorily in other curriculum areas through the use of graph plotting in science and measuring in design and technology. A strength in Years 3 to 6 is that teachers frequently plan for pupils to use numeracy skills, relevant to their abilities, in appropriate contexts of scientific enquiry, for example as in Year 5 to produce and average figure from their measurements and this enhances their understanding.
12. Whilst the classrooms for pupils in Years 4 to 6 are spacious, the absence of corridors in this part of the school has a disruptive influence on the pupils' learning, for classrooms and the hall act as

throughfares and the distraction often restricts the pupils' attention and their overall achievement. The location of the library weakens the development of library skills for all pupils, but particularly for pupils in Year 6 who need to support their learning through research. The absence of sufficient ICT equipment also restricts the pupils' skills and their opportunities to use this technology to advance their learning in other subjects.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils' responses to school are very good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good in lessons as well as in the playground and at lunch-time. These very positive attitudes and relationships are also clearly evident in the Reception class where young children enjoy a happy start to school life. The pupils move in an orderly way between activities. Very occasionally, when a teacher does not engage the pupils' interest in a lesson, some pupils become restless and their attention wanders. Where pupils are given the opportunity to take responsibility or exercise initiative, they display a high level of mature and responsible behaviour, however, these opportunities are restricted due to the large classes in Years 2-6 and this is limiting the pupils' personal development. The pupils work together co-operatively which has a positive effect upon their learning.
14. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work. They enjoy learning and come to school ready to work well. They are eager for lessons to start. For the most part, the pupils' interest and involvement in activities are good. There was real excitement for example, at the prospect of doing some independent research into the solar system in a Year 5 lesson. Where the teaching is very good, even the youngest pupils retain high levels of concentration for extended periods. Lessons were observed which really captured the pupils' imagination; for instance all lessons in the Reception class, a lesson on fossils in Year 3 and a history lesson in Year 2 based on using birth certificates as primary sources. These lessons showed the pupils' responsive attitudes towards well planned and well paced lessons and made a significant contribution to their understanding and skills. In the best lessons pupils were attentive, enthusiastic when answering questions, and keen to make progress and this has a very positive effect on their learning.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in most lessons. Frequently, when teachers invite questions, pupils with statements of special educational need, who are eager to learn, are the first to respond because they are confident that their ideas are valued. The teachers and teaching assistants carefully match work to their needs and this helps the pupils' confidence and they are ready to co-operate in activities. In mathematics lessons in Year 6, possibly as a result of the inconsistent teaching provision, lower attaining pupils lack confidence and are not always sufficiently included in class and small group discussions and this limits their achievement.
16. Behaviour is very good across the school, both in lessons and around the site. The pupils are very polite and pleasant towards each other, their teachers and visitors. The warmth and quality of adult-pupil relationships is very good which contributes positively to the pupils' very good behaviour in class. Where, occasionally, there is a slow pace to lessons, and the pupils are not challenged, there is restless behaviour, which has a negative effect on standards. Good behaviour is now celebrated throughout the school and particularly in the Friday morning assemblies. There was a complete absence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection. The school's behaviour policy is well understood and is applied consistently. One pupil received four fixed-term exclusions in the year prior to the inspection but this was an exceptional case that was addressed effectively.
17. The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs are positive and constructive. Pupils collaborate and co-operate well. They are naturally trustworthy. The relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are very good and, in some cases, excellent. They listen to each other with mutual respect for different opinions and values. The quality of the pupils' personal response to responsibility is good. Where pupils are encouraged to use initiative, they respond to the challenge very well, but there are insufficient opportunities provided. From an early age, pupils take appropriate responsibility for

their reading diaries. A 'School Forum' has recently been convened where representatives from each class meet to discuss aspects of school life. All the members contribute confidently at meetings and the adults listen and respond positively to the pupils' concerns and ideas. The system of "Playground Chums" gives older children responsibility for younger ones during wet play times. These are very positive developments that enrich the pupils' learning. The older pupils have insufficient opportunities, however, to demonstrate the same independence in their academic work and this restricts their achievement.

18. Attendance is satisfactory. It is in line with the national average for primary schools. The level of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Pupils generally arrive punctually for school and classes, and there is no truancy. The vast majority of pupils enjoy being at school and their regular attendance aids their learning.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Even though the majority of lessons seen were good and better, the impact of weaknesses in the provision of teaching in Year 6 is restricting the achievement of potentially higher attaining pupils by the time they leave the school. The high proportion of good and better teaching is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning and is raising standards. The teachers respond warmly to the pupils' responses and this has a beneficial effect in promoting the very positive attitudes and very good levels of behaviour. The pupils' behaviour only slipped in a couple of lessons when the pace of the lessons slowed and they became disinterested. The teachers also create very good learning environments in their classrooms where pupils feel secure and valued and these are characterised by very good relationships throughout the school. Good teaching enables pupils of all prior attainment to achieve well in literacy and in physical education. In most areas of the curriculum teaching helps pupils to at least achieve soundly in relation to their prior attainment.
20. The teaching was very good in just over a tenth of lessons and it was good in half of the lessons seen. Three unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Except in Year 6, the quality of teaching matches the good level found at the time of the last inspection. Improved approaches to planning lessons, a strong emphasis on purposeful questioning and more accurate matching of work to the pupils' prior attainments have also improved the overall quality of the teaching and, consequently, the pupils' achievement. The quality of the pupils' learning matched the quality of the teaching in nearly all the lessons observed. In a few other lessons teaching was also effective because it promoted the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour.
21. Teaching in the Reception Class and remains an exemplary strength of the school. The teaching of children in the Reception Class was very good on all occasions during the week of inspection. The characteristics of this very good teaching included developing warm enthusiastic relationships, perceptive use of questions and quick responses from the teacher. This in turn helped the children to explore their own ideas very effectively. Excellent planned opportunities and innovative methods capture children's attention and enjoyment of learning, and this is contributing to their good rate of achievement.
22. The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good overall and in the lessons observed it was never less than satisfactory; on occasions it was very good. In all lessons teaching makes effective use of vocabulary specific to the subject and work is well matched to pupils of different prior attainments and this promotes the pupils' good achievement. Teachers use their knowledge and expertise to challenge most pupils well particularly in literacy and numeracy, but their understanding of how to challenge higher attaining pupils fully in science is limiting the pupils' achievement. In a good literacy lesson the teacher devised an enjoyable activity which included all pupils carrying large letters or letter groups matched to their differing attainment levels, which increased their confidence and understanding of associated sounds and how to build words. In a well-planned mathematics lesson, effective questioning and discussion promoted pupils' efforts to investigate number patterns and use correct vocabulary when describing their mental strategies about how they solve problems. Teachers plan clearly and purposefully and include the use of computers in most lessons and this extends the knowledge and understanding of pupils' of all

levels of attainment, for example, about the way of life in the past. The teachers use ICT effectively in mathematics lessons to extend higher attaining pupils' mental agility but the time allocated to pupils is insufficient for them to develop their ideas to the full and to make sufficient progress in writing on a screen. Lessons are well managed and teachers and teaching assistants share information conscientiously and this helps the pupils to understand the purpose of the lessons.

23. The teaching was satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6: it had a high proportion of good teaching, but a few lessons were unsatisfactory due to weak management of the pupils' behaviour. Staff sickness and difficulties in retaining consistent supply cover have weakened the teaching and learning in Year 6. Frequent changes have clouded expectations of what pupils can and should attain and several potentially higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged and could achieve more. Teachers provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills and this increases their understanding of the importance of these basic skills in most areas of the curriculum. The pupils use measurements in science and pupils in Year 5 make effective use of their skimming and scanning skills when collecting information from a text and this extends their understanding of the solar system. The teachers have yet to identify how computers could be used for data-logging physical change to enhance pupils' learning about interpretation of graphs in science and this is restricting the pupils' skills. Teachers plan activities that arouse pupils' interests and this results in pupils making a good effort and collaborating well, for example, in investigative work in science thus impacting favourably on pupils' learning.
24. Following purposeful professional development and whole staff agreement, the teaching of English and literacy skills is a developing strength and it is having a particularly beneficial effect on the pupils' achievement in writing across the school. Teachers are confident and have a good knowledge of the literacy strategy and how to extend pupils' skills in writing in most areas of the curriculum. There is scope to challenge pupils even more to raise their rate of progress further, however. Teachers are good communicators and provide good role models for pupils. In a very good lesson the teacher used specific vocabulary and constantly reminded pupils of previous work so that pupils made good gains in their learning during the lesson. The teacher made effective use of computers including a laptop recently introduced into the school and this helped to support pupils' key skills. The teachers give pupils' good individual support and this helps them to gain in confidence in offering their ideas. Teachers focus their questioning on the purpose of the lessons and involve pupils of all levels of attainment equally and encourage them to make thoughtful responses. This helps pupils to learn well in the majority of lessons.
25. The teaching of mathematics is good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and it is satisfactory overall for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Numeracy skills are taught effectively, but there is scope to promote these skills further through investigation and problem solving. In Years 1 and 2 and in Year 5 teachers use questioning matched to pupils' attainment levels to establish pupils understanding and invite them to offer different explanations. They use visual resources effectively to include pupils of all levels of attainment. In several lessons teachers fail to ask questions which extend pupils' understanding or provide clear enough explanations to improve their understanding. Lower attaining pupils in Year 6 found difficulty in coping with the work given to them in two lessons seen because tasks were not suitably matched to enable them to be fully included in lessons and as a result they made little progress. The teacher in Year 6 sets appropriate tasks to pupils who have a statement of special educational need.
26. The teaching in science is satisfactory and is strengthened by an increased emphasis on practical investigation and improved specialist teaching for older pupils. Delays in establishing a full curriculum, however, and weaknesses caused by disrupted teaching provision in Year 6 have limited the achievement of several potentially higher attaining pupils in this year group.
27. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the school's cycle of planning it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in religious education and music in Years 1 and 2 and in history in Years 3 to 6. The teaching is good in mathematics, design and technology, history and ICT in Years 1 and 2 and in physical education in Years 3 to 6. Swimming is also taught well. Teaching is unsatisfactory in music in Years 3 to 6 and it is satisfactory in all the remaining subjects where judgements are made.

28. Most teachers identify relevant opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in science lessons and this is having a positive impact on pupils' active involvement and enjoyment of their learning. In a few design and technology lessons teachers lacked sufficient expectation for pupils to identify measurement in designs to guide the making of a product with any accuracy. In a geography lesson the teacher made insufficient use of learning opportunities for pupils to create a data file to analyse places of work. Teachers of older pupils do not make as effective use of ICT as the teachers of younger pupils do; for example, to present graphs to make sense of their investigations.
29. Where teaching is most effective, teachers set high expectations that develop the pupils' skills. In physical education, for example, pupils are increasingly asked to evaluate their own and each other's efforts and to offer ideas for self improvement. The teaching of history for pupils is often good because pupils use a wide range of secondary and first hand resources to compare life in the present with life in the past and this aids their understanding. Even though there is scope for more opportunities, the increasing emphasis on promoting investigation in science and design and technology represents an improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. Most teaching of English is planned in depth and supports the teachers in their clear and effective emphasis on rich descriptive vocabulary. This stimulates the pupils' thinking and understanding and also nurtures a love and enjoyment of literature and enriches their learning.
30. Teaching was less effective in a few lessons when the teachers' emphasis on basic skills was insecure, for example in design and technology where there was too little emphasis on the design process of planning and designing prior to making. The teaching of music was judged to be unsatisfactory because in a couple of lessons, the pace slipped and pupils lost interest, became distracted and made insufficient gains in their learning. Occasionally teachers provide insufficient opportunities for the pupils to learn by solving problems or through investigation and this slows their learning and this aspect has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Learning is still weakened by too few computers in ICT, and by insufficient use of the library which is not conveniently located in relation to several classrooms, in other respects, however, most teachers use time and resources well.
31. Except in Year 6, teachers are now challenging higher attaining pupils adequately, especially in whole class discussions, but teachers' expectations of these pupils could be even higher. The shared whole school emphasis on writing in English is raising expectations of the quality of the pupils' writing in English, to good effect. Opportunities for the pupils to reflect and to extend their thinking, skills and understanding further through writing are insufficient in other subjects, however, especially in science and religious education, and this is limiting their attainment.
32. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Teachers and support assistants collaborate well to devise strategies that enable pupils to be fully included in classroom activity. As a result the pupils gain confidence and this promotes their learning effectively. As a consequence pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to their low levels of prior attainment. Teachers generally make effective use of the learning support assistants throughout the school and in the long absence of one class teacher, continuity in learning is aided in the class by teaching assistants with support from the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils with statements are fully included in all lessons and they achieve well.
33. The teachers use questioning as an effective ongoing day to day assessment in all areas of learning to monitor pupils' progress and to inform planning. Except in English, the teachers' marking of pupils' work rarely includes comments that focus on the learning intention to promote the pupils' ideas and this restricts achievement. Consequently there is scope to improve the quality of marking to move the pupils' learning forward. Teachers generally make satisfactory use of homework to reinforce what is learned in school. They are well supported in this area by the parents.
34. The inadequacy of resources for ICT has had a negative impact on learning opportunities for pupils. The teaching of ICT is improving well, however, as teachers develop their confidence and skills

through training. By using laptop computers, for example, pupils are now gaining new skills. There remains much scope, however, to increase resources as planned and to provide more teaching and learning opportunities for the pupils by using ICT even more in the full range of subjects across the curriculum.

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

35. The quality and range of learning opportunities is very good in the Foundation Stage for children in their Reception Year but it is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Even though the curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 has been improved in literacy and numeracy, it does not comply with all statutory requirements for ICT. Past omissions, for example, in using computers to control mechanisms and to design models, have recently been planned for, to ensure that in future all pupils will receive their full entitlement. At this time though, they are not taught sufficiently to pupils in Years 3 to 6. Areas for development noted in the last inspection report have been partially addressed. In science, experimental work in Years 5 and 6 has improved, and more investigations are included in the mathematics curriculum, although this needs further development.
36. The literacy strategy is implemented well and the numeracy strategy satisfactorily overall. The school plans to meet the pupils' differing needs by providing work at three levels within each year group. This provides satisfactory and sometimes good challenge for pupils although in a minority of lessons the work set is not sufficiently matched to the pupils' needs or prior attainments. Literacy and numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in other curriculum areas. However, the school does not yet plan and use all opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other curriculum areas and this is unsatisfactory.
37. The time allocation for literacy is very high compared with schools nationally. At times, this has resulted in lower than average time allocations in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, science in Years 1 and 2 and religious education and art and design across all years. This restricts the opportunities provided for the pupils to learn through independent research and, therefore, their overall skills.
38. The school has appropriate and updated policies and schemes of work for all the other subjects and plans to review all subject areas regularly. In religious education the locally agreed syllabus is used and in other subject areas the curriculum is based effectively on the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's schemes. The music syllabus is based around a purchased scheme. These are satisfactory and in physical education, good. In Year 5, however, history, geography and science are taught alternately in a termly cycle in order to make good use of teaching skills in science. A consequence of this is that pupils do no geography and history for a whole term and this limits the pupils' development of skills. The use of ICT to support learning in other areas of the curriculum is developing satisfactorily. All pupils in Year 6 receive weekly French lessons of very high quality by a teacher from a local comprehensive school and this represents a significant enrichment to the curriculum and aids pupils' cultural awareness.
39. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. This does not match the standard noted in the last inspection report, when it was assessed as good. There is at present no overall formal scheme and this reduces its effectiveness. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have regular and beneficial 'circle time' sessions whereby they are able to discuss social issues as a class and in Years 3 to 6 these are included beneficially in the weekly timetable as needs dictate and published material is used to support them. Religious education, 'circle time', assemblies and science provide effective opportunities for discussion and are instrumental in supporting the pupils' personal development. However, older pupils in particular have insufficient opportunity to show initiative in their learning and this is limiting their achievement. Diet and health are addressed effectively as are issues related to substance abuse but there is no governors' policy related to sex education and at present this is not covered. This is unsatisfactory and is a statutory omission.
40. Pupils have satisfactory access to the curriculum. With the range of subjects the teachers ensure equal opportunity and pay due regard to the needs of all pupils. Generally teachers are aware and



some make appropriate provision, but the school lacks a mechanism for ensuring that all pupils withdrawn for instrumental music tuition have appropriate time to revisit areas of the curriculum they have missed. This is a weakness.

41. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with additional support in lessons, from support assistants and teaching assistants. Class teachers and teaching assistants match tasks effectively in most lessons to allow these pupils to be fully included in all subjects. Individual targets for their development in literacy and numeracy are guided by the co-ordinator for special educational needs who collaborates well with teachers, support teachers and the designated governor for special educational needs. The school is aware of the implications of the revised Code of Practice and is currently following requirements effectively to more fully involve parents and pupils in agreeing planning for each level of support.
42. The range of extra-curricular activities is good and includes a choir, run by a teacher from a local school, gymnastics for younger pupils, football, tennis, drama and newspaper clubs. A variety of visits and visitors provide sound support for the formal curriculum and pupils' personal development. These include visits to Truro Museum, Lanhydrock House and a local residential home. Visitors who are invited to share their enthusiasm and particular areas of expertise with the pupils include representatives from the local police force, nurses and local grandparents. At present Year 6 pupils do not attend a residential course and this is a weakness. Overall the learning opportunities have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection.
43. The school has good links with the community which contribute to children's learning. Pupils visit the local old peoples' home and the church, and the vicar participates in assemblies at the school. Members of the community support the school in a variety of ways. Parents regularly help in classes and with clubs. The local police constable, nursing staff and doctors at a local surgery contribute well to the school's effective programme of personal, social and health education. The Citizenship curriculum appropriately involves a range of local people.
44. The school has very constructive relationships with partner institutions. The Reception teacher visits the local playgroups every year to discuss the school's arrangements and policies. These are enriched by the 'Beacon Status' of the school for early years education whereby provision in this aspect is identified as a model of good practice to support work in other schools. Very supportive induction arrangements mean that children and parents attend sessions in the Reception class before children fully join the school. These well-organised sessions give the parents more information about the school while the children are able to familiarise themselves with the classroom and the staff. These strong links ensure that children settle well into the school. To prepare children for the transition to secondary school there is a very well integrated programme for children and parents designed to smooth the way between Year 6 and Year 7. Notably there are summer schools in literacy and numeracy in the first two weeks of the summer holidays for children likely to benefit from them. The school liaises with a range of support services that provide good support for families and pupils. At present the pupils in Year 6 travel to Penrice Comprehensive School for their ICT lessons and this is another positive link to their next stage of schooling that is also helping to develop their skills.
45. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall as it was at the time of the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The assemblies and acts of collective worship in classes meet statutory requirements but pupils are given insufficient opportunities and time to reflect upon the message or to explore their feelings. Children in Reception and younger pupils generally benefit by using music, drama and role-play to stimulate their learning and this promotes their spiritual development well. The religious education curriculum does not contribute sufficiently to the pupils' spiritual development. Younger pupils, especially, find it difficult to engage with some of the topics (such as the story of Abraham) in the manner in which it is conveyed. Spiritual awareness is promoted best in class discussions. For example, lessons in science and literacy were observed in which the pupils marvelled at aspects of nature and the universe but generally such opportunities are not specifically planned in

lessons, and not enough time is given to written work designed to enable all pupils to express their understanding and views.

46. Pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They care for each other. They treat the school and their learning materials with respect. Teachers actively promote opportunities for discussion of moral issues during assemblies and 'circle time', where pupils meet as a class to discuss issues such as 'honesty', encouraging pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude. Good behaviour is rewarded with praise and is celebrated well.
47. Provision for social development is good. During the week of the inspection the theme of 'Friendship' was explored very effectively in all classes. This supports the school's mission to include everyone in the school community. Collective worship and 'circle time' also emphasise the importance of kindness. Prayers of thanks were given, during the inspection, for friends and carers. These contribute to the pupils' developing awareness of the value of positive attitudes and sensitive behaviour. The teachers provide very good role models with their warm, friendly relationships.
48. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory and the range of local and wider cultures is included effectively. There is a strong sense of Cornish identity and St Piran's Day was celebrated during the inspection. Beneficial trips have been arranged to the Eden Project. Over the past year the children have enjoyed visits to Truro museum, to a local production of "Macbeth" and to the Minack Theatre. These experiences enrich their knowledge and understanding of their cultural heritage. At the time of the last inspection, the school did not do enough to prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain. Considerable improvement has been made in this area. The displays around the school emphasise the multi-cultural nature of British society and there is a range of books in the library which portray the life of other ethnic groups and faiths in Britain. In a Year 6 lesson on Sikhism, the teacher introduced the topic with colourful pictures of Sikh communities in inner city areas of Britain and emphasised the importance for children in rural areas learning about other ways of life. In Year 2 the pupils respond to the register in nine different foreign languages: a very imaginative and effective way of promoting cultural awareness and inclusion. The children are also writing letters to friends in Egypt and exchanging letters and photographs with pupils in a multi-cultural school in Birmingham, as well as 'e-mailing' pupils at an inner London school. All these strategies are raising the pupils' multi-cultural awareness effectively. Music from Finland and other countries is used very effectively in the Reception class to support the children's physical development, but across the school as a whole, music is not used to best effect to enrich the cultural curriculum.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

49. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. The support for the pupils' personal welfare is good, reflecting the caring ethos of the school. Many procedures have recently been tightened up so that medicines are now stored safely in the school office, registers are correctly maintained and computerised which assists monitoring, health and safety issues have been addressed, the designated teacher for child protection has been trained. All legal requirements are met in relation to exclusion, where necessary. There is scope to increase staff training in First Aid to keep certificates up-to-date, and teachers should identify personal development targets for all pupils. Although there is now a very comprehensive and effective personal, social and health education curriculum across the school, this does not include sex education.
50. The school monitors and supports pupils' personal development closely, if informally. Teachers know the pupils and their families very well. Pupils find it easy and comfortable to turn to the school for help. All members of staff provide very good role models in their warm relationships with the pupils. Teachers listen to pupils and this results in pupils learning to listen and respect the views of others, too. Teachers use praise well to enhance pupils' self-esteem and confidence. During the inspection there was frequently spontaneous applause from pupils for the achievements of their peers. Sometimes this was in recognition of modest improvements made by the lower attaining pupils. The family community that the school creates gives the pupils a secure sense of

belonging and encourages the older pupils to support the younger ones. The pupils are proud of their school. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to take on further responsibilities and to exercise initiative. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy, backed by clear procedures. The governors are committed and thorough; they work with the headteacher to ensure that hazards are identified and addressed. External agencies are involved appropriately when required. One particularly successful agency is the Traveller Education Service which works with the class teacher to support Traveller children in the school with work that can be continued at home. The Healthy Schools initiative has led to improvements, particularly in the new personal, social and health education curriculum. The children are aware of the advantages of a nutritious, balanced diet and of physical exercise, for example, and have had a lot of fun and gains in understanding, listening to each other's heart beats and breathing using a stethoscope.

51. The procedures for promoting and improving attendance are good. There is systematic daily monitoring of absences. The educational welfare officer is involved with families where there is persistent lateness or absenteeism.
52. The procedures for eliminating bullying or other oppressive behaviour have been very effective. There are now good systems in place to promote and celebrate good behaviour, for example, through 'circle time' and assemblies that focus on improving behaviour. The School Forum is a new and successful arena for the pupils to take responsibility and influence the future direction of the school.
53. Satisfactory procedures are in place to assess pupils with special educational needs. The effective Early Years co-ordinator identifies pupils with special educational need soon after entry into school or during visits to local playgroups before they enter the school. Appropriate action is taken by the school to meet the needs of pupils who are of concern in providing them with individual education plans. The school has formal arrangements for meetings where specific individual targets are agreed between teachers teaching assistants parents and pupils and target written in simple language for younger pupils. Teaching and support assistants record pupils' responses on a daily basis. These are shared with colleagues each day and are discussed at monthly meetings with the special educational needs co-ordinator. Teachers guide the work carefully in conjunction with teaching assistants for pupils who have an individual educational plan. This process is currently less effective in the Year 6 class due to the changes in supply teachers. In numeracy lessons seen in Year 6 tasks were suitably matched for pupils with a statement of special educational need but not suitably matched for low attaining pupils. As a result these pupils were not fully included in lessons. In whole class discussions opportunities are missed to provide more individual support for pupils who lack confidence in communicating.
54. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall. No overall judgement was made at the time of the last inspection but the school has satisfactorily addressed the issues noted in the report as areas of weakness, namely the planning of assessments using National Curriculum attainment levels and the use of assessment results to inform future planning.
55. The results of National Curriculum Standard Assessment Tasks in Years 2 and 6 and the results of non-statutory tests in Years 3,4 and 5 in English and mathematics are analysed satisfactorily. They are used appropriately to monitor pupils' progress and to note year groups in the school where this may have slowed down. The analysis of the performance of boys and girls is noted but no analysis of other groups of pupils within year groups is done. Information from the analysis of these tests is used effectively to help to decide pupils' groupings within classes. The school also uses its analysis to provide information about areas of the curriculum in which the pupils perform less well. An example of this is subtraction and problem solving in mathematics. However, this has not yet resulted in a whole school response and structured plan to improve the pupils' performance in these areas of learning. Assessments in English are used effectively to support the whole school emphasis on writing and this is helping to raise standards. The pupils' performance in reading and reading tests is also covered and learning support assistants, especially in classes with younger pupils, are beginning to monitor and use assessments of pupils' responses in lessons to promote speaking and listening skills further. The school is at an early stage of target

setting in literacy and numeracy but at present the pupils' involvement in this is limited, particularly in numeracy, and this is restricting its effectiveness in promoting higher standards.

56. Assessment in most the other subjects is generally satisfactory with pupils' achievements recorded against a broad National Curriculum objective; for example, 'show a developing sense of chronology in history'. These give the teacher some information with respect to each pupil but they are not always used to best effect in forward planning or in identifying targets for improvement. Assessment in ICT is unsatisfactory.
57. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' recorded work is effective in most lessons with teachers using questioning and discussion productively. The quality of teachers' marking varies; it is completed regularly but, except in English, few ways forward are identified to aid pupils' learning. The written annual pupils' reports to parents are unsatisfactory overall and do not always give parents a clear idea of their child's' attainment with respect to the national picture. This is done for pupils in Years 2 and 6 only. Generally reports contain too much information regarding coverage of work rather than progress and targets for future development. Opportunities for assessment are not always clearly documented in planning, and this restricts the effectiveness of some lessons.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

58. The parents' views of the school are satisfactory overall. Most parents are supportive of the school, as they were at the previous inspection but a significant minority have concerns and are still waiting to see if the school has regained its effectiveness. The school is working hard and has taken significant steps to rebuild the confidence of parents after a period of weakened relationships. Several new governors are also parents, and parents are well represented on the governing body. The parental survey conducted by the school has been a useful tool, but its effectiveness has been weakened by delays in informing parents about how the school plans to respond. The delay in settling the form of the school uniform is an example that has led to continued uncertainty.
59. The parents believe that their children like school, are taught well and make good progress. They consider that their children are expected to work hard and do their best, and are helped to become mature and responsible. They value the contribution that the school makes to their children's academic and, particularly, their personal development, and see the school as very approachable. They also praise the children's behaviour and the interesting range of activities outside lessons. Although inspectors feel that teaching could be based more firmly on information about pupils' attainments which would raise standards further, and that not all pupils have made sufficient progress, they agree overall with this picture.
60. There are several areas where parents feel that the school could be better. Parents feel that homework arrangements could be better; some feel that there is too much homework, while others would like to see more. Inspectors find homework arrangements overall to be satisfactory although provision is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6. Parents also feel that they could be better informed about their children's progress. Inspectors judge that, since Spring 2001, with the frequent newsletters and the regular curriculum information, the quality and frequency of information has been improved, but as there are several deficiencies in the school prospectus and annual reports, information to parents is unsatisfactory overall. Some parents also expressed concerns about leadership and management and about extra-curricular activities but most parents and the inspection team judge them to be improving well.
61. The school is considering changing the timing of parents' evenings so that parents of children in all classes would have a formal feedback session in the autumn term. The annual reports to parents are inconsistent across the years and this is unsatisfactory. Some are very comprehensive, indicating pupils' attainment against national levels, and including individual (academic and personal) targets for each child – Year 5 reports are particularly comprehensive. However, most reports do not include enough required information.

62. Parents feel that the school could work more closely with parents. Inspectors consider that there has been significant improvement in this aspect over the past year. The establishment of the 'Friends of Charlestown School' which has organised social events for the pupils and raised considerable funds for the school, has been a positive development. The number of parents helping in school and with after-school clubs is a strong feature and they are having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and learning. The school has an 'open door' policy and parents who took advantage of that during the week of the inspection were well satisfied.
63. Several parents who attended the meeting with the inspectors also had concerns about the current situation affecting pupils in Year 6 whereby several different teachers, including supply teachers, are covering the absence, through illness, of the class teacher. Inspectors also identified significant weaknesses that are restricting the pupils' attainments in this class.
64. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school, and their contributions to learning, are good and are particularly effective in promoting the pupils' positive approach to school. Parents are invited to bring their specialist skills to lessons and to join in school trips. Parent governors are very committed. The 'Friends of Charlestown School' is very active in supporting school initiatives such as redecorating and updating the school library.
65. There is a strong sense of a close school community that also includes the local community well. The school's links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are also good. They are fully consulted by the school in setting appropriate targets for their children. This close co-operation has a beneficial influence on the pupils' progress.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

66. The leadership and management of the school is now satisfactory overall. After a period of significant instability during recent years, when ongoing changes and uncertainty concerning senior staff undoubtedly weakened the quality of leadership and management and inhibited the pupils' learning on occasions, the school is now striving to move forward again from a position of improved stability.
67. Although this represents an apparently weaker level of leadership and management compared to the findings of the last inspection, nevertheless it constitutes an improved picture when compared with the provision in place during the spring term of last year. The school has done well since then to re-establish an appropriate level of effectiveness through the school. Significant strengths, such as the teaching of very young children and the promotion of the pupils' very positive attitudes, have been retained, and staff are strengthening such provision through the school. Under the careful and good quality leadership of a relatively new headteacher, learning is sustained by a caring ethos and by increasingly good teaching that is adapting well to the varying needs of the pupils. Most pupils generally achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment now because teaching is effectively planned and mostly offers an effective challenge. Current weaknesses in provision, particularly for pupils in Year 6, continue to reduce the overall effectiveness of the school. Other weaknesses also remain; for example, the co-ordination of several subjects and in delayed decision-making concerning the school uniform and sex education. As a consequence, the full benefit in terms of increasing pupils' achievements has yet to reach fulfilment following ongoing improvements in teaching and learning. Even so, under the careful direction of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, management continues to become more effective and is promoting improvement in most areas of the school.
68. The cautious yet wide-reaching corporate management strategies developed by the headteacher, whereby staff and governors are more fully informed and involved, are key factors in the school's recent improvement. The headteacher has emphasised a greater sense of team leadership to management, and with support from colleagues and governors, the effectiveness of management and provision, especially the quality of teaching and learning, are being restored. Following consultations, confidence is returning to the vast majority of parents and the school has a clear educational direction once again. Improved teaching and planning of the curriculum are raising pupils' achievement especially in literacy. Successful links with related pre-schools and secondary

schools continue to ensure progression in the pupils' education. Much remains to be done in terms of raising attainment to the previously well above average levels and provision in ICT and music is still not good enough. However, teachers are setting challenging attainment targets for their pupils and overall provision is steadily improving. The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead by example, and with the full support of staff, governors and supportive parents have re-built a strong commitment to improvement and a good capacity to succeed.

69. The school development plan is clearly prioritised and effective. It is based on firm expectations of the standards pupils are expected to attain and the targets stated are appropriately challenging. Specific action plans direct the steps necessary to improve provision and to raise the pupils' performance. This strategy has been particularly instrumental in promoting increasing standards of pupils' writing. It has been equally effective in utilising the 'Beacon Status' of the school to continue successful early years provision and in developing improving teaching and learning through the school. This approach has been weakened, however, by attempting to prioritise too many areas for improvement in the short term with the result that some aspects such as subject co-ordination have not been fully accomplished. Several areas of subject responsibility have been recently re-allocated and co-ordinators have had insufficient time to complete their work. The ability of the school to focus on key priorities has also been hindered and decisions delayed; for example, that concerning the school uniform. In addition the improvement in standards has been restricted by weaknesses in the provision for pupils in Year 6 and actions have been slow to address this weakness fully. The day-to-day running of the school is effective and the staff work well as a team. Teaching in literacy and numeracy is monitored and evaluated effectively by the headteacher, colleagues and by link inspectors from the local education authority, but the monitoring of teaching and learning in several other subjects is less satisfactory.
70. Staff illness and absence also reduced the effectiveness of day-to-day administration in the past. This compounded the difficulties governors encountered when attempting to reach decisions. Information was often not up to date and this delayed decision-making even more and weakened the effectiveness of financial control and management. As a result a considerable underspend representing 11 per cent of expenditure has accrued in the school budget. These issues have now been addressed sufficiently and with good support from the chair and vice chair of governors, best value principles are now well applied and decisions are informed effectively. The funds carried forward are clearly earmarked and specific finance, plans, responsibilities and time-scales now underpin the school's intention to upgrade ICT facilities and to improve the accommodation later this year. Financial control and management are now satisfactory enabling the headteacher and governors to plan the future direction of the school successfully.
71. After the period of uncertainty, the governors, under the strong direction of the chair and vice chair, support the headteacher and staff effectively and play a satisfactory and improving role in shaping the direction of the school. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly and have an improved and clear strategic view of the school. Weaknesses remain, however, for it fails to meet its legal obligations in terms of fulfilling National Curriculum requirements in ICT, there is no policy for sex education and the prospectus lacks several areas of statutory information for parents.
72. The relatively new headteacher has introduced more systematic procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and is developing management information systems effectively to share this data meaning fully with colleagues. A range of tests in all years is now used to measure standards. The school is effective in its analysis of the pupils' performance. Many of its actions, for example, the supportive staff development to improve teaching, have yet to have full effect on the pupils' achievement over time, however, and are therefore judged to be satisfactory overall. Subject co-ordination is good in English and has had a measurable impact on the pupils' skills in writing, and the co-ordination of early years and special educational needs is also successful in meeting the pupils' needs. Co-ordination is less effective in other subjects, though, and much remains to be done to ensure that provision enables pupils to achieve their full potential across the curriculum.
73. The management of the school ensures that additional funds and specific grants such as those for pupils with special educational needs, for literacy, for staff development, to raise standards and to

improve resources, are used satisfactorily. The school is meeting the government's expectation that literacy and numeracy should receive strong emphasis. Funds to implement the National Literacy Strategy are used particularly successfully and standards in writing are improving well. Funds for the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are used appropriately but have yet to have a similar impact on standards.

74. The school development plan is based on a clear set of aims. Unfortunately these are not published in the school's prospectus and this is a weakness that is inhibiting the development of a more successful partnership with some parents, for they are not yet fully shared by the whole school community. These aims present an appropriate balance between promoting standards of pupils' attainment and equally important qualities such as attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Daily acts of collective worship comply with the statutory requirements but they do not always provide sufficient opportunities for the pupils to reflect about their beliefs and this limits their spiritual development. There is also scope to plan opportunities to promote the pupils' spiritual development more fully across the curriculum, but most other aims are well reflected in the day-to-day work of the school. The school prepares the pupils effectively for life in Britain's multi-cultural society and promotes racial harmony well. Management ensures that all pupils, regardless of their background or attainment level, are included well as they move through the school, but current instability in teaching and learning in Year 6 is limiting the amount of challenging work offered to potentially higher attaining pupils and this is restricting the achievement of several pupils. The school implements its statutory duties regarding pupils with special educational needs well. The co-ordinator, with help from the designated governor for special educational needs and from all the staff, ensure that pupils have their needs addressed with care and effectiveness. The staff present very good role models to the pupils and sustain a good quality of pastoral care.
75. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. Many teachers have considerable experience, with recent appointments providing a balance of younger less experienced staff.
76. Responsibility for subject management does not completely match the teachers' qualifications but where there is a mismatch, experience, attendance of relevant courses and individual interest of teachers ensures that all areas, with the exception of music, are covered satisfactorily. The school has suffered instability in recent years due to the illness of key post holders and a relatively high staff turnover. This has restricted standards and continues to do so in Year 6.
77. The school is well served by committed support assistants who have received appropriate training to undertake their classroom responsibilities. Their qualifications and experience, including those who support pupils with special educational needs, well match the needs of the school curriculum. The school administrator and other ancillary staff are effective in their support of the school and contribute well to the pleasant environment and the smooth running of school life. All staff work well together, effectively enhancing educational provision.
78. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. In the absence of appropriate corridors, the hall and classrooms for pupils in Years 4 and 5 act as thoroughfares and are subject to frequent disturbance as pupils and adults move through the school. Most pupils in the school also have difficulty using the library facilities because of its location. These weaknesses limit the pupils' learning and restrict the effectiveness of the school.
79. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. The resource provision for children in the Reception Class is excellent with a wide range of equipment to support early learning. The provision of materials and equipment in all other classrooms is adequate and the provision of books both in classrooms and the library is good. The books in the library are under-utilised, however, because of the difficulty of pupils being able to access the library without passing through other classrooms. There are computers in every classroom but overall this provision is unsatisfactory and does not support the acquisition of skills in ICT or its effective support of other areas of the curriculum. However the provision of software to support learning across the curriculum is developing appropriately. The range of materials to support learning in art is good. No evaluation of resources was made at the time of the last inspection. Most classrooms are enriched by

attractive, informative displays, with examples of pupils' improving writing celebrating their achievement productively. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally used satisfactorily to help the pupils to learn but weaknesses in using ICT and library facilities are impeding the development of independent learning skills by older pupils.

80. Overall, the school provides an effective and improving quality of education and the pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Consequently the school provides sound value for money. Inspectors judge that the school is well placed to continue this improvement.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81. In the context of the school's renewed educational direction and in order to bring all aspects of the pupils' attainment to the highest possible standard, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise the pupils' overall attainments and achievements by the end of Year 6, especially of potentially higher attainers, particularly in mathematics, science and religious education, and extend their opportunities to learn from independent research by (see paragraphs 19-34):
  - improving the quality of the overall provision to support teaching and learning in this class;
  - increasing expectations of what pupils should and can achieve;
  - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to acquire and use appropriate library and research skills and, together with their improving writing skills, use them to enrich their learning across the range of subjects.
2. (\*) (P) Raise the pupils' overall attainments and achievements in ICT, design and technology and music by Year 6 and improve the use and development of ICT in other subjects across the curriculum by (see paragraphs 1-12; 144-149; 150-153):
  - increasing the resources available and providing pupils with sufficient opportunities to acquire appropriate skills in all strands of the ICT curriculum;
  - improving the pupils' access to ICT equipment so that they can benefit from this technology to learn in other subjects;
  - improving the quality of teaching and planning of design and technology and class-based music and raising expectations of achievement in these subjects;
  - extending the use of music to promote the pupils' spiritual development and learning in other subjects.
3. (\*) Ensure that the statutory requirements are fully met with regard to the National Curriculum in ICT, a policy on sex education, and the prescribed information to parents in the school's prospectus (See paragraphs 35-48; 117-123; 144-149).
4. (\*) (P) Continue to seek improvements to the accommodation provided (see paragraphs 66-80; 91-102):
  - to ensure less disruption to the pupils' learning, especially for pupils in Years 1, 4, 5 and 6;
  - to improve access and use of ICT and library facilities in extending pupils' skills and achievement, particularly in promoting the pupils' independence in their learning.

The following points for improvement should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan (see paragraphs 35-48; 58-65, 72):

1. (\*) Review the balance of the taught curriculum to ensure that the pupils' have sufficient time to develop their skills to the full in all subjects.
2. Ensure that the pupils' annual reports include sufficient information about the pupils' attainment and progress and identify future targets to promote learning effectively.
3. (\*) Continue to develop effective co-ordination across the range of subjects.

(\*) Issues already identified for development by the school.

(P) Linked with Key Issues of the previous inspection report.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	18	14	3	0	0
Percentage	0	22	40	31	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	210
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	20	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	34	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (96)	97 (96)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	33	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	100 (96)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	12	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	15	18
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	26	22	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (74)	65 (68)	82 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	30	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (82)	85 (85)	94 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	184
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

**Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.6
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**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	4	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.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	450,974
Total expenditure	406,851
Expenditure per pupil	1,965
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,823
Balance carried forward to next year	68,946

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	210
Number of questionnaires returned	93

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	41	5	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	43	4	1	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	51	4	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	47	14	4	5
The teaching is good.	51	41	3	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	36	28	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	42	11	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	46	4	1	7
The school works closely with parents.	24	41	25	6	5
The school is well led and managed.	33	38	14	8	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	40	8	1	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	51	12	5	3

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents observe that much remains to be achieved if the school is to retain its former status. Most are encouraged by the actions of the relatively new headteacher, however, in seeking the necessary improvements.

## **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**

82. The overall excellent provision for young children remains an exemplary strength of the school as it was at the time of the last inspection. The 'Beacon Status' of this provision is fully justified. Full time places are available to children at the start of the term in which their fifth birthday occurs. Children whose fifth birthday falls between January 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> are offered a part-time place in the September preceding their fifth birthday. Very good induction programmes help the children settle quickly on entry into the class. Children are warmly introduced to the welcoming atmosphere and settle quickly into well-established routines to support their learning. The Reception teacher and her staff are very experienced and are most successful in supporting the children with a very good curriculum and well-planned activities, which support progress in all the recommended areas of learning for children in the new Foundation Stage. The strong links between the Reception and the Year 1 and 2 classes support a very effective transition from one class to the other and this helps the children to continue their beneficial enjoyment of school at this crucial stage.
83. Children are assessed on entry and regularly throughout their time in Reception and these observations are used to support a curriculum that is effectively matched to meet the children's needs. The entry baseline assessment is completed during their first few weeks in the Reception class, and this year it indicates that children start with knowledge and skills that are slightly above those found in other Cornish schools. Observations of the pupils at work and play, however, across the full areas of learning, shows that their skills as a group are broadly average in some areas with strengths in language and literacy and in their personal and social development. Observations of lessons and of the early years provision show that strengths in the teaching of very young children identified at the time of the last inspection continue. As a consequence, standards have been maintained well and children continue to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

84. The children settle quickly in to their new environment, on starting school and make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. Caring adults systematically encourage the children to communicate and to co-operate with other children. Most do so readily and happily and there is a sense of interest and excitement on entering the classroom. All children build well on caring home backgrounds and are taught to behave well and to care about the needs of others and the children respond well and there is good harmony each day. The teachers and adults use group activities such as story times and singing sessions to promote social skills even more. All children are included equally in a manner that matches their particular need. Higher attaining children are fully challenged to work at their own level, average attainers are questioned equally rigorously to enrich their thinking in whole class discussions and children with special educational needs have their needs considered with care and also achieve well. They are assessed on entry to the class and, as necessary, individual special needs are targeted in specific plans. All children are supported well in their learning. Most children are on course to exceed the early learning goals set in this area of learning by the time they leave the Reception class.

#### **Communication, language and literacy development**

85. Communication, language and literacy skills are taught very well. The teacher and learning support assistants know their children well and work hard to promote positive attitudes and an enjoyment of learning through discussion, through reading and sharing books and by using computers. Most children soon develop the confidence to respond in large group discussions, but a few need and receive more time to build up their confidence. Eventually all pupils develop appropriate speaking and listening skills and are able to access their learning well through regular and sensitive interaction with caring adults. Children enjoy books and are supported well by adult helpers,

assistants and teachers, they achieve well in early reading skills. They develop a satisfactory vocabulary and remember key characters in stories. They are encouraged with success to enjoy learning through rhyme, for example when singing an African song 'Lets go Zudie-o- Walking through the Valley' most pupils achieve well in reading and are on course to reach the standards expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Year. The children have many opportunities to practice writing, initially experimentally, then by using writing frames to complete 'who', 'what' and 'why' grids to record their ideas. Such 'modelling' of writing helps the children to develop sequence and meaning in their writing and is a very effective strategy for promoting their skills. Overall most children achieve well in this area of learning and exceed the learning goals set for them.

### **Mathematical development**

86. Teaching is equally effective in this area of learning and the planning ensures that the children have good opportunities for developing their skills. For example, they have a good supply of soft toys which they use in a variety of learning situations; at every opportunity the teacher and assistants encourage the children to count them and thus promote their knowledge of place value. The children can count how many people there are in their families and compare the sizes of their sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers using words such as shortest and tallest. There are plenty of good resources in the classroom for practising number, for example, number snakes, large floor puzzles and number lines. The teacher and other adult assistants again use number songs and rhymes effectively and use registrations productively to teach numbers and develop the children's counting skills. The teacher ensures a good progression in learning and is particularly successful in promoting the children's understanding by using appropriate technical language. Most of the children will meet the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year and are achieving well.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

87. Teaching is very good and the Reception classroom and adjoining practical area are well-organised, colourful, interesting learning environments where the children are encouraged to learn by following their own lines of enquiry or by undertaking activities planned by their teachers. The children develop appropriate understanding of time by looking at old and new photographs and by exploring the relationships between the people in them. Following discussion, where the teacher values and promotes their ideas through effective questioning the children use teddy bears to create family trees thus reinforcing their understanding. The children are introduced to computers from an early age and use 'talking software' effectively to enrich their letter and word recognition skills. They study the effects of water on sand, work with a range of materials including play-dough and plant seeds and study pictures of different places. The children explore their ideas further through role-play, for example in the 'Ambulance' and achieve well to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

88. The children achieve well and exceed the expected standards in their creative development by the end of the Foundation Stage. They learn to make models with 'playdough' and 'Easter Cards' with card, glue. With good support from learning support assistants the children develop their cutting and pasting skills well. They use a good variety of materials and are encouraged to express their own ideas. Attractive displays enrich the classroom; paper and card 'robots', favourite story characters and a good range of construction equipment illustrate the strong and successful emphasis placed on this area of learning. Teaching is very good and the teachers plan an extensive range of activities but are careful to promote choice and are pleased to allow more time when hesitant pupils show a willingness to make their own decisions. This strategy promotes the children's independence most successfully. The children enjoy musical activities and learn well when singing action songs. The children take in turns to respond through clapping or 'finger dipping' this promotes their awareness of 'timbre, dynamics and tempo' and the teacher reinforces their learning and understanding by specifically using and explaining these technical terms and this enriches the children's achievement significantly.



## Physical development

89. Children respond well to the very good teaching and to the increased opportunities provided through formal physical education lessons in the school hall. They achieve well and are enthused by the teacher's skilful use of music to enrich the pace at which they work. The children show good balance and co-ordination during dance and react to music intelligently when, for example running and waving ribbons to complete their movements. The teacher uses music well to raise interest and the use of music from Finland in one lesson enriched the children's cultural awareness. During the inspection, children were developing their fine motor skills well by making 'Easter Cards'. At other times they use a variety of equipment in their large role-play area or use large wheeled toys to develop team and gross-motor skills. Teaching is very good in this area of learning, the teacher has interest and expertise and uses support assistants well to encourage the pupils to work well either as individuals or with each other. Most children attain the early learning goals for this area of learning by the time they move in to Year 1.
90. Overall the teaching is very good in the Reception class. It is based on valuing children and their efforts and the teacher and learning support assistants are diligent in ensuring that children are given sufficient time; to think, to respond to questions, to formulate their own ideas, to make choices and to work either individually or with others. This careful but sensitive and controlled nurturing of the children's independence is the key to the successful learning accomplished in the Reception class. Everything is planned with great care and forethought and the very good curriculum meets the recommendations of the new Foundation Stage in all areas and this has a most beneficial impact on the children's learning. The work with children in their Reception Year is an undoubted and continuing strength of the school.

## ENGLISH

91. Most pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 are on course to attain standards that are above average for pupils of this age. These represent similar standards to those found in school at the time of the last inspection in 1997. Nevertheless, an effective whole school focus on improving pupils' writing has helped to re-establish the climate of rising standards evident in the school during 1998 and 1999. After a very good start to their schooling in the Reception Class, the vast majority of the pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment in Years 1 to 6.
92. Inspection shows, however, that in response to good teaching, an increasing proportion of pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, are now achieving well in relation to their previous attainment.
93. The pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in recent years, show that standards have been sustained at a level that is above the national average in reading and writing. The above average performance of the pupils in the 2001 tests represented a fall in standards from the well above average and often high standards attained in previous years, as a consequence of a lower proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected level 3 standard. The results in last year's tests, however, represented appropriate achievement for the majority of the pupils in that year group, with boys and girls performing equally effectively. The standards attained by the pupils in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 have declined in recent years. Results in 2000 and 2001 matched those found nationally but were significantly below the well above average standards attained in the previous two years. Although most pupils achieved satisfactorily in relation to their performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 1997, the girls outperformed the boys significantly in the 2001 tests.
94. The headteacher has been monitoring standards carefully and with full support from all staff, has systematically promoted improvement by identifying clear priorities for development. These have included a strong focus on improving the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy through professional development and on raising expectations of what pupils can and should attain, particularly in writing. These strategies are now implemented more consistently through the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

95. The school has also noted the lower attainment of a sizeable number of boys compared to the girls at the end of Year 6, some of which is specifically related to the pupils' special educational needs. The teachers are now addressing this underachievement effectively through good teaching and improved resources and also through additional literacy and 'booster class' support. The school continues to monitor and challenge the pupils effectively.
96. Most pupils attain standards that are above average in speaking and listening in Year 2 and in Year 6, showing that standards match those found at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers continue to place strong and effective emphasis on discussion. They use questioning well to involve and include all pupils equally. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well as they progress through the school. In the lessons observed discussions were often of a high level but learning is sometimes limited by too few opportunities to follow up discussions through extended writing. A strong feature of the teaching and learning in speaking and listening is the confidence which pupils with special needs also show. Teachers and pupils value each other's contributions and this aids their learning.
97. The standards reached by the pupils in reading are above average in Year 2 and are broadly average in Year 6, with most pupils achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment by the time they leave the school. Most pupils were identified as making good progress in reading during the last inspection. This remains the case for pupils in Years 1 to 5, but older pupils have too few opportunities to act as independent learners. The inaccessible location of the library dictates that they cannot access books in the library freely when they are most needed to complete independent research, consequently their library and reading skills are not developed to the full. Pupils achieve well in most classes, benefiting from regular support from home and the teachers' and learning support assistants' encouragement. The teachers make good use of large books and shared texts to promote discussion and to enrich the pupils' vocabulary and this enriches their reading skills. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress in reading, aided by the effective use of individual targets in individual educational plans, helped by sensitive learning support assistants and increasingly by 'Additional Literacy' and 'booster' teaching support. Most of the pupils who read to the inspectors welcomed the opportunity and were polite and friendly. Higher attainers in Years 2 and 6 were confident readers and happily discussed story and plot. Other pupils were less confident, especially when talking about the characters and what might happen next. Several lacked an appropriate knowledge of the library and found difficult in describing how they would select a non-fiction book from the library. Most pupils showed satisfactory progress and positive attitudes towards their work.
98. The school has increased the focus on writing over the past twelve months and as a consequence the standards attained by the pupils in writing are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence suggests that in response to the school's improving emphasis on writing standards are rising through the school. Evidence also shows however that standards could be even higher in Year 6 where significant staff instability especially this term is restricting expectations of what pupils can and should attain. The 'literacy hour' is now well used across the school to develop writing, but writing is insufficiently developed in other subjects, such as geography and religious education. The pupils develop a rich vocabulary through the many class discussions but there is scope to utilise these even more to enrich the pupils' expressive writing.
99. The scrutiny of pupils' work revealed that handwriting skills are taught systematically and effectively through the school. The pupils show care in the presentation of their work showing commitment and positive attitudes to their learning and reflecting the teachers' high expectations. Pupils in Year 2 write accurately in clear sentences. They write in a good range of styles and contexts, showing equal confidence when writing stories, instructions or descriptions, for example of 'bonfire night'. By the end of Year 6 pupils respond well to the teachers' good evaluative marking, following the useful 'ways forward' suggested by the teachers. Their writing is interesting and descriptive, good examples being the well argued evaluations of television as 'a blessing or a curse?' and descriptions of life during the Crimean War and of 'The Play'. Overall the pupils achieve well in their writing as they move through the school, particularly in their skills and in their ability to use expression and to describe events with clarity. There is scope, however, to use this

impetus to promote the pupils' skills and learning more effectively in other subjects such as religious education.

100. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. All the teaching observed was at least good and in a quarter of the lessons observed the teaching was very good. This high level of consistency reflects the united emphasis and whole school development placed on the subject, especially over the past twelve months. Good teaching is a significant factor in restoring standards through the school. All teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy well. They share clear learning intentions with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and following careful plans develop good plenary discussions to good effect at the end of lessons. These strategies ensure that the pupils build progressively on previous learning. The teachers are knowledgeable, use specific vocabulary well to promote the pupils' thinking and to raise interest levels. For example in lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5 the teachers focused attention on 'high frequency words', on 'common letter strings' but different pronunciations and on how authors create 'atmosphere' when describing settings. This purposeful use and explanation of words significantly enriches the pupils' learning. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and know them very well. Pupils want to please, show positive attitudes and enjoy sharing ideas encouraged by the good example of all adults working in the school. Teachers manage the pupils' learning well and this sustains good levels of concentration and promotes achievement. The teachers' marking in this subject is a strength and pupils receive good guidance that aids their steady improvement. The teachers know their pupils well, include all attainment groups well and organise good support for pupils with special educational needs. Learning support staff are fully utilised and make an important contribution to the pupils' learning.
101. Following effective whole school emphasis the curriculum is well planned and is securely based on the National Literacy Strategy. The teachers assess their pupils' well and use these effectively to inform future teaching and learning. This has a positive effect on the pupils' skills. The teaching of literacy skills is an improving strength that is increasingly aided by additional 'booster support and by additional literacy support' from teachers and learning support assistants. The subject is well led and the co-ordinator, with good support from the headteacher promotes a consistent emphasis throughout the school. Focused staff training, and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, are having a beneficial effect on standards. The partnership with parents is successful in developing the pupils' reading skills and there is a clear educational direction that is driving ongoing improvements. Delayed decision making in the past, regarding ICT and library provision, still hamper future development but the school has definitive plans to develop and utilise these important areas of provision to better effect in the future.
102. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Although classrooms are large several also act as thoroughfares to reach other classes or other parts of the school. This is unsatisfactory and learning is regularly disrupted as pupils move through the school. In addition movement to and from the library and indeed the use of the library itself is severely curtailed by these factors and this is not conducive to an effective learning environment. The school has a satisfactory number of books, particularly in the classrooms and these are used well to support work in literacy lessons. Helped by parents, the school has recently completed a full audit and re-organisation of the books in the library and has plans to develop amore effective base for the library. At this time, however the library is underused and is not supporting rising standards. It was little used during the week of the inspection; it is inaccessible for too many classes and does not have enough books to support the pupils' learning. Resources for ICT are unsatisfactory and are equally insufficient for developing the pupils' literacy, research and independent skills to support their work in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

103. The performance of Year 2 pupils in the National Curriculum assessments has been above average for the last five years. In recent years boys have performed slightly better than girls.
104. When taken together, the standards reached by Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum tests over the past four years were above the national average, but in the last two years have not matched the slightly rising trend found nationally. In the 2001 tests, the standard was below that of

similar schools, reflecting a reduced proportion of pupils attaining average standards. In recent years girls performed better than boys, but not to a significant extent.

105. Year 6 pupils attained standards that were average in the 2001 National Curriculum tests. Although this performance is much lower than the well above average standard attained in 1999, comparisons between the performance of Year 6 pupils in last year's tests with their performance when in Year 2 showed that they had achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Inspection now shows that the standard of work of pupils in Year 2, as at the time of the last inspection, is above that expected nationally and pupils have made satisfactory achievement over time since they entered Year 1. The standard of work of pupils in the present Year 6 is in line with the national average. This is below that noted at the time of the last inspection. However evidence shows that, as last year, this is a relatively lower attaining year group than is usually found in the school. In addition, the learning of these pupils has been disturbed because of staff illness and the class has already had a number of different teachers so far this year. Overall the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 5 is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils in Year 6 also achieve satisfactorily, but several higher attainers are insufficiently challenged and do not achieve appropriately.
106. Most pupils in Year 2 have a secure knowledge of the appropriate language of mathematics, are beginning to add single digit numbers to two digit numbers less than one hundred and understand place value in two digit numbers. They recognise odd and even numbers and can halve some even numbers in the twenties but not the thirties with reasonable accuracy. Most pupils know the names of simple plane shapes and solids and know how many faces and edges a cuboid has. They are unsure how to relate their knowledge of faces and edges to a sphere. They can complete a bar chart on a prepared grid and use it to abstract information. Higher attaining pupils can subtract one-digit numbers from two-digit ones less than thirty and can use understanding of doubles and near doubles in calculations. They use partitioning accurately when adding two two-digit numbers when the unit total is less than ten. They construct simple bar charts with less support.
107. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a sound understanding of number and the four operations and work accurately when multiplying by one digit numbers but long multiplication is not secure. Their understanding of decimals is developing and they add two numbers with decimal parts accurately and multiply decimals by ten and a hundred. They understand that fractions can be equivalent but cannot find equivalent fractions independently. They plot co-ordinates in the four quadrants with varying success. Higher attaining pupils multiply two digit numbers with reasonable accuracy. They construct grouped frequency tables, related to heights of dinosaurs, for example, and understand through practical methods that the diagonals of some quadrilaterals cross at right angles. Their ability to plot co-ordinates in four quadrants is more secure.
108. The pupils' numeracy skills are used satisfactorily in other curriculum areas through the use of graph plotting in science and measuring in design and technology. However opportunities are missed and the school has not yet examined its curriculum with a view to maximising the support of pupils' mathematical development with planned experiences across other areas of the curriculum and this is a weakness.
109. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2 it ranges from satisfactory to good and is good overall. In Years 3 to 6 it ranges from satisfactory to good but is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.
110. In effective lessons the teachers make the learning objectives clear to the pupils at the start of the lesson. They are displayed for the lesson on whiteboards and the teachers refer to them again in the review session at the end. These strategies ensure good progression in the pupils' learning. At the start of a Year 2 lesson the teacher explained the objective clearly, including as part of this a check that all the pupils understood the word investigate. This enabled the pupils to obtain a clear understanding of what had been achieved, but the emphasis teachers' place on this is variable across the school. Where this is effective the pupils' literacy skills are enriched by their improving mathematical vocabulary.

111. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the key skills required and in most lessons, but not all, they plan work for three levels of attainment across each year group in order to ensure that suitable challenge is provided for the range of pupils. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the mental arithmetic session at the start, which was designed to reinforce pupils' understanding of place value up to thirty, included as one of the activities the pupils finding the appropriate position to stand with their number card in a line of one to thirty. The teacher had matched the size of the numbers well to the attainment level of the pupils so that all pupils experienced a challenge. This was followed by suitably structured tasks and appropriate tasks designed to extend pupils learning of the subtraction process. Where work is appropriately matched to need, pupils are involved with their work and learning is good. In some lessons, however, pupils did not have sufficiently well focused tasks to cope with the range of needs within the higher attaining group. This resulted in lower attaining pupils struggling with the task and higher attaining pupils finding the task lacking in challenge and this restricted the pupils' learning.
112. Teachers employ effective methods, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and these captivate the interest of the pupils and raise motivation to work. In Year 2 pupils 'fed' their numbers to the 'oddasaurus or evanosaurus' as part of a session designed to reinforce pupils' understanding of odd and even numbers. In Year 1 pupils worked as 'number detectives' and in Year 5 pupils were asked to discuss their strategies for adding three multiples of ten with a partner, thus giving all pupils the opportunity to contribute and explain before offering an explanation to the class. In some lessons, however worksheets are used that are not totally appropriate for the pupils for which they are intended and consequently teachers and support assistants have to provide substantial input.
113. The teachers' management of pupils is effective overall and good relationships exist within the classroom between the pupils and the pupils and adults. Consequently pupils respond positively to lessons and feel secure when offering answers in whole class sessions. In Year 3, for example, an individual pupil completed a portion of the hundred square incorrectly and she was guided carefully by the teacher to the correct answer so that she sat down feeling successful. Even when pupils are kept overly long in a whole class session they do not misbehave. Learning support assistants are used effectively and make positive contributions to the pupils' learning by their competent reinforcement of the teacher's objectives, whether these relate to set tasks or expectations of pupils' response. A pleasant working atmosphere is a feature of the majority of lessons observed.
114. Most teachers use the allocated time appropriately. Lessons are suitable structured and well-organised with resources and instruction/task sheets ready to hand so that minimum time is spent during lessons on unnecessary organisation. This maintains the motivation of the pupils and encourages directed activity as the norm. In some lessons the pupils spend too long on the carpet during the whole class sessions, however, and so the time available for their individual work is too short. In effective lessons, teachers question pupils well, being aware of their differing levels of attainment and encourage clear explanations. In these lessons there is a high level of pupil input. This is particularly good in Years 2 and 5. In mental arithmetic sessions the use of open-ended questions or different questions to cater for different attainment groups within the classroom is more limited and some sessions are not planned to engage all pupils in purposeful activity. The National Numeracy Strategy, with its three-part structure is satisfactorily established but the effectiveness of mental and review sessions is variable throughout the school.
115. Generally pupils' written work is marked regularly but there is a lack of helpful comments for the learners and no expectation that pupils should respond to incorrect work in many of the pupils' work books. Opportunities to move pupils' learning forward are, therefore, not fully exploited. Homework supports learning satisfactorily. The support of the subject through ICT is developing satisfactorily and in some lessons classroom computers are used effectively by pairs of pupils at a time, as for example in a Year 3 lesson to support work on addition using near doubles. A group of pupils from each of Years 3 and 6 are given extra support in order to try to enhance their levels of attainment to the level of the national expectation for their year group.
116. The curriculum is sound as it was at the time of the last inspection and the school has improved its emphasis on investigational work, although this is capable of even further development. The

curriculum is broad and balanced and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. However the time previously allocated for mathematics in Years 3 to 6 was low compared with many schools nationally and this limited the time available for practical investigation and restricted the pupils' skills. Assessment procedures are sound and appropriate analysis of the results of statutory and non-statutory tests are carried out appropriately. However the results of analysis is not yet translated into the planning of a whole school response to raise standards in particular areas. Pupils are set a range of targets at the beginning of the year and this is communicated to parents. However short term targets that involve and inform the pupils throughout the year are not completed restricting the pupils' ownership of their learning and its overall effectiveness. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and monitors teaching and planning satisfactorily but the role of the co-ordinator has not yet developed fully to ensure that the monitoring of pupils' learning is secure. The school has identified the need to set clear expectations of standards as an area for further development. Generally, with the exception of ICT, resources for learning are satisfactory. Overall the school has made satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection.

## SCIENCE

117. On the basis of the work seen during the inspection, standards are on course to reach average levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, matching those observed during the previous inspection just over four years ago. However, pupils now use science enquiry skills more effectively to develop their understanding of science facts and this represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. In all parts of the school pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers to enter data from investigations or to develop sufficient skills to use data handling programs to look for patterns; for example, by recording the time taken for ice cubes to melt in Year 2 and rates of dissolving in Year 6 and this is restricting their learning. However, pupils in Year 3 have adapted very quickly to using a recently introduced data-handling program to present information about their observations on rocks and this is enhancing their skills significantly. Pupils are generally achieving appropriately in relation to their prior attainment in Years 1 to 5, in response to the improving curriculum and specialist teaching. Several potentially higher attaining pupils currently in Year 6, however, will not have achieved satisfactorily by the time they leave the school because they have had insufficient opportunity to develop their skills to the full in all areas of the curriculum. Specialist teaching and improved curriculum planning is enabling most pupils to achieve satisfactorily though.
118. By Year 2, pupils recognise that different groups of food are necessary for a healthy diet. From looking closely at a variety of leaves pupils raise appropriate questions and this helps them to make and use an identification chart. Most pupils fail to record sufficient detail in their drawings and diagrams and this restricts their understanding. They correctly describe changes in materials and from their investigations understand that some materials prevent an ice cube from melting better than others. Pupils have insufficient opportunity to predict outcomes in writing or to record their evaluations about why things happen. The majority of pupils correctly recognise that a complete circuit is required for a bulb to light.
119. By Year 6, pupils correctly name forces, such as gravity and friction, which act on objects and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. They make insufficient use of data handling programs, however, to enter their own measurements to look for patterns. Pupils in Year 6 used scientific vocabulary effectively in discussion but were unable to apply scientific ideas to explain their observations on changes in the height of shadows. These shortcomings limit the contribution of work in the subject to the pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills. Several higher attaining pupils misinterpreted patterns in their results and recorded inaccurate observations. The work of lower attaining pupils in Year 6 is more accurate since they receive good support from classroom assistants. The scrutiny of work shows that several pupils are uncertain of the effects of varying an electric circuit and find difficulty in recalling the correct terms for different pathways. They clearly explained the functions of blood vessels and show a satisfactory understanding of the life processes of plants and were able to group them systematically for identification. Pupils' oral explanations indicated that they have a good understanding about how to use the properties of materials to separate mixtures.

120. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some good teaching observed. Teachers structure their lessons effectively to include pupils in practical activities, which has increased pupils' interest and enjoyment of learning. Most pupils respond extremely well and readily co-operate and share their ideas. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and are fully included in lessons. Planning was good in a Year 2 lesson and higher attaining pupils were provided with more a challenging task but better use could have been made of the school grounds for pupils to explore variation. At times teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' responses were too low and pupils were not required to give sufficient reasons for predictions. As a result teachers were unable to establish pupils' existing ideas and were not fully effective in encouraging pupils to raise their own questions for investigations. Good examples of pupils using their own reasons for testing fabrics for a specific purpose were evident in Year 3, however.
121. Teachers generally have appropriate expectations for pupils to employ their literacy and ICT skills using books or the computer for research to extend their understanding of forces or of the sun, earth and moon system. A strength in classes in Years 3 to 6 is that teachers frequently plan for pupils to use numeracy skills, relevant to their attainment levels, in appropriate contexts of scientific enquiry and this enhances their understanding. In Year 5 the teacher had high expectations for pupils to repeat and average measurements for accuracy. Pupils in Year 3 were provided with good learning opportunities to use the computer to generate graphs but for older pupils the use of spreadsheets for modelling and the use of sensors to monitor external change such as temperature or sound were not evident.
122. Expectations of pupils in Year 6 are too low and pupils have insufficient opportunities to write scientific reasons for their findings, for example, of patterns. The teachers do not make sufficient use of day-to-day assessments of the pupils' ideas to inform further teaching. The scrutiny of work shows that teachers' marking rarely includes comments to extend, affirm or correct scientific ideas and this is unsatisfactory and represents a lost opportunity to move pupils' learning forward. Teachers use end of unit tests satisfactorily to note the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding. Generally teachers lack strategies to record and assess the pupils' acquisition of scientific enquiry skills and are, therefore, not able to strengthen planning to maintain an effective progression in learning. This is a weakness that is inhibiting the pupils' progress.
123. Leadership of the subject provides good guidance for planning investigations. The headteacher's and co-ordinator's good analysis of the 2001 National Curriculum tests in Year 6 identified weaknesses and strategies for improvement. Teachers' assessments of the pupils' performance in Year 2 last year have not been analysed sufficiently to raise standards. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and enthusiasm, and has monitored teaching in Years 3 to 6 classes but not in Years 1 and 2 classes. The planned curriculum now complies with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum but data-logging and human reproduction have not yet been taught at a level that challenges high attainers fully. With the exception of ICT equipment, the subject is resourced adequately.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

124. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are broadly average and there are examples of good standards of work in a few other classes. This matches the findings of the last inspection. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and potentially higher attainers, achieve satisfactorily in all aspects. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress in painting in the styles of other artists and they develop good skills in comparing ideas and acquire a good knowledge of Greek art. The pupils use ICT satisfactorily to generate pictures, but pupils have not begun to explore abstract forms and this is a weakness.
125. By Year 2 pupils explore a wide variety of fabrics, paper and natural materials effectively to create interesting textures for a colourful display of imaginative cats, homes and of the sea. These displays are usefully annotated with suitable adjectives. When making their 'Mothers' Day' cards support assistants introduce different techniques of paper folding to make flowers and help pupils to apply previous learning of 'sandwiching' paint to make symmetrical butterflies. However, few

pupils demonstrate good shading in their direct observational drawings of objects in their sketchbooks. The majority of pupils make little use of different types of line or tone in their drawings of portraits and Victorian dresses. There is little evidence of pupils using sketchbooks to practice these skills before drawing. When drawing flowers in science pupils pay insufficient attention to detail to draw flowers as they actually are because they are provided with insufficient time. In addition there are few examples of pupils using measurement and numeracy skills to gain a greater understanding of proportion. These shortcomings restrict the pupils' acquisition of such skills. The teachers plan appropriate opportunities for pupils to discuss the work of other artists such as Lowry and Breughel.

126. By Year 6 pupils have developed good modelling skills to make images of witches and set them in imaginative settings of 'The Witches Spell.' Occasionally such work is linked to creative writing and this makes a valued contribution to the pupils' writing skills. They use tools effectively to depict, for example, the texture of clothes and hair. Several pupils demonstrate effective use of line and tone in their drawing of fruit and boats. Work in Year 3 and 4 has flair and imagination and pupils confidently experiment with different materials because teachers' expectations are high and they encourage pupils to 'have a go'. Pupils in Year 3 created very striking representations of Barbara Hepworth sculptures by folding and twisting black and white paper. Pupils in Year 4 are given many opportunities to experiment with colour mixing to make different shades and patterns with paint. Pupils readily point out the characteristic of different artists such as 'Gauguin always painted living things.' Because their work is so attractively displayed they proudly announce 'we are the arty class.' Pupils value the qualities displayed in each others' work such as how careful shading can give a three dimensional effect. Teaching and learning in a lesson seen in this year group was good when pupils used their individual descriptions of Greek myths from their own research to create collages of 'monsters'. They explain clearly that the decoration on Greek pottery tells the story of life in ancient times or of Greek gods and reflect this in their use of earth colours in large paintings of pots. Such positive attitudes towards the subject enrich the pupils' learning.
127. Teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Strengths include good management of the pupils' behaviour and firm relationships and these promote the pupils' enjoyment and positive attitudes which in turn enrich their learning. Most teachers use learning support assistants well and place an appropriate emphasis on skills such as mixing when using paints. However, skills such as using pencils to 'sketch' are insufficiently explained. The teachers place a strong and effective emphasis on the careful presentation of finished work and this enriches the pupils' spiritual development. Teachers encourage pupils evaluate and value each other's contributions and this is helping to promote higher levels of skill in such aspects as pencil shading when drawing, for example.
128. The co-ordinator is keen but she is part-time and has had little opportunity to monitor standards or assume her full management role by evaluating teaching or demonstrating her own skills to colleagues and this is unsatisfactory. The school has adopted the QCA scheme of work and this provides an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum. Assessment is not in place to monitor pupils' attainment and progress in learning other than for reporting to parents in annual reports and this is unsatisfactory. Most classes have a comprehensive range of materials and the subject is well resourced.



## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards but standards in Year 6 are below average because pupils' achievement, across the range of prior attainments, is unsatisfactory, particularly in the development of their designing skills. Although this is a similar position to that reported in the previous inspection there is evidence of some improvement. The scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show that pupils throughout the school achieve well in carrying out research and evaluating existing products as part of their planning to meet an identified need.
130. In the one lesson seen teaching and learning was good. Teaching raised pupils' understanding of the notion that making is related to meeting a specific need. The teacher made good links with the traditions of people with specific beliefs and their need for certain foods. In previous work pupils in this class demonstrated a good idea of the design process and before making decisions explored different ways of designing stands for their picture frame. This represents an improvement in investigatory work since the previous inspection. There are good examples in the school which show that pupils use pictures effectively to plan sequences. In Year 2, for example, pupils made bags and in Year 4 pupils planned their designs for Trojan horses. Pupils in Year 6 are very enthusiastic learners and collaborate well to explore different mechanisms to make a boat turn. These pupils fail to label their drawings with sufficient detail, however, or include any measurement in their designs for accuracy. The lack of expectation for pupils to plan a sequence of steps to guide their work results in pupils working in a haphazard way. There is inconsistency in the teaching in providing opportunities to reinforce pupils' learning in science.
131. By Year 2 pupils are taught and learn well about the properties of materials and these pupils use satisfactory joining skills to make bags and include a simple mechanism to move a puppet. The youngest pupils make attractive clocks and explain clearly how the winding mechanism helps the mouse go up the clock. An improvement since the previous inspection is that pupils Year 3 and Year 5 apply artistic skills effectively to attractively finish a product but this good practice is inconsistent in other parts of the school.
132. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from the lesson seen shows that the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory, especially in Years 1 to 5. It is strengthened by warm management of the pupils' behaviour, by the supportive contribution of learning support assistants and by improvements to the planned curriculum. It is weakened, however, by current difficulties in maintaining consistent approaches in Year 6 due to staff illness. Pupils evaluate how their Trojan horses could be improved but insufficient time is allocated for this and there is a lack of teacher expectation for pupils to do so. When teachers expectations are high pupils are inspired to produce well finished good quality work such as an unusual sculpture for the reception area of the school based on the work of Louise Nevelson or colourful clay pencil holders. Generally there is scope for teachers to make more use of work in this subject to promote the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
133. The curriculum is planned effectively in the main but insufficient links are made with ICT and the school currently lacks such equipment to enable the pupils' full learning of the National Curriculum in controlling mechanisms. In all other areas resources for learning are satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and identifies how well the scheme of work is implemented and generally monitors the teachers' planning effectively. Records of pupils' responses are a good feature of monitoring but the tracking of pupils' progress in standards attained is an area for improvement. A collection of photographs and notes show that there is a good coverage of required aspects of knowledge and understanding.

## GEOGRAPHY

134. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily over time. The standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire appropriate geographical knowledge and understanding and their skills develop satisfactorily. In Year 1 pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of maps and symbols through an examination of

pictures and plans of rooms and activities like the 'Elves tidying Santa's Workshop'. They develop a deeper understanding of aspects of their own environment by investigating their parents' occupations and sharing these with the rest of the class. In Year 2 pupils consider parts of the world further afield by, for example, comparing houses in which they live with those of people who live in hotter and colder climates. By the end of Year 2 pupils are familiar with the physical and human features in their own environment, understand the use of symbols to represent things on a simple map and use a simple letter and number co-ordinate to locate a position on a grid. The school has developed effective links with British schools in Egypt and Sri Lanka and this provides good breadth to the learning of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4.

135. At the end of Year 6, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and the achievement of the majority of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Although all pupils are challenged well in class discussions, there is scope to increase the opportunities offered for pupils to learn independently and this is restricting the achievement of a few potentially higher attaining pupils in Year 6, who could achieve more. Pupils develop a sound knowledge of the required aspects of physical and human geography and their skills of analysis, acquisition and use of geographical vocabulary develop appropriately. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils further their understanding of symbols and scales and become more confident in their use of maps. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils use six figure map references accurately to locate places on a map using and extending their developing numeracy skills effectively. Pupils develop an understanding of settlements. Pupils in Year 3, for example, examine Charlestown as a local example and can explain the main reasons for its growth and important factors in its development. In Year 5 they compare this settlement with Pampagrampe, Peru and understand the differences in climate, housing and occupations and in Year 6 with Chembakolli, India. Pupils have a sound understanding of water and its effects on people and the landscape, including the stages of a river and its associated language. They use the local river Fowey effectively as a major input into this area of learning. Evidence to support the pupils' understanding and concern regarding environmental issues is limited.
136. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but good in some lessons. The overall good teaching reported at the time of the last inspection has not been maintained. A continuing strength of teaching is the effective management of pupils. This and the good relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive impact on learning. In Year 1, the pupils responded well to a homework task related to the occupations of one of their parents or other well-known adult and were keen to share the information with the teacher and the rest of the class. In effective lessons teachers enhanced the learning of pupils of varying attainment by well chosen questions to individual pupils and individual tasks that were appropriate for their range of needs. A good example of this was in Year 4 where the teacher checked pupils understanding of the difference between physical and human features related to London, Cairo and Athens by asking a range of pupils to give specific examples. She followed this by providing individual tasks with two different levels of response required. This linking of specific questions and tasks matched to the pupils' needs was not evident in all lessons. In less effective lessons, whole-class sessions included too much teacher exposition and too many general questions where answers were taken only from pupils who put up their hands to respond. This was generally followed by all pupils being asked to attempt the same task and this resulted in tasks of limited challenge for some higher attaining pupils. However, some pupils with special educational needs were supported well by teaching support assistants when present in lessons.
137. Good quality wall displays, which include teachers' and pupils' work are displayed in classrooms and used effectively during whole class discussions but the quality of teachers marking is variable and generally not designed to extent the learning of the pupils. Pupils generally respond well to lessons and have a sense of curiosity about the world around them.
138. The curriculum is sound, as it was at the time of the last inspection. It has appropriate breadth and balance and is based on the national scheme. A range of local visits supports the curriculum effectively and the use of ICT is developing satisfactorily. However, in order to make use of teachers' expertise, geography, history and science for pupils in Year 5 are taught alternatively in a termly cycle. Consequently pupils do no geography for a complete term and this makes the

continuity of knowledge and skills more difficult for these pupils to acquire. Continuous assessment procedures are completed, as at the time of the last inspection, but the format of some of these does not facilitate their effective use in forward planning. The subject co-ordinator is conscientious and well organised and provides satisfactory leadership. She has monitored a sample of lessons but her role has not yet been developed sufficiently to ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning is totally secure. Resources continue to be generally satisfactory and are supplemented by the county lending service. However the library is under-utilised as a resource because of the layout of the classrooms and the disturbance factor involved by pupils moving through other classrooms to access it. This is restricting the pupils' research skills and is limiting their use and extension of their developing literacy skills. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## HISTORY

139. The attainment of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. However, limited opportunities to learn through independent research and the current instability of the teaching provision in Year 6 is restricting the challenge offered to potentially higher attaining pupils and several could achieve more.
140. By the end of Year 2 pupils have an appropriate understanding of changes over time. In Year 1, for example, pupils develop a sense of chronology by identifying the changes in their own lives and also through activities where they examine what bath-time was like years ago compared with present day equivalents. In Year 2 this aspect is developed appropriately through the effective use of the memories of the pupils' own grandparents, the sharing of these memories as a class and the visits by a number of grandparents to lessons. Pupils' depth of knowledge is sound and their learning is enhanced well by the visits they make to places like Lanhydrock House, where Year 2 pupils experience what it must have been like to be wealthy in the Victorian era. Here, as part of a Victorian Day, pupils experience some aspects of England in the past by dressing in Victorian clothing and learning to sing some Victorian songs, for example. A variety of activities help pupils to develop appropriate skills of historical inquiry. A good example of this is the Year 2 lesson where pupils examined and collected information from photocopies of a variety of birth certificates from a wide range of dates, learning amongst other things that some parents signed with a cross as they were unable to read or write.
141. During Years 3 to 6 pupils' appreciation of local history is developed effectively and aspects of other cultures are also promoted satisfactorily. In Year 3, for example, pupils compare St Austell with Pompeii as part of their work on the Romans. They develop an appropriate appreciation of how the physical aspects of a place can affect history as in Year 4 where pupils recognise the importance of the Nile in Egyptian history. Pupils experience using a range of sources in their investigation and interpretation of history. A good example of this is in Year 6 where, as part of their work on the Victorians, pupils examine and put to good use a school log book from 1888. Such analysis of data also supports their numeracy skills. They examine the lives of a range of people and this contributes well to their breadth of historical knowledge. In Year 5, lives of rich, poor and the monarchy contribute to the pupils' understanding of the Tudor period. Pupils appreciate the impact famous people have had upon developments at the time. Examples of this are Guy Fawkes, Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale. Assemblies planned and prepared by pupils reinforce learning and enhance pupils' motivation. The one based on the Greeks and practised by Year 4 pupils is a good example of this.
142. No overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning can be made as no lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6 during the week of the inspection. No overall judgement was made at the time of the last inspection either. However, the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Where teaching is most effective, tasks are matched well to pupils' needs. In a Year 1 lesson based on the life of Florence Nightingale, for example, each attainment group worked with motivation and interest on appropriate tasks within the lesson objectives. Teachers make good use of resources to support and enhance learning and to make

the content of lessons 'come alive' for the pupils. In a very well structured lesson in Year 2, this consisted of a good range of photocopied birth certificates and in Year 1, a pupil dressed up in the style of Florence Nightingale. Lessons are epitomised by a happy working atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning.

143. The curriculum contains sufficient breadth and balance and is based on the national scheme. However in Year 5 history and geography are blocked against science in order to make use of teachers' expertise and a consequence of this is that pupils do no history for a term. This makes continuity of skills and acquisition of knowledge more difficult for these pupils. The curriculum is supported well by visits to Truro Museum and Lanhydrock House. The use of ICT to support learning is developing satisfactorily. Some effective links are made with other curriculum areas as for example in Year 3 by the making of Saxon jewellery. The teachers make appropriate assessments of the pupils' work but these are of limited value in forward planning and they are not used effectively to enrich the pupils' learning. The quality of teachers' marking is unsatisfactory. It is variable and often contains little information to extend and help the learner. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic but the role of the co-ordinator is not yet fully developed or effective and does not ensure that the monitoring of teaching and learning is totally secure. This is unsatisfactory. Resources are adequate, being well supplemented at various times through the county lending service. However, the use of the library as a resource is limited because pupils' access to it is through other classrooms. As a result, pupils are not making best use of their improving literacy skills to enhance their research skills. The good quality displays around the school help raise pupils' awareness of history further. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

144. Currently standards for pupils in Year 2 are close to the national average. The previous inspection judged that standards were satisfactory for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Since that time standards nationally are higher and pupils in Year 6 are expected to use the computer to use e-mail, make presentations using text pictures and sound, control events and use sensors to sense physical change. Because historically pupils at the end of the school have had insufficient opportunity to develop and apply these skills, they will not meet national expectations this year. Their standards are below average and achievement for all groups of pupils is unsatisfactory.
145. Judgements are based on classroom observations of one lesson and of pairs of pupils working on computers during lessons. In addition examples of pupils' previous work stored on computers and in files were also scrutinised. These show that by the end of Year 2 pupils use a mouse correctly to select and drag images of buildings to construct towns. They change the colour and size of text to print their names and select phrases to finish a sentence. Pupils confidently improve their comprehension skills extend their learning about plants and animals from using an on screen dictionary and recognition about change in history by quickly grouping objects from the past and present. From the information collected about favourite food they use the computer to produce a graph which helps them make comparisons. This type of work is beginning to contribute to the pupils' numeracy skills. They are familiar with using on screen tools to generate topical scenes.
146. The school and the nearby community college collaborate very effectively to enable Year 6 pupils to be taught in the college computer suite and this increases pupils' learning opportunities considerably. Pupils were observed during one of these sessions and most have good keyboard skills. The majority of pupils use computers at home and they use these for homework such as writing or research. With support pupils search the Internet successfully for information about forces. Pupils in Year 5 begin to write formulae spreadsheets but these are not used in the context of mathematics lessons and ICT is not yet used to best effect in supporting pupils' numeracy skills. Several pupils in this year group have weak word processing skills. Pupils in Year 4 build on their earlier knowledge of programming a floor turtle to write instructions to create geometric flower shapes. They have begun to use e-mail to communicate with a school with Sikh pupils in London and a school in Egypt which extends their understanding of other cultures. Pupils in Year 3 collect and display information about monsters in different graphical forms. They import a picture to illustrate their writing. Many pupils use modelling programs at home and recognise that they

enable them to do things, which once might have been thought of as impossible, such as creating the ideal conditions for animals in a zoo.

147. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Observations of pupils working with computers shows that teachers plan effectively to maximise opportunities for pupils to use the limited number of computers currently available in each classroom. The accommodation restricts the sharing and the effective use of computers in some classrooms, especially out of school hours, for several classrooms operate also as thoroughfares which is a distraction to learning. The school plans to address this in the near future by providing pupils with laptops. Classes have a good range of CD-ROMS for most areas of the curriculum and these are used well in all classes to extend pupils' understanding about topics being studied. Teachers of younger pupils plan worksheets carefully that enable pupils to extract relevant information from paragraphs on the screen to complete sentences. Pupils lack sufficient opportunities to practice their word processing skills for writing their own sentences on a screen. In the lesson seen the quality of teaching was good and the teacher had high expectations for all pupils to understand that modelling programs help them to do impossible things. Good whole class discussion and decision-making demonstrated a science program to change a cloud into snowflakes introduces fun into their learning about scientific facts. Direct teaching of skills of how to log on and off has little impact on learning because of limited opportunity to practice a newly introduced skill in school. The teacher of this class made effective use of a laptop recently acquired by the school for pupils to enjoy adding and displaying information about their rock collection and pupils are encouraged to use their computers at home for research. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their developing skills.
148. Given the inadequate level of learning resources and the incomplete planning, management of the subject is not satisfactory. The school is currently planning to increase resources for pupils to attain higher standards and remedy the deficiency in equipment for sensing change and for control technology. Planning for use of this equipment to develop the pupils' skills is not included in the current schemes of work and this is unsatisfactory. The teachers assess the pupils' work well and use this effectively to inform teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, and teachers keep a log of what pupils have achieved. This good practice is inconsistent across the school, however, and constrains the standards pupils attain.
149. The pupils' skills are improving in ICT, however, and as their opportunities to work with computers increases, so their literacy skills are also enriched. The school magazine "The Buzz" is a good example of how ICT is beginning to make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

## **MUSIC**

150. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is below national expectations and the achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment and achievement in Years 1 and 2. Standards at the time of the last inspection were above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. Since then the specialist subject leader, who also provided some of the teaching in the school has left. The school has been in the position of having to build up expertise in this area in order to raise pupils' attainment again, although their main efforts in recent years have been directed towards the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy. The class teachers now teach music. Those with musicianship skills do this effectively, but a few lack confidence and experience. A subject co-ordinator, who has some expertise in this area has been appointed. However, he is a part-time teacher, with an appointment equivalent to one day per week, and he has insufficient time to develop the subject and monitor teaching and learning and this is restricting the development of the subject across the school.
151. By the end of Year 6 pupils sing in tune but their response is often unsatisfactory and a lack of joy and enthusiasm is evident. In a Year 6 lesson based on the publication 'Sherlock Holmes and the Rogues Gallery' the pupils sang apathetically, showing little pride in their performance, until the temporary teacher, who has some expertise in singing joined in and encouraged an improved response. Pupils know the names of some instruments but their use of appropriate musical terms was lacking in their responses in lessons. They understand that music can be represented by

written notation but only a small minority of pupils feels confident in playing a four-note phrase on a piano or tuned percussion instrument. There is little evidence to suggest that the pupils' literacy or numeracy skills are used or enriched during music lessons and this is a weakness. Pupils are given limited opportunities to sing together as a school, in a weekly school assembly, for example, where, during the week of the inspection, the pupils accompanied a tape of other children singing as part of their worship. In some assemblies pupils listen to 'music of the month'. They build up a limited appreciation of music from a variety of periods and cultures, for example African, as shown in the Year 4 lesson where an African piece was played.

152. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, but overall is unsatisfactory. The high quality of teaching noted in the last inspection report has not been maintained. Lessons are satisfactorily planned and organised but the limited knowledge and understanding of the teachers' results in lessons that are often lacking in musical content and/or challenge. Some lessons are based around a published scheme but teachers lack the expertise to extend it during the subsequent activities. Consequently, despite the good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils, pupils do not always respond appropriately in the specialist music room where lessons are held. Their responses range from apathetic to restlessness, with pupils fidgeting with their instruments and occasionally not treating the instruments carefully. Teachers try to make the sessions meaningful for the pupils, sometimes using music as part of a class assembly, as in Year 4 when the pupils presented an assembly based around the Greeks, for example.
153. The learning opportunities are based around a purchased scheme, which the new subject leader has checked for compatibility with the requirements of the National Curriculum. This, at present, provides satisfactory support for the teachers. Enrichment of the curriculum by visits and visitors who share their expertise is limited but pupils have taken part in a local education authority event, the presentation of Yanamamo, with other partner schools. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited a local residential home to sing for the residents. Peripatetic teachers visit the school weekly to provide tuition on brass, woodwind, violin, keyboard and recorders. This group of between thirty and forty pupils have put on a small concert and the school has regular carol services each Christmas. A music teacher from a local school has provided good support by providing an opportunity for pupils to sing together in a choir in a weekly extra-curricular activity but this has been temporarily suspended this year. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but the format of these makes their effective use in forward planning difficult. Resources are adequate but the use of ICT to support learning is not sufficiently developed. Overall the school has made unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection and music is not used to best effect in promoting learning in other areas of the curriculum in Years 3 to 6.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

154. Overall standards are broadly average for pupils in Year 2 and they are above average for pupils in Year 6. Most pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6 in relation to their prior attainment. The majority of pupils attain above average standards and achieves well in swimming. Standards have generally been sustained in comparison with those found at the time of the last inspection. In the main this has been accomplished by improved planning that has sharpened the teachers' focus on teaching specific skills. This illustrated well by the strengthened provision in swimming since the last inspection. All pupils attend a series of swimming sessions at a local sports centre. Visits are organised so that two year groups of pupils attend at the same time. During the inspection Year 1 and Year 4 pupils were observed receiving swimming tuition. The teaching was good overall and was significantly enriched by the involvement of two very experienced voluntary instructors. Pupils were divided into attainment groups and all pupils were taught skills at an appropriate level and this enabled them to make good progress. The sessions are extremely well organised, safety is secured and pupils enjoy and benefit from the good overall provision and attain above average standards, with most pupils able to swim well beyond the required 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

155. During the inspection pupils were also observed experiencing dance, games and gymnastics lessons. In addition pupils were observed at play and enjoying extra-curricular activities such as 'Tag Rugby' and aerobics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 showed more skill, when evaluating their own and each other's efforts, than younger pupils and consequently made more progress learning from their successes and failures. This was evident when pupils in Year 6 competed enthusiastically in a 'team ball' game. They developed good team skills and transferred the ball quickly and skilfully by passing from one end of the court to the other to score 'goals'. This was also a feature of dance lessons where pupils are increasingly encouraged to comment on the quality of their own and each other's efforts and this enriches their learning. Occasionally younger pupils, for example in Year 2, have insufficient opportunities to learn in such ways from each other and this limits their acquisition of skills.
156. Overall the quality of teaching is good. It is good for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and it is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2. All teachers promote positive attitudes and cultivate the pupils' enjoyment and set high expectations of effort and awareness of others. All lessons are positive social occasions, supporting good relationships and communication skills, for example, the teachers use questioning as a constructive tool in developing understanding and skills. In turn this approach extends and uses the pupils' literacy skills to widen the pupils' knowledge of how exercise promotes health. All pupils respond enthusiastically; they enjoy the work and are appreciative of the teachers' warm and supportive management of their behaviour. These positive relationships support learning well.
157. The curriculum is planned effectively and teachers are careful to identify clear learning objectives to ensure steady progression in the pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has interest and expertise and supported continued staff development to ensure that strengths in the subject have been retained since the last inspection. With direction from the new headteacher, provision in swimming has been improved. The curriculum is enriched by the beneficial links with the nearby sports college and staff and pupils have been helped by the wide ranging skills of college staff. Additional opportunities result from the school's good range of extra-curricular clubs. Some such as the cross-country club, the athletics club and the gym club have led to pupils being involved in representative sport at a higher level. Such additional opportunities for the older boys are limited at this time due to the illness of a member of staff.
158. The teachers assess the pupils' effort and skill effectively during lessons but these are not recorded or used sufficiently to inform future teaching and learning and this is limiting the overall standards. Resources for learning are good; the facilities and accommodation are satisfactory overall, but the spacious hall is significantly disadvantaged by being the main access to several classrooms and lessons and learning are subject to disruption as staff and pupils move through the school. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT to monitor standards or to enrich the pupils' understanding of the effect of exercise on the body by measuring and recording pulse rates and this is a weakness. The teachers occasionally use music to good effect in promoting effort and interest and the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

159. Standards are generally above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 2 and match those expected of pupils in Year 6. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection for pupils in Year 2, but are no longer above average in Year 6 as they were previously. This has occurred as a result of a reduced emphasis being placed on the subject which stems from the significantly increased focus on literacy and numeracy. In particular older pupils have had insufficient opportunities to reflect in writing about religious belief and practice and this has restricted their learning. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers, achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. However, the current instability in teaching and provision in Year 6 is limiting the challenge offered to several potentially higher attaining pupils and they could achieve more.
160. Observations of lessons, discussions with pupils and evaluations of the pupils' work shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good awareness and respect for other faiths. Studies in

Christianity and Hinduism promote their knowledge of religious belief and show how customs are often based on stories, signs and symbols. The pupils' booklets about 'Rama and Sita' show effective use of ICT to enrich presentation and the neat work also demonstrates the pupils' respect and positive attitudes towards their work in this subject. Additional discussions with the pupils also showed their good understanding and achievement.

161. Older pupils demonstrate similarly positive attitudes and respect towards the views and beliefs of others but their opportunities to reflect, to consider in depth and to explore reasons why people follow specific beliefs and practices are very limited. Even though their writing skills are developing well few teachers expect or require their pupils to write at length during their religious education studies and this is limiting pupils' achievement and understanding. This situation represents a lost opportunity to extend the pupils' understanding and literacy skills. Teachers do place a strong emphasis on discussion, however, for example in Year 6 the teacher was careful to discuss the locations of faith communities such as Sikhs in this country. Even though pupils were unable to write about multi-culturalism, they increased their awareness effectively and achieved satisfactorily. In addition these discussions support the school's policy of inclusion, whereby views and needs of others are fully considered, and this helps the pupils to relate positively toward each other.
162. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Evaluations of the teachers' planning and the pupils' work shows that most teachers plan their lessons effectively and manage the pupils' behaviour well. Occasionally, however, planning is incomplete and the pace of lessons slip and pupils lose interest and this restricts their learning. This happened at times in lessons in Year 3 and 6 and also reflected the lack of emphasis placed on the subject. Teachers have good knowledge though and are happy to use their own experiences to illustrate meanings, for example in Year 5, when discussing the story of the 'The Good Samaritan'. Teachers are also good at including all pupils equally and in most of the lessons seen, pupils with special educational needs were as confident in offering ideas as other pupils illustrating their strong self-esteem in these important class discussions. Indeed the willingness and ability of the pupils to respond thoughtfully in class discussions shows that their overall awareness of belief and custom remains as strong as it was at the time of the last inspection. Most teachers emphasise writing insufficiently, however, and the quality of marking is not effective in moving the pupils' knowledge and understanding forward and these are weaknesses that are restricting achievement. In addition teachers make too little use of ICT and the library and learning is not supported sufficiently by independent research and enquiry, again limiting the pupils' progress and inhibiting higher attaining pupils in particular from learning at a higher level of thinking.
163. The curriculum has appropriate breadth and balance and meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator has interest and expertise but has had limited opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. She has reviewed planning in relation to the new locally Agreed Syllabus and has encouraged the positive method of teaching through role-play developed successfully with younger pupils. Overall, however, leadership is not effective in promoting high standards through the school. Work in class is often supported to good effect with links with whole school assembly themes but again the recording of ideas is not emphasised limiting the benefits. The co-ordinator is helping colleagues to introduce strategies for assessing the pupils' work but these are not used consistently through the school and have limited value in promoting improved teaching and learning.
164. Resources for learning for learning are satisfactory but they are not deployed to maximise best use, for example the library is under-used and is not readily accessible to all classes, this restricts the pupils' independence and their ability to learn by accessing information for themselves. Similarly access to computers is very restricted and has the same limiting effect on the pupils' learning. The school has a few artefacts to support teaching especially representing world faiths but these are not used to best effect in promoting practical approaches to learning.
165. Work in the subject occasionally makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially for example when pupils in Year 5 and 6 spontaneously welcomed and applauded the efforts and suggestions of pupils' with special



educational needs. As a whole, however, work in this subject could have a greater effect in promoting these areas.