

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST ERME WITH TRISPEN COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Truro, Cornwall

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111871

Headteacher: Mr R Goodright

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jane McNeil
30711

Dates of inspection: 28 January – 01 February 2002

Inspection number: 197717

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: St Erme with Trispen Community Primary School
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Trispen
Truro
Cornwall

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Harvey

Date of previous inspection: 29th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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30711	Jane McNeil	Registered inspector	Science, Music, Religious Education Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards – the school's results and pupils' achievements? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13048	Patricia Bowen	Lay inspector		How high are standards – 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?
2472	Terry Finn	Team inspector	English, Geography, History, Physical education	
19302	Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information Technology, Art, Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Erme with Trispen Community Primary School provides education for pupils aged four to 11. Of smaller than average size there are currently 111 pupils on roll, 57 boys and 54 girls. The pupils are drawn from a wide area and from a wide range of backgrounds. There is a high turnover of pupils each year, on average 15 per cent. Other than the Reception class, the pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes. All the pupils are white and speak English. The school has identified one pupil with a particular gift in mathematics and two pupils with talent in physical education. Sixteen per cent of the pupils have free school meals, similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, currently 25 per cent, is average. This includes two pupils who have statements of need, which is similar to most schools. The main needs catered for are learning difficulties and speech and language difficulties. The attainment of pupils on entry is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The clear focus on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy has a positive impact on how very well the pupils achieve in English and mathematics. The success of the school is largely due to the good and often very good teaching and the very positive attitudes to learning of the pupils. It is also the result of the very good leadership of the long-serving headteacher. The recent 'Investors in People' award justly recognises the very good quality of teamwork that exists between teachers and support staff. This gives a consistency of approach that has a positive impact on how well the pupils achieve and ensures that all pupils get a fair deal in the school. The strengths of the school far outweigh its weaknesses and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average and the pupils make very good progress in these subjects.
- The teaching is consistently good and very good in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher gives very strong leadership for school improvement. All teaching staff, support staff and governors work very effectively as a team.
- The school is very effective at reviewing the quality of its work and monitoring the pupils' progress.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good and they have very good attitudes to learning.
- The links with parents are very good.

What could be improved

- The opportunities for pupils to write longer pieces of work in English and other subjects.
- The standards in art by the time the pupils leave the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress in the period since the last inspection in 1997. Then, standards in English and mathematics were found to be average and the pupils were judged to be making satisfactory progress. The standards of the current Year 6 pupils are well above average in English and mathematics, with pupils achieving very well considering their prior attainment. Where standards in physical education, music and information and communication technology (ICT) were seen to be average in 1997 they are now above

average by the time the pupils leave the school. Standards in science are now above average by the age of 7 as well as by 11. All aspects of leadership and management have improved. The teaching is better, with far more teaching that is very good, particularly in English and mathematics. The school has successfully addressed all the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The very good improvement is largely due to the strong commitment by all staff and governors to continual improvement and the very good procedures in place for monitoring the quality of the pupils' performance and the work of the school.

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	B	D	D	D
mathematics	B	D	B	B
science	B	B	C	C

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

There was a fall in standards in 2000 and 2001 and the rate of improvement was seen to be below the national trend. However, the 2001 results need to be treated with caution since the size of the group was small and there was a particularly high turnover of these pupils during the four years in junior school. For those pupils that were in the school in Year 2, data held by the school indicates that they made at least good progress and achieved well considering their prior attainment. The test results for Year 2 pupils show that the standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above or well above average for the past four years, mainly due to very good teaching by a teacher with 'advanced skills' recognition.

The inspection found that by the time the pupils leave the school standards are higher than the test results indicate. This is because the current junior age pupils have started in Year 3 with higher standards and continue to achieve well. The school enables all its pupils to achieve well irrespective of gender, capability or point of entry. By the time the pupils leave the reception class, standards in language skills and mathematics are average. They continue to achieve well in the infants and standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. This good progress continues in the junior department. The current Year 6 pupils are in line to attain well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. The school exceeded its targets set for English and mathematics in 2000 and 2001. It has revised upwards the targets set for 2002 to a more appropriately challenging level. Standards in art are currently not high enough for the older pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning contributes much to their very good achievement. They enjoy school and are keen to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils say that there are very few incidences of poor behaviour and these <i>'are sorted out well'</i> . No poor behaviour was seen during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect the views of others and they play and work happily together. There are very good relationships between pupils and all staff. Pupils say <i>'Everyone is really friendly in this school'</i> and <i>'everyone is nice to me'</i> .
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are average. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start promptly.

The positive approach towards encouraging very good behaviour, very good attitudes to work and self-respect and respect for others is central to the school's aims and values. The 'paired reading' sessions, where older pupils support the younger is an excellent initiative to encourage maturity and responsibility.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In almost all lessons the teaching is good and in almost half it is very good. There is a consistency of approach in all aspects of teaching, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. In the vast majority of lessons the teachers have good knowledge of the subject they are teaching and they plan well. They share the lesson objectives with the class, which ensures that the pupils know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. As a result, the pupils work at a good pace, concentrate well and maintain interest in their work, although there are limited opportunities for them to use their own initiative. The teachers have sufficiently realistic expectations of what the pupils can achieve, with the exception of art for the oldest pupils, where the teachers' subject knowledge is less secure. The pupils with special educational needs are taught well. The learning support assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.

The teaching of English and mathematics is very good, which has a significant impact on how very well the pupils achieve in these subjects. In part, this is because there is a strong commitment to teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school. In the junior department, the setting arrangements are also a key factor in the rising standards seen by the inspectors. There are currently insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, in English and in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils, both through lessons and in extra-curricular provision. The curriculum provision for the gifted and talented pupils is good. All requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Learning difficulties are identified early. The pupils are supported well in classes and smaller groups and make good progress towards their targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The school makes very good provision for moral development, good provision for social and cultural development and sound provision for spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There is very good monitoring of behaviour and academic performance. There are very good systems to ensure the pupils' health and welfare. Procedures to monitor attendance are good.

All pupils have access to the school's broad and balanced curriculum. Curriculum planning is good and contributes to the improved teaching and pupil achievement. The school works very closely with its parents, who have a generally very good regard for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership for school improvement. He and his staff form a mutually supportive and effective partnership. There is a very clear focus on continuous improvement and academic success for all.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are hard working, well informed and fully involved. They provide a very good level of support for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school monitors its strengths and weaknesses very successfully. The headteacher and subject leaders evaluate teaching and learning effectively to improve the quality of education provided.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Forward planning of expenditure is very good. The school makes very good use of the building, time, staff and the budget to provide a good education for its pupils. It seeks to find best value for money.

There is a very strong, shared sense of purpose in the school. The headteacher has been

instrumental in placing a strong emphasis on good teaching and on high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The effectiveness of this is clear from the overall above average results being attained by pupils who enter with below average attainment. The headteacher has also been effective in delegating management responsibilities to his deputy headteacher and subject leaders. The support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, for instance one with excellent ICT expertise. Learning resources are generally satisfactory although there are insufficient non-fiction books to support the curriculum fully.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Thirty two questionnaires (30 per cent) were returned and 17 parents attended the meeting with representatives of the inspection team.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children are expected to work hard. • Their children make good progress. • The help for their children to become mature and responsible. • The good teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The amount of homework.

Parents commented very favourably about almost every aspect of the school. The inspectors fully agree with all the things that most please parents. They found that, for a school of this size and the number of adults employed, it is providing a good range of extra-curricular activities. Where parents expressed a view about homework, it was as much to do with too much as too little. Inspectors found the quality and quantity of homework to be appropriate and that it makes a good contribution to the school's and the pupils' success. Nevertheless, inspectors agree with parents that there are inconsistencies between classes, both in how homework exercises are presented to the pupils and what happens to the work on completion. This causes anxiety for some parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The majority of pupils who attend the school start in the reception year. The turnover of pupils in any year is approximately 15 per cent, although in some years it is very high. For example, only half of the current Year 6 pupils who took the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 now make up the composition of that class, with equal numbers leaving and joining during Years 3 to 6. This clearly has an effect the on-going work of the school in being able to monitor and sustain the progress of individual pupils. However, the headteacher and teachers work very hard to monitor progress and maintain very detailed records. Regular assessments and interim testing is very thorough and shows the progress made by individual pupils and year groups. This is a strong area of the school's work.

2. There is a range of attainment on entry to school but overall the majority of children are attaining below average standards against the Cornwall Baseline Assessment Scheme, with only a small proportion attaining average standards. The children are below average in all six areas of learning and this has been the case since comparative data has been made available to Cornwall schools. By the time they complete the Foundation Stage all children, with the exception of those with learning difficulties, have reached the expected early learning goals, with particular strengths in personal and social development. This represents good achievement, the same judgement as made at the last inspection. All children achieve well, including those with special educational needs.

3. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils standards were found to be below average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science, whether compared with all schools or against similar schools. There was a dip in standards in both 2000 and 2001 and the rate of improvement was seen to be below the national trend. However, these results do not accurately reflect the true picture and need to be treated with caution since the size of the cohort, at 15 pupils, was small. With each pupil representing almost seven per cent, the statistical reliability of the data is diminished. In fact, all pupils (with the exception of those with statements of special educational need) achieved the expected level, Level 4 in English and mathematics and all pupils achieved Level 4 in science. It was the smaller number of pupils achieving Level 5 in 2001 that caused English to be 'below average' and science to be 'average'. A more reliable way of judging whether the standards are high enough is to gauge the pupils' achievements from the test results they obtained in Year 2. According to this data, the pupils achieved well above expectations in mathematics and above average expectations in English and science, given that the Year 2 test results in 1997 were below average. However, even here, the very high turnover of pupils during the four years in the junior department does not ensure the validity of this evidence. Data held by the school is more reliable. This indicates that the vast majority of pupils in the school in Year 2 made good progress and achieved well according to their prior attainment.

4. For the Year 2 pupils who took the 2001 National Curriculum tests standards were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. The results in 1999 and 2000 were even higher, with standards in reading and mathematics being well above average and very high in writing. In 2001, over 40 per cent of the pupils achieved the higher level, Level 3, in reading and mathematics which is well above national averages. A third attained Level 3 in writing, which is very high in comparison with national expectations. A gifted boy attained a very secure Level 4 in mathematics. There is less pupil mobility in the infant department so the results are more secure than those attained in the junior

department. Added to this, the same teacher has been responsible for teaching Years 1 and 2 for the last four years. Her recognition as an 'advanced skills teacher' has clearly had a very favourable impact on the standards attained by the pupils. Given that the overall attainment on entry to Year 1 is average this represents very good achievement during the two years. Achievement in science is harder to judge, since the pupils are not tested in science. However, the teacher assessments in 2001 suggest the pupils to be attaining below average standards overall, with grades for the four different areas of science work fluctuating from 'very high' in knowledge and understanding of materials to 'well below' average for work in experimental and investigative science. It is probable that the assessments overly erred on the side of caution and that standards were higher than reported.

5. The inspectors found the standards to be generally rising, particularly in English and mathematics but also in science, ICT, physical education and music. All pupils achieve well and get a fair deal in the school, irrespective of gender, capability or point of entry. This represents good improvement, and very good improvement in English and mathematics, since the last inspection in 1997, where standards in most subjects were seen to be average with the pupils making sound progress. This progress is largely due to the good and often very good teaching combined with the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. By the time the pupils leave the school they are attaining well above average standards in English and mathematics. Given that they enter the school with below average standards they make very good progress in these subjects during their time in the school. Standards in design technology, history and geography are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were in 1997.

6. The reason that the pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics is because of the very good teaching and the whole school commitment to the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. It is also due to the commitment of the headteacher and governors to maintaining smaller teaching groups. Therefore, in the junior years the two classes are taught in three sets for literacy and numeracy. These smaller sets are generally arranged according to prior attainment, which means that the pupils' individual needs are met more fully. Additionally, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been particularly well implemented and adapted to the teaching of mixed aged classes. The school exceeded its targets for English and mathematics for the last two years and has recently revised the targets for 2002. In English, the new targets are particularly challenging, with all the pupils anticipated to attain Level 4 or above and 38 per cent expected to attain Level 5. Inspectors agree that these targets are likely to be met. For mathematics, the new targets of 81 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 or above and 43 per cent to attain Level 5 are likely to be exceeded.

7. In science, the pupils are attaining above average standards by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, relatively unchanged since the last inspection. They are also above average by the end of Year 2, which is an improvement since 1997. Given their starting point, overall achievement through the school is good. The reason why standards have not improved further is because the teaching of scientific enquiry has been overly directed by the teachers, with the pupils being given insufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and make choices. This has now been addressed for the pupils in Years 5 and 6 and should ensure that the targets set for the current Year 6 pupils, of 88 per cent to attain Level 4 or above and 38 per cent to reach Level 5 will be met, if not exceeded. The school has yet to address this issue for the younger pupils.

8. There has been good improvement in other subjects since the time of the last inspection, where standards were then seen to be average with pupils making sound progress. In these subjects teaching is consistently good or better, which has a positive impact on the quality of

pupils' knowledge and understanding. The pupils achieve well throughout the school and, by the time they leave, the vast majority are attaining standards that are above average. The subjects are:

- ICT. The school has particularly focused on ICT, to very good effect. There has been an intensive training programme for teaching and support staff, which is a key reason why standards have improved. Staff and pupils particularly gain from the expertise of one member of the support staff. Added to this, the teaching is very good and curriculum and resources are much improved.
- Music. The improvement is the result of the expertise of the subject leader who, until recently, taught music to all pupils in the school. Her teaching of music is very good. She has ensured that the scheme of work supports the non-specialist teachers very well. However, the subject will not improve further until the pupils sing with more gusto and enthusiasm, relishing the opportunities afforded by singing in unison as a class or school.
- Physical education. Here, all teachers have a particularly secure knowledge of the subject. The curriculum is well implemented, covering all aspects of physical education well. The swimming programme is particularly effective. The subject is further enhanced through good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular clubs and competitions with other schools.

9. There are two subjects where standards are now seen to be lower than at the time of the last inspection:

- Religious education. Standards now meet expectations of the agreed syllabus for pupils' aged seven and 11, whereas in 1997 they were seen to be above average at the end of Year 2 and sometimes above average at the end of Year 6. Despite the slight decline in standards, the pupils are still making appropriate progress given their starting point. The dip reflects the insecurities of staff with regard to the new scheme of work, particularly the choice of the three alternative faiths and when they are expected to be taught in the school.
- Art. Standards remain average by the end of Year 2 with the pupils making expected progress. This continues to be the case in Years 3 and 4, but slows in Year 5 and 6 and by the time the pupils leave the school standards are below average. This is because teacher expertise in pitching work at an appropriate level is not good enough. As such, work is insufficiently demanding and artistic skills are not sufficiently well developed by the oldest pupils.

10. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well in relation to their earlier attainment. Pupils are identified early and targets are set to address their needs. The school provides a range of additional help, including extra help from the teacher or learning support assistants within the class and additional support from the special needs co-ordinator, either individually or in small groups. Pupils work hard to achieve their individual targets, and make good progress as a result of the good focussed support they receive. The provision for the pupils who have been identified as being gifted or talented is good and they achieve well in their special fields.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good as they were at the time of the last inspection. They enjoy coming to school, and make very good relationships with the adults who care for them. Good habits are established as soon as they come into school. In all the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes and responses were generally good or very good.

12. The pupils move around the school sensibly. At the start of each school session they line up quickly and wait quietly. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection.

Where there are pupils with identified behavioural difficulties they work hard to achieve their targets and generally conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour. At the parents' meeting and in discussions with the pupils in school, it was reported that any incident was dealt with promptly and effectively. During playtimes the pupils show consideration for each other, for example a boisterous game of football was being played in one area of the playground, without impinging on other activities going on elsewhere. The pupils are well mannered and confident in talking to adults. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided and pupils have the opportunity to participate in sporting competitions in football, cross-country and netball.

13. Relationships are very good. The staff know their pupils very well and have established effective systems to ensure that they encourage the pupils to work towards their potential. In most classes observed, a pleasant, easy rapport was evident between staff and pupils. The pupils know their teachers will help them with their work, although as one Year 4 pupil quite rightly commented, *'if it's a test they won't help us, because they want to see what we can do'*. The personal development of the pupils is good. The school provides opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility, for example as register monitors. However, although pupils at the upper end of the school have various responsibilities, such as helping at lunchtimes and in the excellent weekly 'paired reading' sessions, there are fewer opportunities for younger children to take responsibility. The pupils have some opportunity to reflect on the feelings of others and they show consideration for each other. However, opportunities for them to make choices about how they complete their work or to evaluate their own and other pupils' work are limited.

14. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with most other schools. The registers are marked consistently and correctly. Pupils generally arrive in time for the start of the day and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good and almost half is very good. The pupils are taught well in the Foundation Stage, infant and junior classes. More than anything else, this explains the overall good achievement made by the pupils. This represents significant improvement since the last inspection, when although the teaching was judged to be good, more lessons were sound and fewer were very good. The overall quality of teaching is very good in English and mathematics. It is consistently good in science, ICT, music and physical education. The teaching of art is sound in the infant department and Years 3 and 4, but unsatisfactory for the older pupils, because subject knowledge is less secure and expectations of what the pupils can achieve are too low. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects.

16. The pupils of all levels of attainment respond well to the good teaching, making good progress in the vast majority of lessons. Almost all teaching builds successfully on the very good attitudes to learning that the children bring to school. There are common features to most good lessons. The key characteristics of lessons where the teaching is successful and the pupils achieve well are:

- There is a clear expectation that learning will take place. Teachers plan well and share the lesson objectives with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Similarly, at the end of the lesson, the teachers refer back to the expected outcomes to ensure that the learning has been secured. This helps the pupils to appreciate the relevance of their learning. Pupils say that teachers are *'very good at explaining what the lesson is about, the learning objective'*.
- Lessons start promptly and time is used very effectively.
- Teachers generally know their subjects well and use the correct technical, subject-based language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of each subject. For instance,

older pupils understand the meaning of a 'rest', 'quaver' and 'crotchet' as they read music. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the meaning of 'insulator' in science as they investigate the best materials for keeping ice as a solid.

- There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils, which encourage the pupils to think and respond freely as they work as a class or as part of a small group. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development. Pupils say that *'all the teachers are good'*. Likewise, the pupils' behaviour is very well managed and there is never a need for them to be admonished.
- Expectations are high of what will be achieved and pupils know this to be the case. They say that their teachers *'help us, but expect us to work hard'* and *'if you don't finish your work you miss playtimes or take it home'*.
- Teachers assess and track the pupils' progress in very great detail. They use the information they gather to pinpoint the pupils' future learning.
- The learning support staff are well briefed by the teachers and make a valuable contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning. There is a strong team spirit between teachers and support staff.

17. Much of the best teaching occurs in English and mathematics lessons. The most significant factor is the consistently very good teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. All teachers have a good understanding of the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy. They are able to convey this to the pupils in such a way that they learn very effectively, from early in the reception class to when they leave at the end of Year 6. Most lessons move at a fast pace with a wide variety of teaching techniques. The teachers' questioning skills are skilful and challenge pupils to think about their work. In return, the pupils are totally engaged; they maintain interest and tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentration. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are well established and make a significant impact on how well the pupils achieve in each class. The junior setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy are now embedded and have a positive impact on the high standards being achieved by the time the pupils leave the school. In part this is because the pupils are taught in smaller groups. It is also because the teachers are planning for a narrower attainment range, enabling them to match the work more accurately to the capability of the pupils.

18. The weakness in the teaching is the lack of sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative. The teachers generally overly direct the activity and therefore there is little room for error. The choices available for the pupils are too limited. For example in one observed science lesson, the equipment and materials were well prepared and placed on tables. However, this prevented the pupils from suggesting and finding alternative insulating materials to use in their investigation.

19. Good teaching of ICT supports learning in other subjects as well as developing the pupils' ICT skills. The pupils' very good relationships and support for each other were particularly evident in the 'sharing' assembly, where each class demonstrated their work in ICT. This ranged from the youngest pupils demonstrating their developing keyboard skills in writing their first name to the multi-media presentations of the oldest pupils.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are taught in small withdrawn groups and in whole class settings. Each has an individual education plan (IEP) that contains clear practical targets. Work is planned to address these targets, and good support is given to the pupils by learning support assistants in lessons, and by the special needs co-ordinator in withdrawn groups. The school's learning support assistants are well trained to meet the needs of the pupils. The special needs co-ordinator knows the individual needs of each pupil well. He shows good expertise in his teaching and the very good relationships and sensitive but focussed approach ensure that these pupils achieve well in relation to their prior learning.

Good use is made of other professionals, as and when they are needed. The one pupil identified by the school as being gifted in mathematics and the two with a particular talent in sport are taught well; they receive appropriate support and extension and they achieve well. There are some pupils who have recently benefited from additional music tuition. They make good progress in lessons and are achieving well.

21. The teachers have very secure knowledge of the standards and achievement of the pupils. They make very good use of assessment to plan the next stage of their teaching and to give feedback on how the pupils can improve their standards. The marking of the pupils' work is very good overall and exemplary in classes containing younger pupils. Good use is made of agreeing targets for improvement with pupils.

22. A small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction over the school's provision of homework, although the concern was as much to do with too much homework as too little. The inspectors found that the quantity and quality of homework are generally good. These opportunities help the pupils to develop the organisational and independent study skills, which they will need on transfer to secondary school. However, the inspectors agree that there are inconsistencies in how homework is presented to the pupils and what happens to it on completion and that this causes concern for some parents.

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

23. As at the time of the last inspection, the overall curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are good. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. It is relevant to meet the needs of all pupils in the Foundation Stage and the infants and juniors. The curriculum for religious education conforms to the locally agreed syllabus. Sex education and drugs awareness form part of a programme of personal and social development, but the scheme of work for this area needs further development. Provision for pupils with special educational needs remains good, as it was at the last inspection, and pupils are well supported, either in withdrawn groups or in the class, by dedicated learning support assistants.

24. Although there is a heavy emphasis on teaching English and mathematics, all other areas of the curriculum are given appropriate amounts of time. However, subjects such as art and design technology are often 'blocked', so there are times when pupils do not receive regular exposure to all subjects; this is having a negative impact on standards in art at the top end of the school. The strategies for numeracy and literacy are used well to develop pupils' skills and raise standards. However, there is a need to provide pupils with more opportunities to do longer pieces of writing, so extending their creativity, in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. A Year 3 pupil who is particularly gifted in mathematics has his needs catered for well at this time. He is able to join much older pupils for his lessons and this ensures that he is appropriately challenged. Thought has already been given to how these needs can be met as he gets older, and there are plans to involve other teaching establishments. Pupils who receive additional musical tuition are withdrawn from lessons, but care is taken so that the same lessons are not constantly missed.

25. The school has moved forward in developing pupils' skills in art, ICT and design technology, which were all highlighted as needing improvement in the last inspection. Schemes of work have been developed which clearly identify a progression of skills to be learned in all these subjects. This has helped to raise standards particularly in ICT. Subject leaders monitor their subjects closely to ensure that standards are rising. All foundation subjects are taught using a two-year cycle to accommodate the mixed-age classes, which ensures that there is no undue repetition of topics. English and mathematics are taught in

three groups in the junior school, set by prior attainment. Now that this is embedded in the school it is helping to raise standards. The governing body is very well informed about curriculum matters and gives very good support.

26. Extra-curricular provision remains good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school, including choir, recorders, book club, guitars, gymnastics, chess and computer clubs. All pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in any extra-curricular activities that the school might provide. The school competes in many inter-school events, including football, swimming and cross-country. The school makes good use of the local peripatetic music service to give pupils the opportunity to learn a woodwind instrument, the guitar or to play the drums. Regular visits, to places of local interest and further afield, form an important part of the curriculum for each class. For example, the older pupils have the opportunity to attend a biannual residential camp where they develop their social skills, build their self-esteem, and enhance their learning.

27. The curriculum is suitably adapted for pupils with special educational needs. Policies and procedures meet statutory requirements. There are good identification procedures, which ensure that pupils' needs are picked up and addressed very early. Pupils with special educational needs have individual programmes of work and are set specific targets to meet their individual needs. Their progress is closely monitored according to these targets, which are regularly reviewed. A weakness is that although parents are involved in the reviews of pupils' progress, they are not given targets to help their children at home and report on this progress. The Trailblazers group of older pupils engages in specially designed outings to address their particular needs. This results in increased motivation and improved attitudes to work for these pupils, whilst furthering their academic targets. A range of outside agencies support the school when appropriate, and specialist resources are supplied to aid pupils' learning. For example, a pupil with visual impairment has a sloped board to aid his vision. The school is therefore successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to all activities regardless of their gender, special needs or particular gifts or talents.

28. The curriculum is enriched by good overall provision for social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. This represents similar findings to the last inspection. However, moral development has improved and is now very good. Cultural provision has also improved, from being sound to good. However, the provision for spiritual development, previously seen to be good, is now sound. All the teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils' achievements are recognised and celebrated. Parents are welcome into school and express satisfaction with the values and attitudes it promotes.

29. Spiritual development is well promoted through assemblies and religious education, although less successfully through other subjects of the National Curriculum. It is clear from the way that pupils relate to each other and the adults around them, that they are developing a set of values that inform their perspective on life. They are developing a sense of empathy and show concern and compassion for others, locally, nationally and globally. However, there are missed opportunities in some subjects, for example art, music and science, for experiences to be planned into lessons to more fully develop the spiritual aspect.

30. The provision for social development is good and moral development is very good. Teachers and support staff set very good examples and encourage and reward good behaviour. All pupils are taught right from wrong and to respect the views of others. Many pupils make significant efforts to maintain the good quality environment of their school, for example, in clearing the hall and setting out chairs, music and equipment. The high expectations of staff for pupils to be honest, co-operative and well mannered are reflected in the very good daily behaviour of pupils. Relationships are very good and reflect the school's

aims and values. Pupils are considerate and make visitors feel welcome. Class rules are discussed early in each academic year and displayed to remind the pupils of what they agreed. The excellent 'paired reading' arrangement enables older and younger pupils to share ideas and skills both socially and intellectually. Some pupils in the older classes are 'computer experts', and take responsibility for equipment and supporting other pupils in their classes. Older pupils have good opportunities to develop maturity through residential visits. They learn the importance of helping others less fortunate than themselves and support charities, including Barnado's Action for Children and orphans in Romania. Pupils gain a good understanding of the environmental challenges facing developing countries; for example the older pupils discuss the current situation in Afghanistan.

31. The school makes good provision for cultural development. Within the curriculum, pupils have opportunity to listen to and appreciate live music, for example when local peripatetic musicians and a samba band recently performed in the school. The school is regularly visited by the Knee High Theatre group. The Year 5 and 6 pupils visit London to see *The Lion King*. Overall, the pupils have good access to live drama. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to explore their own cultural assumptions and values by studying their own local Cornish culture. Over the past two years they have developed partnership visits with Rotherhithe Junior School, a multi-ethnic school in London, to begin to understand the values and traditions of other cultures. The school's cultural values are further expressed through displays and the use of visual artefacts, for instance the Jewish Torah, which is on show within the school. In food technology lessons, junior pupils bake naan bread and make a vegetable bhajji in their topic work about India.

32. The school makes good use of links with the community to extend pupils' learning as it did at the time of the last inspection. Members from the local police force and local churches visit regularly and the school takes part in numerous village activities. Pupils enter competitions, and for example won the Marks and Spencer Poetry Award. The school is a member of the local cluster of schools where staff and pupils benefit from close liaison with these schools.

33. There are good links between the school and its partner institutions. Links with the local playgroup, which a majority of the children attend before they join the reception class, help to ensure continuity in children's learning. There are equally good links with the local secondary school to which the pupils transfer. Pupils attend induction days at the secondary school prior to transfer, and together with visits of the secondary school staff to see the pupils, a smooth transfer to the next stage of education is ensured.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good; those for personal support and guidance are good. Both teaching and support staff know the pupils very well and are responsive to any concerns about them. Relationships within the school are very good. The last inspection team also reported similar findings.

35. The school has given appropriate consideration to the security of the site. Regular safety checks are carried out and suitable arrangements are in place for first aid. The school has a designated teacher for child protection, who has undertaken training and is familiar with the procedures. Staff are alert to the signs and know whom to contact. Good relationships exist with other agencies that come into the school. The school has a successful Trailblazers group, an initiative to refocus a few pupils on a range of positive activities. The education welfare officer does not make regular visits to the school, but is available if needed. There are good systems in place to encourage attendance. The school uses a computer program to analyse attendance and this is checked regularly to ensure that no patterns of absence are

emerging. However, although the school telephones parents to check unexplained absences this is not until a pupil has been away for three days.

36. The school is very successful in promoting good behaviour, with a policy that is consistently applied by all staff. The pupils know what is expected of them and feel involved in the formulating of their class rules, which are displayed in each class. Each week there is an assembly to celebrate the pupils' achievements. The parents at the pre-inspection meeting were confident that class teachers were very approachable and responsive to any concerns that they expressed. They also reported, and the inspectors agreed, that the pupils were polite and well mannered.

37. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the wealth of information that has been collected and analysed has been skilfully directed towards identifying actions that improve individual and overall school performance. The school provides compelling statistical evidence in the evaluation of pupil progress. There is close tracking of individual pupil performance from the reception class to Year 6. The initial assessment of the pupils as they enter the school, the subsequent significant testing arrangements for each year group and the analysis of this data provide a very good picture of what the pupils can and cannot do. The teachers use this data well when planning work to build on the pupils' previous learning. Learning support assistants staff play a particularly valuable role in noting down the many and varied contributions of pupils, during literacy and numeracy sessions and in other lessons. This is complemented by highly consistent, informative, written feedback provided in copious detail to all pupils in their books, by their teachers. Such detail reflects the positive pupil-teacher discussion, which underpins the good progress made by all pupils. All pupils are involved in contributing to their own targets in literacy and numeracy and to the collection of work for their own records of achievement. The effectiveness of these very good assessment procedures are increasing the likelihood that, subject to pupil mobility, overall school targets for English, mathematics and science over the next two years are likely to be met and possibly exceeded. The quality of information provided to parents, on their child's progress, through reports and termly meetings is very good. Comments in reading and homework diaries are used effectively as a means of daily communication between parents and teachers.

38. The headteacher and staff respond sympathetically to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There is a caring ethos within the school, where disadvantaged pupils are valued and they are made to feel wanted and cared for. Their academic and personal attainments are monitored well by the special needs co-ordinator. Assessments are carried out regularly to track the progress that pupils with special educational needs make against their own targets. These targets are reviewed regularly and new targets set when appropriate, to ensure the pupils' learning continuously develops.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The last inspection team found that the school had established a very good working partnership with parents and this has been maintained. The pre-inspection parents' meeting and questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school. The school has an open door policy for any parent wishing to discuss matters or share concerns. Almost all of the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire feel comfortable about approaching the school and value having reasonable access to the headteacher and other teaching staff.

40. The school has very good links with the parents. Newsletters are sent home every fortnight so all parents know when to expect them. In addition, at the beginning of the autumn

term, each class teacher supplies an outline of the topic areas that will be covered for each curriculum subject during the year. Parents' meetings are held each term. In the autumn and summer term these are particularly for parents who have particular concerns about their child. In the spring term most parents attend to review the progress of their child since the last report and to set targets to be achieved by the summer. The annual summer reports are very thorough and give a clear idea of the progress and achievement of individual children. Teachers set realistic targets for the children, in consultation with the parents, which has a positive impact on their learning. The very good informal contacts between teachers and parents mean that any concerns can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

41. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the work their children complete at home and they have a positive impact on their children's achievements. There were some concerns expressed, at the pre-inspection meeting and through the questionnaires, about the provision of homework. In some cases this was as much to do with too much homework being set as too little. Inspectors found the quantity of homework to be appropriate for pupils of this age. However, they agree with parents that a more consistent and well-understood approach to homework could help parents to provide more effective help at home. In their questionnaire responses a few parents (12 per cent) also expressed concern about the range of extra-curricular activities available to the children. The inspectors found that, for a school of this size and the number of adults employed, the provision was good.

42. Parents who have pupils with special educational needs are involved at every stage of the Code of Practice. They are fully informed of the school's practice, and invited to attend meetings where their child's progress is discussed. However, there are no targets on the pupils' individual plans to enable parents to help at home.

43. A number of parents help in the school on a regular basis, either in class or with particular projects or excursions. The thriving Parent and Friends Group continues to support the school through arranging a variety of events and activities. Raising in excess of £3000 per year, most recently their efforts have supported the development of ICT.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. There are clear links between management decisions and actions and the continual improvements in standards and provision since the last inspection. The headteacher, subject leaders and governors work together very effectively as a team to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and plan for improvement. There is a strong commitment to improvement and very good capacity to succeed. Policies are implemented with a high degree of consistency. The aims and values of the school are very well met through the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and in the very good ethos of the school. The good support for pupils with special educational needs and those that are gifted or talented reflects the inclusive nature of the school, ensuring that all the pupils get a fair deal by being at the school. The very good improvement in the school since the last inspection owes much to the very good leadership and management. Despite being found to be 'good' by the last inspection, leadership and management are clearly much improved since then. For instance, the weaknesses in leadership and management, identified in the last inspection report, have all been successfully addressed.

45. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He has been very influential in establishing and maintaining the strong emphasis on academic success, particularly for the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Whilst he provides very clear direction, that is raising standards, he effectively maintains the strong pastoral ethos of the school. Working in a relationship of strong teamwork with the staff, there is a

secure collective understanding of what is working well in the school and what needs to be improved. This is achieved through the very good professional dialogue that takes place amongst all the staff and through the very thorough and accurate tracking of the pupils attainment and progress. The emphasis on good teaching and high expectations of what all pupils can achieve is paying dividends, clearly evident in the well above average results being achieved in English and mathematics by pupils who start the school with below average abilities.

46. The school has successfully established the role of the subject leader for each National Curriculum subject, and religious education, as one of giving strategic direction to raise standards. The headteacher is able to delegate well and let staff get on with the job, giving them responsibility for planning and implementing improvements. The subject leadership role is operating well, with the exception of art where leadership has yet to have an impact on the standards achieved by the oldest pupils. There are opportunities for all subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the improvements in their subjects. This was seen as a weakness in the last inspection and is now a strong area of the school's work. All subject leaders are given time to observe and feedback on teaching, sample pupils' work and establish a picture of the pupils' standards and achievement in each subject. The subject leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. This is translated into appropriate subject improvement plans. However, the plans do not always prioritise the most important actions that will further improve the quality of provision and the pupils' achievements. In addition, actions for improvement are not always costed and subject leaders cannot be totally sure whether their plans can be realised in practice.

47. The governors provide a very good level of support for the school. They are well informed about the work of the school and its performance and form an integral part of the school team. For example:

- They have a committee structure that works successfully. They meet regularly and have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
- They meet with all staff to discuss the most appropriate priorities for inclusion in the school improvement plan. This is very good practice. The governors are now aiming to widen the consultation process to seek the views of parents and pupils on further ways in which the school could improve. This will ensure that all parties work towards common goals and understand the most pressing priorities for the school.
- They have very good arrangements for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of key spending decisions and their impact on the pupils' learning. Financial planning is related to focused educational priorities. For example, the governors and staff are committed to retaining the small classes for the younger pupils and the third teacher in the juniors so that pupils can continue to be taught in three sets for English and mathematics. These are key factors in why the pupils are achieving well in the school. The budget surplus, that the school had accumulated, is being well used to enable these arrangements to continue for as long as possible.
- The principles of 'best value' are very well understood and applied. For example, the school makes an annual saving of almost £7000 by opting to organise its own maintenance contracts. The secretary, as 'finance officer' and 'clerk to the governors' is very effective in promoting and securing 'best value' from purchases on a day-to-day basis. Both her administrative procedures and financial control are to be commended.
- They receive written reports from the headteacher and each subject leader following 'non-contact' time for observations of teaching, pupils' work and planning. These reports are thorough and provide governors with a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in each subject.
- They monitor the work of the school themselves, both formally and informally. This may be to understand more about an area of the curriculum or to gain information about other

aspects of the school. For example, there has recently been a visit with a focus on finance.

48. The school's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its performance are very good. This represents significant improvement since the time of the last inspection when these arrangements were seen to be in need of development. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are very good. Teaching is regularly observed by the headteacher, subject leaders and is well supported by governors. There are good systems for monitoring the work of pupils in each year group. The headteacher and teachers keep a close track of pupils' progress. Standardised tests are also used to support the tracking of progress and attainment. Test results are carefully analysed, weaknesses are highlighted and teaching programmes adapted to meet needs. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and monitored, both by the school and the link adviser from the county. The success of these procedures is apparent from the amount of good and very good teaching evident and the improving standards seen, particularly in English and mathematics. All data is used very well to evaluate the school's success in enabling the pupils to build on their prior attainment as they move through the school, i.e. the school's added value.

49. The school provides all its pupils with equal opportunity to learn and achieve. This includes those with special educational needs, who are well supported in lessons, and those with a special gift or talent whose needs are catered for well. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership. He has considerable expertise in dealing with pupils in need and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Thorough records are kept for every pupil on the register. All paperwork is kept up to date, and all monies are carefully allocated so that statement provision is guaranteed. He liaises well with the special needs governor so that the governing body is well informed concerning all matters relating to special needs.

50. The school has a generous number of teaching and support staff to meet curriculum requirements, a priority in the forward financial planning by staff and governors. This has a positive impact on the achievements of all pupils. The teaching staff are appropriately qualified to meet the teaching and management requirements of the curriculum. One has recently received the accolade of being recognised as an 'advanced skills teacher', which should have an impact on other teachers, both those in the school and wider afield. There are very good procedures in place for the performance management of staff. There are annual appraisals for all staff, with targets that reflect school priorities and individual needs. This is very good practice and reflects the strong team spirit in the school. In being awarded 'Investors in People' status there is recognition of the effectiveness of Performance Management systems and the induction processes for new staff, in that all staff understand how they contribute to achieving the school's aims and values.

51. The school's accommodation is very good and is very well utilised, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Indeed, the provision of a further classroom is an additional bonus for the school, enabling the literacy and numeracy sets to be taught in separate classrooms. The quantity and quality of learning resources are generally satisfactory. The exception is the provision of non-fiction books in the library. Here, there is an insufficient range and quantity of books to support independent learning. The resources to support ICT are good, improved since the last inspection. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. There have been improvements to the external play areas since the last inspection. For example, there is more fixed equipment for the pupils to use in lessons and enjoy at playtimes. However, the environmental area is still underdeveloped and underused as a learning resource. The school's income and expenditure are above average. Nevertheless, given the good teaching and the difference that this makes to the pupils' achievements by the

time they leave. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Provide more opportunities for the pupils to write longer pieces of work in English and other subjects, by:

- using curriculum time in other subjects, particularly in history, geography and religious education, for pupils to write at length;
- revising curriculum time to enable some writing to be completed over a two-day period;
- encouraging more use of research notes to improve context and setting information in developing story plots.

(See paragraphs 24, 66, 91, 98 and 121)

2. Improve standards in art by the time the pupils leave the school, by:

- raising the level of teachers' subject knowledge and confidence, so that they can help pupils to progressively develop their skills as they get older;
- ensuring that all elements of art are given sufficient curriculum time;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to study a wide range of different artistic styles;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use their imagination, express their own ideas and feelings and look critically at their own work and that of others to further improve their work.

(See paragraphs 9, 15, 24, 46, and 82 - 85)

In addition, the governors should also consider including in the action plan:

- Improving the range and quantity of non-fiction books in the library to facilitate greater choice for independent learning (see paragraphs 51, 64, 81, 99, and 122);
- Planning more opportunities in the curriculum where the pupils are able to make choices, find out information for themselves and plan their own investigations (see paragraphs 7, 13, 18, 54, 75, 78, 81, 84 and 122);
- Ensuring consistency in 'action planning' by subject leaders, particularly in prioritising the steps to be taken and identifying the costs involved (see paragraph 46);
- Providing consistency in the way homework is presented to pupils and how it is marked (see paragraph 22, 67);
- Extending the provision for the development of pupils' spiritual awareness within the curriculum (see paragraphs 29, 84 and 109);
- Further development of the environmental area as a learning resource (see paragraphs 51 and 81).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	13	5	0	0	0
Percentage	3	36	33	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		105
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		21

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	13	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (89)	94 (95)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	7
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (89)	88 (95)	88 (95)
	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	8	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	6	6	7
	Total	12	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (81)	80 (69)	100 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	11	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (75)	73 (75)	93 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.1
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	255279
Total expenditure	259466
Expenditure per pupil	2298
Balance brought forward from previous year	10104
Balance carried forward to next year	14917

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	105
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	44	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	41	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	50	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	56	12	0	0
The teaching is good.	47	53	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	56	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	25	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	25	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	47	6	6	3

Other issues raised by parents

The pre-inspection meeting was attended by 17 parents. The parents were very complimentary in their responses. There were generally very positive remarks concerning teaching, behaviour, the standards the pupils attain and the progress children make, the leadership of the headteacher and the wide range of social events organised by the Parent and Friends Group. There were concerns expressed about the provision of homework. The main concerns were:

- either too much or too little being set;
- inconsistencies in how exercises are presented to pupils and the effectiveness of feedback through marking.

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

52. The provision for children in the reception class, now known as the Foundation Stage, is good. This is the same judgement as at the time of the last inspection. The children start full-time schooling in the term in which they are five, but have all had the benefit of two terms of part-time schooling in the 'nursery unit' organised by the school.

53. There is a range of attainment on entry to school but overall the majority of pupils are below average against the Cornwall Baseline Assessment Scheme and a few are well below average. A small number attain standards that are average, generally the older children who have spent a longer time in the school. Overall, the children are below average in all six areas of learning. By the time they complete the Foundation Stage most children will have attained the expected early learning goals, with particular strengths in personal and social development. This represents good achievement, the same judgement as made at the last inspection. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, according to the length of time they have been in the school.

54. The key reason why children achieve well during their first year at school is that the quality of teaching is mostly good and occasionally very good. It is also because the headteacher and governors are committed to keeping the class size small so that the children get the best possible start to school life. The teacher and nursery assistant work very well together and carefully support the children in all aspects of their work. All activities are well planned, providing for good variety and coverage of the six areas of learning. Children's books give evidence of how well they are achieving given their short time in the school. The teacher 'marks' their work, with exemplary annotations. This helps the reader know the level of help received and whether the lesson objective was achieved. She maintains thorough records of the children's achievements and monitors and evaluates their progress very well. She has high expectations of the children and lessons proceed very smoothly. As a result, the pupils undertake all that is asked of them with energy and enthusiasm. They enjoy lessons and work with a will, whether on tasks the teacher directs them to do or where they are allowed to choose for themselves. However, during group activities the children are too often overly guided and there is insufficient consideration given to allowing pupils to learn by their mistakes.

55. The reception teacher provides clear direction for the work in the Foundation Stage. Displays are informative and instructive with appropriate examples of children's work being celebrated. The accommodation, both inside and out, is very good. It is spacious and used very effectively to enhance learning. The school has appropriate induction procedures, linking with the local playgroup, which is attended by approximately three-quarters of the children. A sound programme of meetings and visits prior to entry helps to ensure a confident start to school life. Parents are supportive of their children's work at home and in school.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. Children achieve particularly well in their personal and social development and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, attainment in this area of learning is generally above what is expected nationally. This reflects the skilful teaching, where the children are continually encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. They come into school happily

and quickly learn the routines of the class and the school day. Their behaviour is very good at all times; they listen attentively and show interest in their work. They organise themselves for work activities with minimum fuss. When working without the direct supervision of staff they stay on task and show good skills of independence. Similarly, they show respect for their classroom and treat equipment with care. Within the class, the children co-operate well, share ideas and appreciate the contributions of others. This was evident in a very good lesson, where the children reflected on facial expressions and how these can convey different moods, through playing the 'Mr Balloon' game. They memorised and recited the rhyme as a class, saying '*Mr Balloon, Mr Balloon, how do you feel today?*' In turn, one child selected a balloon, responding for example with '*Today he feels excited*'. To the class question '*Mr Balloon, Mr Balloon, why do feel excited?*' the child responded '*because he's going to the fair!*' There were very good gains in learning by all the pupils, both in their personal and social development as well as in skills of speaking and listening. The teacher and nursery assistant continually reinforce the importance of remembering the class rules, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and is key to the success the children achieve.

Communication, language and literacy

57. This area of learning is very well taught and children achieve well during their time in the reception class. By the end of the year all children, with the exception of those with learning difficulties, are reaching the early learning goal. The children listen attentively at all times and this is one reason why they make good progress. It is also because they are clear what they are expected to learn and what they need to do to improve. They agree targets with their teacher. For instance, one child's target is '*to write the m in Thomas*' and for another child it is '*to be able to read ten key words*'. The majority of children are developing good language and literacy skills. Most of the children who attend full time are now reading simple texts and all know the majority of letter sounds and letter names. An excellent initiative is the support from the junior pupils to undertake 'paired reading' sessions on a weekly basis. Here, with the older pupils assuming responsibility, they hear a child read, check letter sounds and key words and write in the home-school books before reading a story to the child. One younger pupil was clear about the value of this session, saying '*He helps me with some of the words I don't know and to recognise words I've seen before*'. The Year 4 pupil responded with '*She's reading more clearly now and she can sound her letters*'. The home-school reading record is effective and parents play a valuable part in helping their children practise letter sounds and names as well as learning key words and hearing them read. The children are taught to hold a pencil and form letters correctly. Many are in the early stages of constructing simple sentences. All children recognise and write their own names. Elements of the Literacy Framework are well used by the teacher. For example, when looking at the book '*Duck in a Truck*' they are becoming familiar with speech bubbles and rhyming words. They listen to stories attentively and particularly enjoy using the props in the 'story sacks' that have been expertly made by a willing band of volunteer parents.

Mathematical development

58. The children make good progress and achieve well in this area of learning. By the time they complete the year all children, with the exception of those with learning difficulties, will have acquired a good understanding of numbers and reached the early learning goal. This is because the teacher is very confident in how to teach the pupils the initial aspects of number. They sequence pictures, days of the week and events. For instance, an above average child wrote '*Yesterday I had cornflakes. Today I had cocoa-pops. Tomorrow I am going to have sugar puffs*'. All pupils are familiar with number rhymes and counting games. The majority of reception children understand numbers to ten, can count to twenty and some beyond. Through formal recording and practical contexts children are learning to understand number

operations, such as addition, subtraction, more than and less than. For example, in ordering numbers, they know that 'six comes immediately after five and that it is one more than five'. All recognise the names and properties of simple shapes. For example, in producing a picture of a machine they used and could name circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. They learn the language associated with length, for instance when making shorter and longer snakes or when describing the shortest and tallest characters in their reading books. They recognise the symmetry of a butterfly and can match the same number of spots to each wing. They are beginning to understand and interpret simple graphs, for instance one of 'our favourite crisps'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

59. Children are making good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them as a result of good teaching and good coverage of the area of learning. By the end of the Foundation Stage the vast majority will have attained the early learning goal. They undertake early science activities, for instance they learn about electricity and can sort toys into those that need batteries and those that need mains power. With adult help they can complete an electrical circuit to light a bulb. They learn the difference between past, present, today and tomorrow through sequencing events in their own lives on a time line. They compare life in St Erme with life in a village in a hot country. In their work on machines the children use a variety of modelling materials to make robots. They select the most appropriate materials and decide how to join them together. They annotate their final products, for example *'My name is Scarecrow. I like to walk around. I like to eat carrots and fish and drink milk. I like children'*. The children are well supported by ICT. For example, they can 'instruct' the Roamer to move from one rhyming word to another. They understand how to clear the memory, to set forwards and backwards and can self-correct when instructions are wrong. They use the computer with confidence. For example, in a whole school celebratory assembly a few children demonstrated how to use the keyboard to write their name. They could use the shift key and backspace, showing good co-ordination and use of the mouse. The children listen to stories from the Bible and know this is a special book. For instance, after listening to a simplified story, The Wise Man and the Silly Man, the children used either small construction apparatus or sticks and sand to construct houses. They chattered happily as they worked together, saying *'I'll be your friend making the house'* and *'that's a good house'*. They had listened well to the story, knowing *'I'm making a house in the sand like the silly man did'*. In understanding what is silly about building a house in the sand, the immediate response was *'because it would fall over'*.

Physical development

60. Limited evidence comes from one lesson, thorough planning, photographs of the children at work and observations at playtimes. It is not possible to make an accurate judgement on the quality of teaching in this area of learning. However, through very good access and opportunity to develop physical skills, it is anticipated that the vast majority of children will meet the expectations for this area by the end of the Foundation Stage. The children have appropriate access to the hall for physical activities. Photographic evidence of a PE lesson suggests that the children develop skills in balancing on the floor, on mats and on benches. In a follow-up to a lesson on road safety the children used bikes in the hall to cross a zebra crossing. Here, they demonstrated they could move forwards, backwards and stop as requested. In working with toy cars and a floor road map in the classroom the children then refined fine motor skills, showing good hand and eye co-ordination to ensure that their cars stayed on the roads. There are good opportunities in the classrooms for children to handle tools and construction equipment. The outdoor space is safe and includes a covered area. It is used to full advantage in lesson times and at playtimes. There is good storage space for the ample big toys and there is good quality climbing apparatus to enhance the development

of physical skills.

Creative development

61. Children enter the reception class with a variety of artistic and musical skills. They are given numerous opportunities to develop, practise and refine these skills and by the end of the year will be attaining standards in line with expectations. This is because the teaching is good and there is good planning to meet the requirements. A range of media is available to encourage creative development and all children are given opportunities to enjoy art and craft activities. They learn to mix colours. They are given sufficient opportunities to design and plan their own work. For example, in making a 'shape' picture of a machine the children cut shapes fairly accurately with scissors and use glue to join the different parts together. In music, they make the story of the Happy Hedgehog Band more effective by using tambours and body parts to play the rhythm 'Tum Tum Te Tum'. Here, they made very good suggestions about how to create the rhythm using body parts, such as 'hands clapping on knees', the 'use of voices' or 'stamping our feet'. The children develop imaginative role-play skills through linking with topics. During the week of the inspection the theme was Bob the Builder. Here, there were opportunities for telephone conversations, a play clock for making appointments, paper and pens for keeping a diary, a till for taking money and a box of items needing mending.

ENGLISH

62. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven the standards that the pupils attain are above average and that by the age of eleven the standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Considering that the pupils start school with standards that are below average this represents very good achievement overall. It also represents very good improvement since the last inspection, where standards were seen to be average with the pupils making sound progress. The improvement in standards is in part due to the very good teaching in the infant department over the past four years, which has resulted in the pupils entering Year 3 with standards that are above average or higher. Then, in the juniors there is continued very good teaching. It is also the result of other initiatives the school has recently instigated, for instance the placing of the junior pupils in sets for literacy, generally organised according to prior attainment, also the commitment by the governors to retain smaller classes for the younger pupils. The school makes effective use of the National Literacy Strategy, which underpins the quality of the school achievements. The pupils cover a very good range of texts and literacy structures. The standards of the younger pupils are seen to be rising, with a higher proportion of pupils making very good progress and looking likely to attain Level 5 by the time they leave the school. There are no major differences in the attainment of boys or girls. The targets set for 2002, which have recently been revised upwards, although challenging, are likely to be met if not exceeded. The targets set for 2003 are also, based on present analysis, likely to be exceeded.

63. As they move through school the vast majority of the pupils listen attentively and speak with growing confidence. This is helped by the very good relationships throughout the school. Teachers welcome and value what the pupils have to say so that they are confident and eager to take part in discussions. For example, in a good work assembly, the pupils have the opportunity to speak to a larger audience. Those chosen to do so spoke clearly, showing confidence and articulation, in explaining their work in ICT. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils carefully explained how a 'roamer' is used. By the time the pupils are in Years 5 and 6 they show, by their responses, that they listen attentively and adapt their speech to the views and questions of others. They enter into good dialogue with teachers and other pupils, for instance in history when talking about Henry VIII being a good or bad ruler, or in explaining the meaning of words or how cinquains are constructed in poetry.

64. In reading, most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, show the confidence and skill with which they use strategies such as phonics, picture clues and the meaning of text when meeting new and unfamiliar words. They persevere and self correct if difficulties are met. By the end of Year 2, all know their initial sounds and the vast majority know the blends, digraphs and phonemes. These pupils show a real interest in books, they know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, they read with expression and can talk easily about the characters in their books. There are excellent arrangements for 'paired reading' to take place. These sessions are thoroughly enjoyed by the recipients (the younger pupils), and the junior 'teachers' who make a good contribution to the achievements of the younger pupils in their reading. Teachers keep very detailed records of reading development and are supported by the comments parents make about their child's reading progress. By the time the pupils reach Year 6, nearly all are confident, fluent and accurate readers. They talk about the work of different authors, like Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith, using inference and deduction skills when referring to detail in the plot. The more able pupils are able to scan texts to locate the part they need, use a glossary and retrieve books from the school or local library. The vast majority of pupils demonstrate good attitudes to reading. The school has recognised the need to re-design and re-locate its existing library. Overall, there are insufficient non-fiction books within the central school library to support the curriculum or to enable the pupils to sufficiently seek information for themselves. Decisions also need to be taken on how teachers can enhance the quality and effectiveness of class fiction libraries.

65. In their writing, by Year 2 most of the pupils have developed their ideas into well-structured sentences because work builds carefully on what has gone before. They begin to use full stops and capital letters with accuracy. Year 3 and 4 pupils explore compound words, like butterfly and Penair, they understand the use of the first and second person in writing, they can break down words into syllables, and know how to write instructions. Their technical knowledge and use of specific vocabulary is extensive, when discussing how they can make improvements to their writing. By Year 6, most pupils are very competent writers. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in lessons. In a very good extended writing session, the pupils entered into very detailed and technical debate over the use of flashbacks in developing their story plots. They know from their own reading that names, like 'Colonel Butterworth Toast' create humour and are creative ways of engaging their audience. More able, Level 5 pupils, are quick to use indentation and produce complex sentences, interspersed with subordinate clauses. Throughout these and other lessons pupil concentration is high. Spellings are systematically taught throughout the school, with the pupils following the well tried 'look and cover' spelling strategies. Handwriting is exemplary and is the consequence of the consistent, methodical approach evident throughout the school. Effective use is also made of ICT for the pupils to present their work. The good integration of ICT, ably supported by learning support assistants, has successfully supported pupil interest and the standards being achieved in writing.

66. The overall quality of teaching is very good. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection, where it was generally satisfactory and often good. Teachers subject knowledge is very good. They have attended all the relevant literacy strategy training courses and this is reflected in the quality of their lessons. Lessons are characterised by high technical vocabulary, very good feedback to pupils, and very good questioning techniques. Teachers value what the pupils have to say so that all pupils respond happily, even if they make mistakes. The teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and constantly reinforce understanding by asking them to explain and describe their ideas, challenging them to improve their writing. Whilst pupils do produce quality pieces of extended writing, these tend to be on the short side. The school recognises that further

improvements can only come from finding time in other areas of the curriculum to write longer and more researched pieces of writing.

67. The subject is well co-ordinated. The subject leader, though new to the post, has a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and has produced a good action plan for the subject's development. The quality of assessment is exemplary in pupils' books and very good in the annual reports to parents. Analysis of National Curriculum test data and the use of reading tests has successfully aided the provision of accurate school targets, and helped to focus and match work to the individual needs of pupils. Homework is given to all pupils, to include reading and spelling practice. However, there are inconsistencies in how teachers present exercises and how effectively the pupils receive feedback. The subject leader monitors the teachers' planning and observes teaching, and these strategies will help ensure a sustained quality of improvement in future years. This is an improving area of the school and a strength of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

68. Since the last inspection, standards achieved by the pupils throughout the school have risen substantially, and many aspects of the way the subject is taught have improved. At that time standards were described as average. Now attainment by the age of seven is above average and, by the time the pupils leave school, standards are well above average. This represents very good achievement overall and is a result of the very good teaching throughout the school and the setting arrangements in the juniors. These setting arrangements ensure that there is a closer match of work to prior attainment. All pupils are being appropriately challenged, as there are good opportunities for pupils to move on to work, usually set for older pupils, once they have grasped the objectives set for their age group. At the last inspection it was considered that the pupils' ability to manipulate numbers to solve problems was in need of development. This is not the case now, as there is a strong emphasis on the methods used for calculations which ensures that pupils have a very good understanding of all they do. The good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a very positive impact on the pupils' ability to carry out mental calculations quickly and accurately. Pupils enter school with abilities in mathematical development that are below those expected for their age, and make continuous good progress throughout the school to enable them to reach standards that are above average when they leave. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress, as the work set matches their capabilities well, and the quality support they receive in class ensures they achieve as well as they are able. Assessment arrangements have improved and are now very thorough. Pupils' attainment is tracked throughout the school, and regular testing ensures that pupils are on track to meet their targets. These assessment results are used very well to plan further work and reinforce learning.

69. By the age of seven the majority of pupils have a good understanding of number and place value. The most able are easily able to count to 100, and carry out addition and subtraction problems with two-digit numbers. All pupils recognise and name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They know the difference between 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes; one Year 1 pupil proudly stated that *'2D shapes are flat'*. They identify the properties of simple shapes, such as a square has four equal sides, and they know terms such as 'faces', 'edges' and 'corners'. The most able use the known properties of three-dimensional shapes to help sort and name them. For example, they identify the shape as a cuboid when told it has six faces, with each face being the same shape. Some less able pupils still have problems with reversing their numbers, but adults in the class constantly reinforce this so that pupils are beginning to recognise the mistakes themselves.

70. By the time the pupils leave the school they have very good mathematical understanding of numbers. Very good teaching and secure subject knowledge are helping pupils to become confident in handling numbers, to choose different strategies for carrying out calculations, and to apply known facts to check that their answers are reasonable. The most able pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are taught together in a top set, and the most able of these can easily use all the number operations when carrying out calculations to two places of decimals. They are able to change mixed numbers to vulgar fractions and then to decimals. They use calculators to help them with changing fractions to decimals and then round their answers to two places. They effectively use their knowledge and understanding in real situations when problem solving, so that they appreciate the relevance of their learning. They use negative numbers when plotting co-ordinates in four quadrants, and use brackets confidently when carrying out simple equations. A few pupils in this set still struggle when using decimals. They have difficulty with identifying numbers when the place value of a digit is changed. The teacher's awareness of when pupils are experiencing these difficulties, and the support given, help to ensure that the pupils make good progress. Good provision is made in this set for a gifted Year 3 pupil who works well alongside his much older peers. In the middle set pupils learn different methods of multiplication, and use their well-developed mental skills to help them record sums in a variety of ways. These pupils have good understanding of place value, and how to multiply two and three digits by a single digit. In this set, however, there are several disruptive pupils who do not always work as hard as they could, and their progress, on occasions, is therefore not as good as their peers. However, the teacher has good strategies for encouraging them to do their best, so that overall good progress is maintained. In the lower attaining set there are many pupils who are on the school's special needs register. The teacher, who helps them enjoy their lessons whilst rigorously extending their knowledge and understanding, very sensitively handles these pupils' needs. They make good progress, and are able to add and subtract quantities of money with confidence. They use their knowledge to solve problems, and use strategies such as doubling, and near doubling to help them. Throughout the school the strengths in pupils' work lie in their ability to handle numbers. Good teaching strategies used during the mental mathematics sessions at the start of each lesson are increasing pupils' confidence to manipulate numbers. However, when problem solving, some lower attaining pupils find it difficult to identify which operation they should use.

71. Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school and this has had a major impact on the standards attained. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was described as usually good. Teachers have very good subject expertise, and plan appropriate activities well matched to the pupils' needs. Teachers use time effectively and during the introductory sessions they ensure that their pupils are quite clear about what they are to learn. Instructions are precise and previous work is reinforced before being extended. Very good use is made of day-to-day assessments to ensure that pupils who are experiencing difficulties clarify their understanding before moving on. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2, where the teacher makes detailed notes of what each child understands and any areas that need further practice. In the middle set the teacher uses her assessments of the previous lesson as the starting point for the next one. Teachers have a very clear picture of what each pupil can and cannot do to enable them to set appropriate work to extend pupils' learning continuously. Expectations are high and relationships are very good. This means that pupils are confident to ask for help, and are encouraged to evaluate their own understanding at the end of the lesson by indicating whether or not they have fully understood the objective for the lesson. The vast majority of pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They listen well, concentrate hard, and are eager to learn. There is a small group of older pupils who have difficulty concentrating for the whole session, but the teacher has good strategies for encouraging them to work and they respond well to rewards and praise. Correct mathematical language is emphasised throughout the school, so that even the very youngest pupils confidently use and understand mathematical terms.

Teachers, particularly in the infant class and in Years 3 and 4, emphasise basic literacy skills in their mathematics lessons so that these are developed well alongside mathematical skills. For example, reading skills are practised in Year 2 when pupils have to read questions aloud and in the lower attaining set pupils are reminded what 'cheap', 'cheaper', and 'cheapest' mean. Homework is set regularly, which gives pupils good opportunities to reinforce their learning often through problem solving.

72. Mathematical skills are developed well in other subjects such as science and ICT. For example, the pupils in Year 2 very successfully reinforce their sense of direction and their understanding of half and quarter turns when programming the Roamer. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 use data collected from a lunchtime survey to plot a variety of graphs on the computer. They use their mathematical skills to interpret these graphs and decide on the best presentation. Line graphs are very effectively used to plot the temperature in the classroom. During a geography topic, the pupils used block graphs to show the distribution of workers in the area. ICT is particularly well used to organise and present data, and to extend pupils' spatial awareness when using programs for designing patterns, reinforcing the pupils' knowledge of angles. The pupils in Year 6 use an object-based program to manipulate shapes to form a design in design and technology. These older pupils also use spreadsheets and formulae to interrogate data.

73. The management of the subject has improved since the last inspection. At that time the subject leader was not sufficiently involved in the systematic monitoring of the development and progression of pupils' knowledge and skills. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now well established, and the subject leader has a very clear picture of standards of teaching and learning throughout the school. Assessment procedures are very thorough, and pupils are involved in setting their own targets for improvement so that they are very aware of their own learning. The whole school approach to the teaching of mathematics has also helped standards to rise.

SCIENCE

74. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they are attaining standards that are above average, unchanged since the last inspection. They are also above average by the end of Year 2, which represents an improvement since 1997. Considering that many of the pupils enter the school with below average levels of knowledge and understanding of the world around them, overall achievement through the school is good. Where standards have improved it is because of the good teaching and the very good support the pupils receive. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well, mainly because of the hard work of the teachers in providing for their needs. The skilful learning support assistants also provide good support, ensuring that these pupils have full access to the practical aspects of science.

75. The reason why standards have not improved even further is because the teaching of scientific enquiry has been overly directed by the teachers, with the pupils being given insufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and make choices. This has now been addressed for the pupils in Years 5 and 6. Since the Year 6 test results last year, when just a quarter of the pupils achieved Level 5, the headteacher has been trialling an 'investigation plan' with the older pupils. This has enabled the pupils to think about and plan their own investigations, incorporating the principles of 'fair testing'. It has proved to be very effective and should ensure that the school's targets for 2002 are at least met, if not exceeded. The inspectors agree with the subject leader that a simplified version of this plan would further raise the standards achieved by younger pupils in the school.

76. All aspects of science are covered well, with life processes, physical processes and materials and their properties being covered particularly well. It is this good coverage, combined with good teaching, which results in standards being above expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. For example, in learning about life processes, the younger pupils know how animals change as they get older, such as egg to caterpillar to cocoon to butterfly. They name the parts of common fruits and know that fruit is good for healthy eating, commenting *'Mr Goodright needs to eat more fruit because every time we go into his room he has a big bag of chocolates'*. Older pupils extend their learning about healthy lifestyles further. For example, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 know that exercise keeps us fit, effectively recording the changes to the pulse rate whether walking, jogging, sprinting or resting. They investigate the effects of smoking, drawing conclusions from their observations, for instance, one pupil noting that *'the colour of the cotton wool between the cigarette and the bottle turned brown. That is what happens to your lungs if you smoke'*.

77. The quality of teaching is now consistently good and often very good which is an improvement since the last inspection. The teachers have a good interactive style with the pupils and plan for a good deal of pupil involvement in the lesson, reinforcing pupils' knowledge and understanding. This was evident in one Year 2 lesson where the teacher asked the pupils to discover why the bulb would not light in a number of pre-prepared, faulty circuits. During this practical session the pupils explored the circuits and in all cases could rectify the problem, whether one of two batteries was incorrectly inserted, crocodile clips attached incorrectly or a loose bulb. A range of well-focused questions enhanced learning, by the teacher and learning support assistants. As the pupils worked in pairs the quality of their discussions was good. All the pupils know that a light bulb will remain unlit if there is no power from a battery or if there is a break in the circuit. They achieved very well during this lesson in furthering and consolidating their learning about electrical circuits.

78. Where teaching could be further strengthened there is often a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils and over direction by the teacher. This is generally because all pupils are expected to tackle the problem in the same way. For example in investigating the best material for keeping an ice cube solid, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 were restricted to a choice of two materials from the four given to them. There were missed opportunities for the pupils to make choices and take responsibility for their own investigations. However, despite the over-direction, all the pupils achieved well in furthering their understanding about insulators. This is because the majority of the class worked in pairs and their discussions about each of the four materials were focused. It was also the result of the effective guided support work led by the teacher and a learning support assistant for the lower attaining pupils. They challenged pupils' thinking through a range of different questions such as 'why do think the ice would melt if we used the cotton wool?' and 'what do you think will happen if we use tin foil?'

79. Across the school the pupils are very interested and involved in their work. They enjoy science because the teachers treat them as scientists. This was evident in the Year 3 and 4 lesson where Mrs Grinling from the story 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' frequently sends messages to the pupils requesting help in solving a problem, in this case how to keep Mr Grinling's ice cream from melting on the journey to the lighthouse. The vast majority of pupils record their work well, whether in books or through the use of worksheets. Marking by the teachers is very good. For example, a marking comment in a Year 2 book (where the pupil's food choices for a special party menu included crisps, chocolate, cake and lemonade) was, 'You knew you should only eat these foods sometimes, can you explain why? The written response from the child 'You will get fat. You will have fillings. Your teeth will go black', demonstrated good knowledge of the effects of eating foods considered to be unhealthy.

80. The pupils are given good opportunities to use and refine their ICT skills in science. For

example, in Years 3 and 4, the pupils use temperature sensors attached to the computer to take readings at 15-minute intervals, resulting in a line graph. They then interpret the graph, knowing how and why the temperature rose and fell during the day. There are equally good links to other areas of the curriculum. For example in learning about animal movement, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 moved in the style of animals. They used skills learned in literacy to write, *'a snake can slither on its belly'*, *'a wasp can flutter about and sting'*, *'a baby can crawl on its knees'*.

81. The headteacher is the subject manager. He has a clear view of the subject and its development across the school. Since the last inspection he has monitored the quality of teaching and achievements in each year group. Test results are thoroughly analysed to ascertain strengths and weaknesses in provision. It is through this very good monitoring and evaluation programme that he has correctly identified the need for pupils to make more choices in their investigative work and learn from their own errors. Practical resources are generally of good quality and quantity to support the curriculum, although there are insufficient non-fiction books to encourage the pupils to use their own initiative and search for information for themselves. The environmental area and pond are valuable resources in offering first-hand experiences to the pupils. However, although some developments have taken place since the last inspection, both remain underused.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Additional evidence gathered from the scrutiny of the pupils' work, looking at teachers' planning and talking to pupils, show that standards by the age of seven remain average as they were at the time of the last inspection, and that pupils make satisfactory progress during the infant stage. In Years 3 and 4 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress, but as they get older progress slows and, by the time they leave the school, standards are below average and not as high as they ought to be. This is a decline since the last inspection when standards were described as average. The overall unsatisfactory progress in the juniors is because the artistic skills, which are being developed in the younger pupils, are not sufficiently well developed by the oldest pupils to ensure that the work they produce is of a high enough standard.

83. Pupils' observational skills are developing well in the infants, where pupils examine and draw a variety of objects, such as old toys, linked to their history topic. They are beginning to think about perspective and what is in the foreground, and what is in the background, although this concept is too hard for many to appreciate. A sense of perspective is then developed in Years 3 and 4, when pupils draw different chairs, and begin to use shading to show light and dark and give a feeling of depth. This use of shading is not then sufficiently enhanced by the older pupils, who still draw figures that look flat and faces with the features positioned incorrectly. A variety of different media is used in the infants such as paint, felt pens, pencils and collage, to create pleasing images. The pupils learn to mix two primary colours to make a secondary one, and are encouraged to use a paintbrush with accuracy. In Years 3 and 4, pupils investigate the difference between pencils of different hardness, and discover that softer pencils create blacker shading. The oldest pupils are beginning to use a mixture of shading and smudging to create a sense of movement in their drawings of figures. In the infants the pupils study the work of Picasso, and make colourful representations of people in the same style. There is little evidence to show that the older pupils have opportunities to study a variety of different artistic styles and incorporate different methods into their own work. The range of work seen is very limited for the older pupils. There is limited work with paint, and little large collaborative work in two and three dimensions. Clay is used to make cups and bowls, but the decoration is unsophisticated, showing a lack of imagination. The lack of opportunities for the older pupils to engage in artistic activities has a negative impact on their progress. Pupils with special educational needs do the same tasks

as their peers and make similar progress.

84. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are highly structured and well planned where opportunities are given for pupils to learn and practise new skills. However, there are few chances for the pupils to develop their imagination, and express their moods and feelings through art, particularly in the juniors. The teacher overly directs activities with no opportunities for independent pupil choice. For example, during a lesson on colour mixing, pupils were directed to add yellow to blue, and then blue to red, with no room for pupils' experimentation on the real effects of mixing their chosen colours. Chances were therefore missed during this lesson to develop the pupils' spiritual development through the unexpected. All the pupils knew what the outcomes would be of their limited mixing. The resources used are not always appropriate. For example, Year 2 pupils were asked to sketch using hard pencils, and the paper used for drawing had an inappropriately shiny surface so they were hardly able to see their finished efforts. The pupils are sometimes given inappropriate tasks, which are either too hard or too easy, and teachers' expectations are unrealistic. For example, in Year 2, the objects the pupils were asked to draw were too complicated, particularly when they were being asked to consider perspective. Despite this, the pupils' very good attitudes to their work, their very good concentration and application, ensured that they worked hard and achieved drawings that showed a reasonable resemblance to the actual object. This may be compared to Year 6 pupils who draw a head with a hat on, and no attention is paid to the form of the head or the position of the features. By this stage these pupils should know that eyes are not positioned at the top of the head. This shows a lack of teacher expertise in pitching work at an appropriate level for the stage of development of the pupils, and what standards should be expected at particular ages. There is a need therefore for further teacher training, and an agreement as to the standard that is expected from different age groups.

85. The school has addressed the key issue from the last inspection and developed a long-term plan for the teaching of skills linked to national guidance and documents, which all teachers are using. However this is still being trialled, and there is a need to review it to ensure that the units taught suit the needs of the school and the pupils, and that there is an appropriate continuous development of skills which the pupils can apply to their work. The curriculum covers all the elements of the subject, but there is an imbalance in the amount of time spent on each element. For example, little time is given to developing work with paint throughout the school, but all classes pay a lot of attention to pencil observational drawing. The time spent on art in practice is sometimes squeezed, particularly for the older pupils, due to the demands of numeracy and literacy. The subject leader has created a plan to direct the work over the next three years. However, procedures for monitoring and assessing the quality of artwork produced are not sufficiently established. There is appropriate use of ICT to support the subject, for instance in the use of 'paint programs'.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 remain broadly average and the pupils achieve appropriately, the same as at the time of the last inspection. Those pupils with special educational needs complete similar tasks as their peers and make satisfactory progress. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. All elements of the subject are taught and the deficiencies highlighted in the last report have been addressed. There is now a progression of skill development, as the school has adopted national guidance to ensure that the subject is taught in a systematic manner. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 design and make moving models that are controlled by motors and electrical circuits, which was not evident at the last inspection. Teachers plan a balanced programme of activities including food technology, and pupils evaluate their own work.

87. By the age of seven pupils design and make some Egyptian jewellery, linked to their

history topic. They draw their designs and identify what materials are required. After making, the pupils evaluate their work and say how it could be improved. For example, one pupil said *'I would change the tubes holding the beads for wire to make it look nicer'*. All pupils are very aware of the need for clean hands when they make jelly and the need for safety when handling hot objects. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they can design and make wooden frameworks as a chassis for a moving vehicle. They ably use tools such as saws and drills. They very effectively use a variety of commercial construction kits to make fairground rides such as an impressive, huge Ferris wheel. They use wooden frameworks to make xylophones, cutting wood to make differently pitched notes. This supports scientific work on 'sound' well. The quality of finish of these musical instruments is good.

88. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but from this and the scrutiny of pupils' work across the school, the quality of teaching can be judged to be at least satisfactory. The staff have received training and are generally more confident than at the last inspection. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and there is evidence that skills are progressively developed as pupils get older. Good use is made of ICT to support 'design' work. Photographic evidence shows that pupils are proud of their models. They are encouraged to think constructively about their work and how models could be improved. Thus assessment is ongoing with pupils very much involved in the process. Teachers evaluate their own performance by recording the strengths and weaknesses experienced in their lessons. The effective subject leader collates these evaluations and through these, and the sampling of pupils' work, is able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The 'good work' assemblies provide another good opportunity for the subject leader to see and assess the work that is going on in all classes.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Inspection evidence, based on the observation of one lesson, scrutiny of pupils work and teachers' planning, and discussion with both, indicate standards are in line with national expectations for children aged seven and eleven. This reflects similar findings to the last inspection. The pupils undertake a broad range of activities and achieve appropriately, according to their capabilities, despite the fact that the foot and mouth epidemic restricted opportunities to undertake some local visits and field trips. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for, mainly through additional support within the classroom. This enables them to make sound progress during lessons.

90. Younger pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of their immediate location. For example, they can record accurately their journey to school, they know about local shops and they can make simple maps to plot their location. They start to compare their own lives with those of others, for instance between their village and Handa's village in India. Here, they note how goods are carried on heads and homes are made of different materials. There are good links made to ICT, for instance when they use CD-Roms to create their own virtual villages of homes, streets and scenery. Year 1 and 2 pupils label aerial photographs indicating houses, car parks, telephone boxes and are able to give compass directions around the village. They can graph and interpret the results of a survey of jobs indicating if their mothers or fathers work in Truro, Trispen or elsewhere. More able pupils can name and locate towns on the Cornwall peninsula. They write about going to the seaside and use information about the local seaside town to create bar graphs. To cover a wider range of geographical ideas younger pupils follow the travels of Barnaby Bear as he moves around the world.

91. Study skills are further developed in the junior classes. Year 3 and 4 pupils study settlements and can describe the hills, rivers, flood plains and valleys of the local area. They know their addresses and talk about their 'island home'. They are aware of recycling

'rubbish' and know they can improve the environment around their school. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate satisfactory study skills when they research mountain environments. They can name and list the highest mountains around the world and compare the similarities of weather conditions. They develop cross-curricular links with literacy, producing 'mail shots' for tourists about visiting Mount Everest. This could be usefully developed to include more opportunities to use research notes to write more extended pieces of writing. In connection with their study on India, they cook naan bread and compare it to the bread they normally eat. They demonstrate satisfactory recall of the paddy fields, the temples, tea and coffee plantations in their study of Chembakoli village. They show sound mapping skills identifying Bombay, the Indian Ocean, Nepal and Pakistan. More able pupils can use co-ordinates to plot the position of Kanjikoli Village situated in the Nigiri Hills of India.

92. From the evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning, teaching is at least sound. In the one lesson seen, a radio tape recording was successfully used as a stimulus to plot the routes to towns on the Cornwall peninsula, to avoid accidents or slow moving traffic. The mapping skills of the Year 6 pupils are satisfactory. Using Ordnance Survey maps, most were able to identify symbols for 'A' roads, motorways, churches, campsites and golf courses. In the comparison of several computer produced autoroute maps from CD-Rom, the teacher successfully drew out the use of different scales and the implications of distances travelled.

93. Pupils enjoy geography. All, including those with special needs, generally make sound progress. They often bring in 'What's in the News' material, maintaining an ongoing dialogue with world events and sparking off thoughtful discussions about the "stricken tanker off the coast of Cornwall" or "concerns over the war in Afghanistan". They co-operate well and show respect for each other's contributions.

94. The subject leader has created a clear plan to direct the work to be done in geography over the next three years. Procedures for assessment are well established. The policy and scheme are being updated to ensure a broad and balanced range of activities. The school has recognised the need to develop increasing cross-curricular links to further develop literacy and numeracy skills. The enthusiastic subject leader is aware of the resource needs, particularly more aerial photographs and up-to-date maps for older pupils.

HISTORY

95. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However using the evidence from discussion with pupils, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, overall standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for pupils at end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar standard to that seen at the last inspection. Overall all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing a satisfactory understanding of the past and achieving appropriately. They display good attitudes, enjoyment and interest in the work covered. They settle to their tasks well, showing good concentration and co-operation.

96. Throughout Year 1 and Year 2 the pupils learn about some of important personalities who contribute to historical events. For example, most pupils can recall the important facts about Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. One pupil described Grace Darling as '*the woman who saved the people from the rocks*'. More able pupils can interpret information and act as real life reporters in creating their own newspaper stories about the Gunpowder Plot. Others use historical facts to write convincing letters to the King warning him of the impending situation. They know about their own locality and compare and contrast old homes in Trispen with homes today. They can plot the historical growth of their village, and this helps them develop a sound understanding of the passage of time.

97. The pupils in Year 3 and 4 display interest and show good recall of the work they have completed about Tudors. They enthusiastically recount the pattern of Henry VIII's relationships with his wives as '*divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived*'. They begin to make decisions about whether Henry was a good or a bad ruler. They make good use of secondary sources such as old photographs of Lemon Quay in Truro, artefacts, maps and costumes from the museum services, which support and add relevance to their work. Visits to the Celtic Village at Blackwater enhance their visual knowledge of life during these times. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 also learn about ancient civilisations. For instance, they write books, which show their knowledge and understanding of the Egyptians through recounting the life of Tutankhamen. Older pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are able to interpret data and information when using the 1871 census CD-Rom materials for Trispen and are able to compare and contrast life then and now. They can make judgements about how the occupations of people in Trispen have changed and make graphs of the results. Year 6 pupils make notes of their interviews with people born before, during and after the Second World War. They discuss the effects of war and study the first hand accounts of Anne Frank. Their recall, knowledge and understanding of this work is good. They show satisfactory understanding of the skills of historical enquiry through their work on the Victorians and remember using the school logbooks, particularly the punishment book, to gain appropriate information.

98. Overall, from the evidence in planning and books, teaching is at least satisfactory, and often it is good. There is good coverage of the curriculum, providing good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning about historical knowledge and skills through written work and the use of ICT. In the lesson seen, good presentation of the learning objectives and the materials about Henry VIII enabled a good interactive discussion to take place engaging and motivating all pupils. Good debate ensued, particularly between boys and girls, about the fairness or unfairness of Anne of Cleves being painted as a beautiful lady, but in real life being ugly. The teacher's decision to work with the less able children enabled the learning support assistant to work effectively with other groups. The good review of learning, skilfully handled by the teacher, enabled all pupils to take part in the lesson successfully. The teacher and learning support assistant took every opportunity to make notes in assessing the contribution of individuals during the lesson. There is some limited evidence of writing at length using history themes as a motivation. This needs further development if it is to play a valuable role in supporting the further development of literacy standards.

99. The subject is soundly managed. The policy and scheme of work are in the process of being updated. The subject leader checks and monitors planning and has two days a year allocated for monitoring teaching. Overall, there is a good range of resources. However, there are insufficient non-fiction books to ensure better development of the pupils' skills and knowledge and to encourage the pupils to search for information themselves.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

100. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally. The school has made this subject a focus for development and spent much time, effort and resources in improving standards in a relatively short time. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in all aspects of the subject, not only in pupils' attainment. The quality of the resources has improved, the expertise of the staff, both teaching and non-teaching, is now very good, as they have all received rigorous training, and there is now a well-structured curriculum where skills are continuously and systematically developed as pupils get older. The quality of the teaching is good in the infant and junior departments, whereas at the time of the last inspection teaching was described as mostly satisfactory. The school is very fortunate in having a non-teaching assistant with excellent expertise who helps to manage the subject, and this has had a very positive impact on the

quality of the pupils' knowledge and understanding. All the key points that needed improvement in the last inspection report have been addressed very successfully, and the school is understandably proud of the good progress that has been made. The comprehensive and well-ordered portfolio of work clearly shows the good progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

101. Pupils throughout the school are confident users of the computer, and use ICT to support other subjects in a meaningful way. The youngest children in the reception class use the computer with confidence. They use the keyboard well to write their names, and use the shift key to produce capital letters, the backspace to edit out mistakes, and the most able can use a paint program to write their name on the screen. This requires very precise use of the mouse. Years 1 and 2 use a paint program to draw pictures of their toys to support their work in history and art. They show very good co-ordination when they use the mouse to draw outlines accurately, and use chosen colours to fill in given areas. They know which icons to use and confidently change colour or erase their mistakes. These pupils are able to programme the Roamer to travel to a given spot. Year 1 pupils know the importance of clearing the memory before putting in directions to make the machine go forwards and turn left or right, and they use their estimating skills well to make the machine arrive on a precise mark. Pupils in Year 2 build on these skills and are able to plan routes using a grid to enable Roamer to take Fuzzy Bear to find his birthday presents, and the most able can use quarter turns. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop their skills by using a more sophisticated paint program involving the use of a pencil, brush or spray can. Computers are used well in this class to support mathematics, when the pupils use a data collection program to present their findings after carrying out a survey about lunchtimes in school. They use a variety of graphs and decide which presentation is the most helpful. Sensors are used in Years 3 and 4 to monitor the temperature in the classroom effectively and the pupils choose an appropriate way to graphically present their results to give a clear picture of their findings. The choices they make are well informed and based on their previous experience. By the time pupils leave the school they can very ably use multimedia packages to create very attractive and interesting pages. They can use text and pictures and insert sound files to create pleasing effects and animate the pictures. They successfully use appropriate 'buttons' to link pages in a web site to give detailed information about a family. Older pupils who attend the computer club learn how to use the warp function to twist and turn their images. All pupils enjoy using computers, show great interest and concentration, and think carefully about what they are doing. They show respect for the machines and work co-operatively when necessary, supporting each other's learning. These very positive attitudes have a very positive impact on the progress pupils' make. They simply enjoy using information and communication technology and want to learn.

102. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, examination of the work completed confirms that the quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. Much work is done in small groups that are taken by a well-qualified, knowledgeable non-teaching member of staff. Work is well planned so that skills are progressively taught and methods ensure that by the time they leave school the pupils have acquired a good degree of skill. Instructions are clear and pupils are given plenty of opportunities for 'hands on' experience. In the one lesson observed, very good use of the computer and projector ensured that all pupils saw the presentation and were quite clear about what they were to learn in the lesson. The pace was appropriate to enable the pupils to consolidate their learning, and sufficient challenge moved learning on so that maximum use was made of the time available. Very good relationships meant that pupils were confident to ask when they had a problem. Teacher expectations were high and specialist vocabulary was used consistently so that all pupils became very confident with the use of this technical language. The use of branching diagrams very effectively reinforces what the computer is doing when pages are being linked. This ensures that pupils understand the processes that are being used. Good opportunities

are given for pupils to work co-operatively, thus enhancing their moral and social development. ICT is used well across the curriculum, and activities that are set support and enhance what is being done in the lesson. The adults keep precise records of what the pupils learn in the lesson, which are then used to plan future learning. Assessment is thorough and the older pupils are encouraged to keep their own self-assessments of their knowledge and understanding, which makes them very aware of what they can and cannot do.

103. Pupils with special educational needs do the same tasks as their peers and make similar progress. Pupils who are withdrawn for extra literacy help use the computer very successfully to write a story with animated characters and the use of the spoken word. In these lessons the computer is a great motivator, and these special needs pupils want to use it and so improve their language acquisition and ability to construct a story.

104. The subject is well managed and all documentation is meticulously organised. The present subject leader is new to the job, but the non-teaching assistant has provided an excellent link during the changeover. All the elements of the subject are covered and good planning ensures that ICT is well used across the curriculum. Resources are now good with a variety of appropriate software to support all areas of the curriculum. The provision of an extra-curricular computer club run by a non-teaching member of staff greatly enhances the curriculum for those pupils who attend.

MUSIC

105. There has been good improvement in the standards attained in music since the last inspection. Although it was only possible to observe one complete music lesson during the inspection, additional evidence came from the observation of music clubs and peripatetic music tuition, the scrutiny of pupils' music books and teachers' planning and discussion with teachers and pupils. This indicates that by the end of Year 2 standards are average and by the end of Year 6 the pupils' attainment is above average. All pupils make good progress in the school and achieve well, including those with special educational needs.

106. The standards have improved because the teaching is consistently good and very good when taught by the subject leader. She has very good subject expertise and successfully motivates and challenges the pupils to listen and perform. This results in very good involvement by the pupils and ensures at least good, and often very good, learning by all, including those with special educational needs. Until this academic year the subject leader was teaching all classes in the school and this had a positive impact on the achievements of the pupils. With her guidance the teachers in the infant classes now teach their own music lessons. All lessons are well planned using the detailed scheme of work, which gives a firm structure to the lessons and helps to ensure that elements are progressively developed and activities are appropriately challenging. There is an appropriate balance of teacher input and the pupils' practical involvement and lessons proceed at a very good pace. All the pupils enjoy music. Younger pupils particularly enjoy the fun element of singing. Older pupils were seen to be very enthusiastic and totally co-operative, becoming thoroughly involved in the lesson. These positive attitudes help to ensure that standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school.

107. By Year 6 all the pupils have a good knowledge of the technical language associated with music. For example, they know that 'linear' music has a beginning, middle and end and that 'cyclic' music is music that repeats. They compose and write music using conventional musical notation. For instance, in a lesson for the older pupils, many were able to use notation to record the rhythm and the pulse. The higher attainers are very familiar with crotchets, quavers and rests. All pupils could clap the notated rhythm patterns whilst a

steady pulse was maintained with a tambour. They all kept to time, starting and finishing in unison. Pupils in the junior classes listen to a variety of different types of music, studying composers in the past and those in more recent years. For instance, in their study of 'The Planets' by Holst, one older pupil wrote that Mars conjured up *'war, fire, battles, star wars.'* Another thought that Venus conjured up *'peace, harmony, love.'* They appreciate that the lyrics in music conjure up similar images for all of us. For example, that the music of The Carpenters makes us think of *'hope, love, sadness, loneliness.'*

108. Younger pupils in Year 2 have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing tunefully, often using appropriate actions. For example they sing 'The Elephant Song' and 'There's a Fox in the Box' with gusto and some humour. They are beginning to understand that music conveys different moods and feelings. For example, they recognise that slow, soft lullabies are best for getting babies to sleep and that some 'slow' music can make you feel sad. They understand the importance of singing at the correct speed. For instance, they sang 'The Grand Old Duke of York' at a very slow tempo, with laborious actions to match. They were clear that this did not enhance the song at all, saying *'it doesn't sound right'* and *'it's really boring like this'*.

109. Music is celebrated and learning is enhanced through the wider life of the school. For instance:

- Music is played as pupils enter the hall for assembly and the pupils are encouraged to learn the name of the composer and the title of the piece of music.
- Whole school singing takes place in assemblies, which is tuneful and all pupils participate. However, it lacks passion and makes little contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
- There are good extra-curricular opportunities from Year 2 onwards, for recorders and choir.
- There are seasonal presentations with a strong focus on music, particularly for singing.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to play woodwind and stringed instruments and drums taught by peripatetic teachers. This has a positive impact on the learning for those pupils.
- There are good links to ICT. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use a program to 'write' music and older pupils insert musical 'sound files' in preparing their multi-media presentations.

110. Resources for music are good. Whilst there is no pianist in the school there are ample CDs to accompany hymns and songs. The very effective subject leader monitors the quality of the teaching in the infant classes to identify strengths and areas for development. She has an appropriate action plan to ensure further improvements to the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. During the inspection it was only possible to observe some elements of the full physical education programme. From lessons observed, including an after school gym club, photographs of dance events and teachers' planning, pupils' overall standards of attainment are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All achieve well in the school, including those with special educational needs. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school has developed significant teacher expertise in this area. The good subject leader, an advanced skills teacher, together with the enthusiasm and expertise of the headteacher, has successfully supported staff to feel confident in promoting a skilled programme of development across the school.

112. Teachers and children dress appropriately for physical education. This encourages children to exercise efficiently and helps to lift the levels of expectations. Though the subject

leader has identified the need to improve the games curriculum further, the school appropriately supports pupils who show a particular talent in sport. There are two boys at present, both with a talent in football. The school caters for their needs well and both have been accepted for the School of Excellence at Plymouth Argyle Football club. The subject leader has fully developed the good quality resources and has ensured all staff have received, through team teaching, full training on the Top Sport courses. As a consequence, in the lessons seen the teachers demonstrated a good understanding of the techniques for warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of lessons. The very good quality of relationships ensured children behaved well and worked safely.

113. Swimming for all children from Year 3 to Year 6 is very well organised and implemented. Health and Safety arrangements are excellent. High quality individual and group teaching ensures that virtually all children achieve the expected 25 metre swimming standard by Year 6 or before. Support staff work in the water with the pupils, giving confidence to the less able swimmers. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers make notes of individual progress to support planning for the next session.

114. In the gymnastic lessons seen, the overall standard of teaching was good and in one lesson was outstanding. Younger pupils are introduced to very good routines. The putting out and clearing away of apparatus is exemplary. They have been well taught to move around safely, making good use of space. They show creativity in the range of movements executed over and through different apparatus set ups, travelling on different parts of their bodies and at different speeds and levels. Pupils are able to demonstrate balances, rolls and jumps, creating patterns of movement across the hall. They use good technical vocabulary to express evaluations of each other's work. The overall quality of pupil involvement and interaction with their teacher is very good. Older pupils were learning the correct way to hold a tennis racket and the correct height at which to hit and throw the ball. Most pupils work well together, enjoying friendly competition. Most lessons are taught at a good pace, but occasionally the teacher talks for too long and pupil concentration slips.

115. Pupils show real enjoyment of their physical education sessions. Within lessons they are focused and show good concentration. Many pupils from Year 2 onwards attend a good range of extra-curricular clubs, in cross-country, running, football, netball and short tennis. They engage in friendly competition with other schools, achieving a good degree of success. These opportunities do much to enhance the programme for physical education.

116. Assessment is very good. Reports to parents are very full, detailed and informative, identifying skills and progress of individuals. The quality of feedback to pupils in lessons is generally good and in one was outstanding. The subject leader has produced good action plans, which give good direction for this area of the curriculum. The use of pupil surveys, to evaluate pupil interest, and the good quality of monitoring of teaching ensure the improving quality of physical education in the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

117. Standards in religious education meet expectations of the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus for pupils aged seven and 11. This represents satisfactory achievement overall, although there is a slight dip in the standards attained by the younger pupils from the previous inspection. This reflects the uncertainty by staff in the new scheme of work, particularly the recommendation that alongside Christianity, Hinduism is studied in the infant classes and Judaism and Sikhism in the junior classes. The subject leader has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject through observing teaching and sampling pupils' work. She has already identified the need to personalise the agreed syllabus to the school

and to seek external support to help with more effective implementation. Both are seen to be essential if standards are to further improve.

118. As they move through the school the pupils accumulate considerable knowledge and understanding of Christianity and three other major world faiths. Through their study of Christianity, younger pupils learn to appreciate that the world is a special place and that people want to describe it and care for it. They can identify their own special place and talk about why it is special to them. The pupils in Year 2 understand the importance of religious books. They know that the Bible is a special book and that is why it is placed on the lectern in assemblies. They listen to and discuss stories from the Bible, and can give descriptive accounts of the Creation. Many can relate biblical events to a modern context. For example, younger pupils can reflect on the dilemma of Adam and Eve and rationalise their own feelings about temptation.

119. Pupils in the junior school increase their understanding of Christianity and learn about Judaism and Sikhism. Older pupils have a good understanding on the emphasis that believers place on special places of worship. For instance, they know that Jewish believers worship both at home and in the synagogue, that prayers are said before and after meals and that a mezuzah (containing passages from their Bible) can be found on a door inside their houses. In studying Christianity, one Year 6 pupil described St Erme's Church as *'big, welcoming, warm, a place of privacy, cosy, peaceful'*. They are beginning to appreciate the place of artefacts within religious practice. For example, older pupils know the Cross is a symbol of Christianity because *'Jesus died on it'* and that the bread and wine in Communion services represent the *'body and blood of Christ'*. They reflect on the nature of God, as shown in the thoughts of one Year 6 pupil:

*'God looks over everyone,
I believe in God.
God is powerful,
He means to me 'controller'
He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit
He loves everyone.'*

120. From the one lesson seen, from talking with pupils and looking at their work, it is evident that teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For instance, good teaching in a Year 3 and 4 lesson ensured that the pupils made good progress in understanding how many Christians use the Bible for guidance in their everyday lives. Effective planning enabled the pupils to reflect on problems of today and learn how the Bible could give them answers. Here, the teacher's questioning skills were very effective in challenging the pupils' thinking. For example, the words in Matthew, Chapter 5, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, that this is wrong to take revenge' were well equated to how to react to a playground incident, where revenge may perhaps be the first reaction but not the most appropriate. The teacher had very clear lesson objectives and pupils understood what they were expected to learn. There were good opportunities for the higher attainers to extend their research skills as they scanned text in the Bible to find relevant verses. Those pupils with special educational needs were particularly well supported, either by the teacher or by a learning support assistant. All pupils were attentive and interested. When working together, they co-operated well, contributed sensible answers to discussions and were respectful of the views of others.

121. The school successfully integrates the teaching of religious education into its daily life. Themes selected for assemblies promote pupils' understanding of Christianity and they are taught to recognise how people's beliefs affect their actions. The reflective nature of religious education successfully pervades other areas of the curriculum, such as personal and social education and 'circle time', and is one of the reasons why the caring ethos of the school is of

such a high calibre. Religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in the school. Provision is further enhanced through visits to places of interest and occasional visitors coming to the school. For example, effective use is made of local churches. In one instance, the infant pupils visited St Erme's church to stage a 'christening service'. The vicar led this, with pupils acting the roles of family members and the congregation. This enhanced the pupils' learning through first hand experience, with pupils understanding that the ceremony would be the start of 'Jenny Sarah's' life as a Christian, if Jenny Sarah were a baby and not a doll. Most written work complements work in English, although there are missed opportunities for the pupils to write longer pieces of work that are researched for story setting and context. There are appropriate links made to ICT. For instance, Year 2 pupils used a drawing program to create a Nativity scene and then used word processing skills to provide captions, such as *'This is Mary and Joseph and they are going to have a baby in Bethlehem'*.

122. Resources were seen to be good at the last inspection. They are now adequate. This is partly because the 'shared' artefacts have since been distributed amongst the cluster schools. However, in replacing artefacts for the faiths studied in the junior school there has been less expenditure on books for the non-fiction library, posters and videos. This limits the opportunities available for the pupils to use their own initiative and find out information for themselves.