

# INSPECTION REPORT

Headteacher's Draft

**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Penzance

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111999

Acting Headteacher: Mr. Ken Sansom

Reporting inspector: Mr. Peter Brock  
OFSTED Inspector No: 17969

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2001

Inspection number: 215075

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Peverell Road  
Penzance  
Cornwall

Postcode: TR18 2DH

Telephone number: 01736 364385

Fax number: 01735 331802

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. Jeremy Field

Date of previous inspection: June 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17969	Peter Brock	Registered inspector	Science Information and Communication Technology Equal Opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9306	Barbara Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4109	James Barley	Team inspector	English Design and Technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
11848	John Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical Education	
21086	Elizabeth Strange	Team inspector	Art Music The Foundation Stage Curriculum Special Educational Needs English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Education Associates  
The Innovation Centre  
Europarc  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire  
DN37 9TT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10 - 12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>12 - 14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>14 - 16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17 - 18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18 - 20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21 - 22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23 - 26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>27 - 42</b>



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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is the only Catholic Primary School serving the Penwith District. Whilst every attempt is made to maintain its catholicity, the number of catholic children attending has fallen in recent years. There are 217 children on roll – 103 boys and 114 girls and there were 62 under five at the time of the inspection. There is a nursery with 48 children who attend part time. Assessment data shows that attainment of children on entry is average overall. Forty-seven children are on the special educational needs register and this is broadly in line with the national average. Three of these have a statement of special educational need. Two children have English as an additional language. This is similar to most schools and the majority of pupils come from a white UK heritage background. The take up of free school meals is approximately 23 per cent. This is above the national average.

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

The school is effective in providing a satisfactory level of education. Children enter with standards that are average overall. They make steady progress with their learning in most subjects over time but this has improved lately with an improvement in the permanency of the teaching staff. A new headteacher has been appointed recently. Standards in English are above average by the time children are eleven years of age. They are average in maths and science. In all other subjects, they are at a standard expected for pupils of seven and eleven. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good and has a positive effect upon children's learning.
- The personal development of children is very good. Attitudes and behaviour are good.
- It provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good.
- The provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- It has good procedures in place for ensuring children's welfare.
- It has strong links with parents and their views of the school are positive.

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

- Aspects of leadership and management to continue to raise standards.
- Teachers' planning for higher attaining children – particularly in mathematics and science.
- The present structure of the curriculum to ensure breadth and balance in all subjects.
- Equal opportunities for all children in all aspects of school life.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in June 1999 and was found to have serious weaknesses. This is no longer the case. It has made satisfactory progress with improvement in most of the areas of concern since the last inspection. It has successfully delegated responsibilities to the senior management team so that they can begin to support colleagues and evaluate critically how well their areas are responding. This is a new concept for most members and some have developed their skills more securely than others have at this stage. A clear management structure is now in place and has led to the development of a positive team spirit. Monitoring Responsibilities of the senior management team for monitoring teaching and learning have not yet been strengthened sufficiently. Apart from music, schemes of work are now in place for all subjects of the curriculum. Staff training has been increased but an appraisal system has yet to be developed. Staff morale has definitely improved since the last inspection and the voluntary fund is now properly run and audited. Co-ordinators now have limited financial responsibility. The financial and administrative work of school management is now carried out efficiently. All resources, specific grants and other funding are used correctly and the school applies appropriate principles of best value when purchasing stock. All of the main recommendations of the last financial audit have been acted upon and the school is now in a strong position to improve further.



## STANDARDS

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

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

The information in the above chart shows that, in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds, children achieved above average standards in English and average standards in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Over the past three years, standards have declined and the most likely reason is the considerable incidence of temporary teachers in some classes and the increased numbers of pupils leaving and arriving to and from the school for various reasons. Now, the progress that pupils make with their learning in most subjects over time is satisfactory although it was good during the inspection. The school sets realistic targets for improvement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are good. Children enjoy coming to school and they want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is good. Most children behave sensibly both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Children's personal development is very good, as are their relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	This is satisfactory.

The overall quality of children's relationships and behaviour is a strong feature of this school. Children are very good at caring for each other and are polite and pleasant to others. They are eager to come to school but punctuality for some children is an area for improvement.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive impact on the quality of children's learning in most subjects. Teachers take care to provide appropriately for children with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum are secure. They teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively and their planning is satisfactory in most subjects, but there are weaknesses in science and mathematics. Most teachers have sound expectations of what children can do and of how they should behave. However, this is not so in all classes. Most teachers make use of an effective range of methods to help children learn and most manage children effectively. Marking is variable – good in some classes and unsatisfactory in others. Teaching was satisfactory or better in

93 per cent of all lessons seen. In 80 per cent, it was good or better and in 31 per cent it was very good or better. In seven per cent, it was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching seen was similar to that observed during the last inspection.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A satisfactory range of learning opportunities but there are some imbalances within particular subjects and a lack of balance in some areas. In the Foundation Stage, breadth, balance and relevance are good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is satisfactory. Children have full access to the curriculum and receive special support as appropriate.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory. Children have full access to the curriculum and their needs are well met through the special provision made by the school. Teachers recognise the need to provide opportunities that are rich in first-hand experiences and they ensure that children have high quality support.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good for children's personal, spiritual, moral and social development. It is good for their cultural development but with insufficient focus on their learning about other cultures within British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good level of support overall. Procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are satisfactory. Use of assessment to help teachers plan the curriculum is satisfactory but its use to identify and support individual pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory.

The school works successfully in partnership with parents. It creates good links with them and their contribution to their children's learning is good. The school provides a satisfactory level of information about what is happening throughout the year. Written reports generally provide reasonable information on how well children are doing but they do not always state clearly what children need to do next to improve.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher is providing firm leadership that has done much to stabilise the school and enable all involved to work together effectively as a team and to take on appropriate responsibilities. The deputy headteacher has not had opportunities in the past to acquire the necessary skills of leadership and there is a clear need to raise expectations of what the role involves.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are aware that they have much to learn and have already taken some difficult management decisions that indicate their willingness and commitment to move the school forwards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This remains an area of weakness. It does not yet have secure systems in place for appraising the work of the headteacher, teachers and the success of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes appropriate use of resources. It uses them sensibly.

The school has enough suitably qualified and experienced teaching and support staff and the accommodation is appropriate. The range and quality of learning resources are suitable overall and the school's procedures for ensuring that it gets best value for money are satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitudes and values</li> <li>• Behaviour and attendance</li> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• Teaching is good</li> <li>• They can talk to teachers about problems</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of progress in some classes</li> <li>• Regularity of marking of homework</li> <li>• The uncertainty over the headship</li> <li>• Lack of sport, PE, swimming pool use</li> <li>• Lack of information – child getting on</li> <li>• Range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views of parents. It agrees with parents that there is a lack of progress in some aspects of some classes and that the marking of homework is inconsistent. The team believes that parents do receive sufficient information on their children's progress overall but that insufficient guidance is given in reports as to how children may improve. It acknowledges parents' concerns over the headship vacancy but understands that this position has now been resolved. The team finds that the range of extra-curricular activities is very good. It believes that emphasis on swimming detracts from the development of other aspects of physical education.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school's tests on entry show that it admits children from across the full range of attainment. However, when they start full-time education, most children's levels of attainment are average for their age. Attainment is at a level expected in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. In their personal and social development and their speaking and listening skills, most children achieve above the levels expected for their age
2. Children in the Foundation Stage generally make satisfactory progress over time both in the nursery class and the reception classes. During the inspection, the quality of their learning was good because of the good quality of teaching seen. This level of progress applies to all areas of learning. The difference between achievement over time and the progress that children now make with their learning is due to recent improvements in curricular planning and the present good quality of teaching. Children forge good relationships with each other and build up their self-esteem and confidence. They develop their reading and writing skills and learn to form letters and write simple words correctly. They develop an understanding of number and learn how to use money correctly. Pupils develop the ability to observe carefully when studying animals and increase their control and co-ordination as they play with large toys and use a range of tools to make and paint. They respond positively to music and develop the ability to sing in tune successfully.
3. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection were average, for pupils aged seven, in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Findings from teachers' assessments and test results indicate that standards have declined over the past four years. As a result, the comparison with similar schools was below average in writing and mathematics for Year 2000 pupils although well above average in reading. The increased numbers of pupils leaving the school as a result of past internal frictions and the considerable incidence of temporary teachers for this group point to the possible cause.
4. By the time pupils are eleven years of age, standards of attainment based on inspection evidence, are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. Findings from teachers' assessments and test results indicate that standards have declined over the past four years. However, compared with similar schools, the standards achieved for Year 2000 pupils were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The downward trend in standards over the past four years is probably due to the same reasons cited for pupils reaching seven years of age. However, it is important to note that the high standards compared with similar schools, and the good quality of teaching and learning seen during the

inspection, show that the trend has been halted and that attainment overall is heading in a positive direction.

5. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is at a level expected for pupils of both seven and eleven years of age. This is similar to the levels attained during the last inspection. Pupils' main strengths are in the developing level of confidence that they have in using computer programs to help them display their work in an attractive way through the growth of their cutting and pasting skills. Their main weakness lies in the limited range of experiences that they have in other aspects of the subject and the limited time that they have to practise their various computer skills so that they can use these competently to support their work in other subjects of the curriculum.
6. The school sets targets for improvement in English and mathematics. These are appropriate for the level of ability of all pupils except in mathematics, where they could be increased for higher attaining pupils. Part of the reason for this weakness is that the school has not yet developed a firm strategy for assessing and analysing the needs of individual pupils so that clear targets for their individual progress can be set.
7. By seven and eleven years of age, pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning in all subjects over time. However, the overall progress in subjects seen during the inspection was good. The difference between the judgements over time and recently is further evidence of the improving quality of teaching and learning.
8. In English, pupils develop speaking and listening skills effectively so that they engage in conversation with adults willingly and readily express themselves well, often giving reasons for their opinions. They become avid and enthusiastic readers and enjoy the moods and emotions that books can generate. Pupils develop good research skills and know how to interrogate various sources for the information that they require. Pupils become competent writers and use various styles effectively to express their views. They know how to enrich their writing by using various parts of speech with confidence.
9. By the time they leave the school at eleven, most pupils have good basic numeracy skills. They apply these confidently to mental and written problems involving the four rules of number. They know how to work out various methods of solving problems and have a secure knowledge of various aspects of mathematics. These include measurement in its various forms, graphical representation and the use of money.
10. In science, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a fair test and they know what is required for living things to grow and reproduce. They have a broad knowledge of the effects of forces on various objects and they begin to understand some of the properties of common gases. They increase their knowledge of scientific words and develop the confidence to question and predict what might happen next when planning experiments.

11. The school places a considerable emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in specific English and mathematics lessons and through associated development in other subjects of the curriculum. Examples were seen in the history lesson in Year 2, where listening and questioning skills were developed, and in geography, where recording is completed through various forms of graphs and tables.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets in their individual educational plans and respond positively to the support that they receive. They take a full part in school activities. They also make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the curriculum. There are currently two pupils in the school who have English as an additional language. Both are in the foundation stage. They now speak English fluently and are making satisfactory progress. They have full access to the curriculum and their needs are well met through the special provision made by the school. Teachers recognise the need to provide opportunities that are rich in first-hand experiences and they ensure that the pupils have high quality support.

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

13. Since the last inspection report, attitudes and behaviour throughout the school have become generally good and personal development and relationships are very good. These very good relationships are a strength of the school.
14. Pupils are eager to come to school and are keen to participate in the activities on offer. Their behaviour in and around the school is good. They work co-operatively with each other and enjoy learning. There are occasional lapses of behaviour by a minority of pupils when classroom organisation and work are less challenging. However, the majority of pupils are courteous and polite and very welcoming to visitors. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and with adults. This strong development starts early in their life in school.
15. Staff set a good standard in their relationships with one another and with pupils. This is reflected by the way in which pupils work and play together without any apparent aggression. During the time of the inspection, no incidences of bullying were observed. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on the lives of others. This is reflected in the support that they give to various charities. For example, during Lent almost £1000 was raised in order to help those less fortunate than themselves.
16. The personal development of pupils is very good. The system of Golden Time encourages pupils to think positively about their actions and the actions of others. Those who are monitors take responsibility for some of the daily routines of the school and they undertake their tasks with quiet efficiency. The School Council meets regularly and works hard to implement improvements in aspects of school life of importance to pupils, such as more privacy in the toilet areas. Pupils work together democratically with each member reporting back to the class they represent.

17. Pupils are happy to come to school and the attendance rate at the school is satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is just below the national average. The school works hard in an attempt to improve the level of pupils' punctuality. Through the daily life of the school, pupils' understanding and respect for others reflects the school's mission statement with the focus on creating a Christian ethos where everyone is valued.

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

18. The quality of teaching is now good overall, with a considerable number of strengths and few weaknesses in most classes. As a result, pupils now make good progress in most subjects in all year groups although, over time, the progress has been satisfactory. This has been a direct result of too many temporary teachers for some classes in the past and insufficient guidance for teachers with reference to planning, teaching and learning. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of all lessons seen. In 80 per cent, it was good or better and in 31 per cent it was very good or better. In seven per cent, it was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching seen was similar to that observed during the last inspection. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed throughout the school and were characterised by positive teaching methods, good management of pupils, and effective use of time and resources in particular. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen only with pupils in Year 4 and was largely due to low expectations of pupils' behaviour, of what they can achieve and the slow pace of lessons.
19. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is now good overall. The curriculum is now well planned and of good quality. Teachers are well supported in the nursery by trained staff who enrich the learning opportunities of children and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers in these early years make secure use of assessment to plan and adjust the curriculum to suit the needs of individual children. Teachers take care to build up good classroom routines so that children increase the level of their self-esteem and confidence. All teachers in the early years' classes are very effective in creating a caring atmosphere of mutual respect that fosters positive relationships between children and others.
20. The overall quality of teaching seen in both key stages was good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum is secure. They make regular use of subject-specific words to increase pupils' ability to discuss and understand various aspects of their lessons in a clear and accurate way. A good example was seen in science in a Year 6 lesson on the properties of gases. The teacher enhanced pupils' learning by talking knowledgeably with them about the various elements.
21. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and pupils make steady progress with their learning of these aspects of the subjects. In mathematics, most teachers place appropriate emphasis on the development of pupils' ability to investigate and solve various problems and they are aware of the need to revise and develop their skills of quick mental recall. In English, a clear and

regular emphasis is placed upon the development of accurate spelling and writing in a variety of forms for different purposes.

22. The quality of planning is satisfactory for most subjects but there are weaknesses in science and mathematics. In these two areas, teachers do not make sufficient allowance for pupils of different abilities when planning activities for them to achieve. This applies to higher attaining pupils in particular. As a result, they do not reach the maximum level of progress of which they are capable. However, pupils make good progress with their learning when the work is matched well to their different abilities and needs as seen in a Year 6 English lesson on explanatory text.
23. Teachers' expectations of how much work pupils can achieve and an appropriate level of learning are generally satisfactory throughout the school. Where they are high, as in a Year 1 English lesson on blending letters in preparation for spelling, pupils respond positively, work hard and enjoy what they are doing. Where they are low, as in both science and mathematics lessons seen in Year 4, pupils lose concentration, distract others and make unsatisfactory progress with their learning.
24. Most teachers make good use of a range of methods of organisation and teaching techniques to help pupils learn effectively. They use a mixture of approaches that include whole-class, group and individual teaching. Several good examples were seen of positive ways in which teachers help pupils to learn. Most make effective use of tried and tested questioning techniques as a way of furthering pupils' learning as in a Year 2/3 design and technology lesson on designing photograph frames. Pupils were challenged to think of ways in which they might improve their designs. Most teachers encourage pupils positively with appropriate praise and guidance. Many make effective use of their voice to stimulate and encourage pupils to concentrate.
25. The majority of teachers manage pupils effectively. This is because they are firm but also fair. As a result, most pupils behave and respond positively to others and to their work. On occasions when some pupils do not react in a reasonable manner, most teachers respond quickly and professionally to ensure that minimum disruption occurs and lessons return to normal as soon as possible.
26. The use that teachers make of support staff and resources is also good through the school. As a result, the level of pupils' learning is raised. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 English lesson on sharing and reporting news where the teaching assistants were used effectively to supervise groups of pupils with their learning. Many teachers make sure that lessons move at a lively pace and this ensures that pupils remain interested and active with their work. Teachers often set time limits for completion of sections of their lessons, as in a Year 2/3 lesson on writing poems. This is good practice and helps pupils to make the most of the time available to them.

27. The quality of teachers' daily assessment of pupils' work is good when they make comments to pupils during lessons. Most teachers make positive and constructive comments that help pupils to increase their learning. Some, but not all, do this with their written marking so pupils know what to do next to improve their work. The quality of marking is variable - for example, in Year 4 mathematics. Good examples of positive marking were seen in science in Years 5 and 6. The work that teachers set for homework is appropriate for pupils of different age groups.
28. Teachers keep informative records of pupils' achievement in English and history and follow a whole-school format to achieve this. In other subjects, systems of recording are variable and, generally, not up to the same standard. As a result, they are of limited value in providing appropriate information that will support future lesson planning.
29. There is a satisfactory whole-school commitment to the inclusion and integration of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Over time their progress has been satisfactory, mainly because of the numbers of changes in teaching staff. However, during the inspection, the progress that these pupils made in their lessons was good. Pupils with special educational needs now receive a good quality of teaching both in their classrooms, and in withdrawal groups. Tasks are well matched to their abilities and sometimes to the targets outlined in their Individual Education Plans.
30. The school organises separate small group activities led by a specialist teacher on one afternoon each week. Pupils requiring closer support in literacy are well supported in these classes, which significantly promote better progress and understanding.

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

31. The school provides a satisfactory range of interesting learning opportunities that enhance the curriculum. The programmes of study of the National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals are followed and due time is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, there are some imbalances within particular subjects, such as physical education, and a lack of balance across the curriculum in some areas except in the Foundation Stage, where breadth, balance and relevance are good. In physical education, every class has a swimming lesson every week but this leaves insufficient time for other aspects of the subject. The amount of time given to history and geography is not yet balanced, with history being given more time than geography. Similarly, the school has only just begun to consider the amount of time given to design and technology.
32. Most subjects now have appropriate schemes of work and this has dealt with one of the key issues from the last inspection. The schemes generally take

account of the latest requirements of the national curriculum and the latest advice from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

33. The school has satisfactory strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Both National Strategies have been successfully implemented and skills from both are used in other subjects. For instance, pupils use time lines in history to show the passage of time and literacy skills are used constantly in history for writing and for developing speaking and listening.
34. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that include several sporting clubs such as cricket, athletics, football, rounders and canoeing. Other groups include the choir, chess and the ornithologists' club. In addition, the school has visits from a range of artists, including live theatre and music groups. Parents with particular skills also visit the school to make a valuable contribution to the curriculum. During the inspection, two parents visited infants classes to support the work in history
35. The school provides pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, full access to the curriculum. Pupils with the greatest severity of need receive a curriculum that meets the detailed targets outlined in their Individual Education Plans. Arrangements for these pupils conform to the requirements of the Code of Practice. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons to receive special support, the school makes good arrangements to ensure that they do not miss the same lesson every week.
36. Not all pupils have opportunities to participate equally in all subjects of the curriculum. There are three main reasons for this. In mixed age classes in Years 2/3 and 5/6, pupils do not always have the same level of learning experiences as their peers in parallel single age classes. For example, Year 6 pupils in Years 5/6 developed their understanding of similes and alliteration while pupils in the Year 6 class worked on the key language features of explanatory text during the inspection week. In mathematics and science, higher attaining pupils are not expected to complete work at a higher level to that of pupils of other abilities in order to reach their own particular levels of attainment. In a few instances, individual pupils are placed in a class with a year group above their own. While recognising that in some cases this may be justified when there are good social reasons, very often little thought has been given to the implications for the pupil's curricular requirements. Furthermore, this limits the opportunities that these pupils have to benefit from social and other related experiences of their own age group.
37. At present, provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The governors are currently looking for an appropriate sex education programme that meets the needs of pupils and the needs of a Catholic school. There is no formal drug education programme within the school but the school is aware of this and a designated teacher is due to undertake appropriate training in the near future. Pupils keep a personal record of achievement but there is no consistent, formal approach to this area.

38. Relationships with other schools in the area are beginning to develop. There are satisfactory links with the secondary schools for pupils who transfer, and students from these schools help with sports at St Mary's. Curricular links with other primary schools in the area, including the other Catholic primary schools, are rather tenuous and the present acting headteacher has identified this as an area for future development.
39. The school's overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is similar to the judgement in the last inspection report and such provision continues to make a positive contribution to the ethos of the school. Its mission statement places great importance on pupils' spiritual development, which is very good. Collective worship provides a strong daily opportunity for a spiritual focus and pupils sing together with obvious enjoyment. Pupils' ideas are valued by teachers and by other pupils.
40. In an assembly observed during the inspection, clear appreciation was shown for the way in which pupils had planned and produced it themselves. The focus of the candle and the dimmed lights in the classroom helped to provide a strong spiritual environment. Throughout the school there are areas to celebrate the school's strong Christian ethos and the creation of lively classroom environments where pupils' work is valued through attractive displays that help to raise pupils' self-esteem and awareness of what they are capable of achieving.
41. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and provision for moral development is very good. Notices around the school such as, "Be someone you would be proud to know", encourage the positive development of this aspect of their learning. In its code of behaviour, the school makes clear the need to encourage pupils to work hard and behave well. In lessons, and in the day-to-day life of the school, staff promote values that foster honesty, fairness and respect for truth. All pupils are valued and relationships are very good throughout the school, where kind and thoughtful behaviour is encouraged. Pupils show respect for the building, equipment and materials. Teachers use every opportunity to develop pupils' understanding of what is acceptable and what is not.
42. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. Most teachers are very good role models; they are sensitive and supportive of their pupils and of one another. The very good relationships in the school ensure that each person is valued and pupils respond positively to this. The school provides opportunities for pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility. Each class has monitors who undertake various tasks to support the daily life of the school. The school council makes a positive contribution as its members undertake their responsibilities diligently, dealing with issues raised by their classmates and reporting back after each meeting. Most pupils work collaboratively in lessons and respond well to each other at play. They show concern for the needs of others. For example, they raise funds for charities and provide Christmas gift boxes for two charities.

43. Provision for cultural development is good overall. Displays in the school of local mining and Mousehole village show how well pupils learn about their local heritage. They take part in events and festivals giving pupils many opportunities to celebrate their local culture. Good use is made of visits to nearby places of interest and pupils in Year 6 spend a week's residential visit to the Scilly Islands. Visitors to the school cover subjects such as the care of animals, the history of the seaside and a local engineer of the past. Local artists have helped pupils design costumes for the year 2101 and these will be a feature of a local exhibition. However, the provision for pupils to learn about other cultures and about the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society is less well developed.

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

44. Since the last inspection report the school has maintained its good support for ensuring pupils' welfare. Teachers understand their pupils well. They know the procedures to be followed to ensure that pupils are well protected and that the level of welfare is of good quality. Parents appreciate the way that staff care for their children. For example, during the inspection, a pupil, who had recently returned from some time spent in hospital, was welcomed with care and understanding by both his teacher and classmates. The care of pupils through the educational and personal support and guidance offered is satisfactory. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all related matters of health, safety, security and first aid are dealt with to a high standard.
45. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are good overall but those for monitoring and supporting their academic progress are unsatisfactory. Personal development is ensured through the system of class monitors and the promotion of the school council, and everyone in the school community is valued. The office staff ensures that procedures for the monitoring of attendance are good. Staff work together well to ensure the implementation of the "Positive Approach to Discipline Policy", this firm and friendly approach extends to lunchtimes. This consistent approach ensures the good behaviour of pupils and the elimination of oppressive behaviour. The very effective support provided by staff makes a positive contribution to pupils' well being, and enables them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered.
46. The school provides pupils with special educational needs full access to the curriculum and those with the greatest severity of need receive a curriculum that meets the detailed targets outlined in their Individual Education Plans. Arrangements for these pupils conform to the requirements of the Code of Practice. Where these pupils are withdrawn from lessons to receive special support, the school makes good arrangements to ensure that they do not miss the same lesson every week.
47. At the previous inspection, it was reported that pupils, especially those capable of higher achievement, were sometimes insufficiently challenged in their

lessons. There has been an improvement in that teachers now indicate in their plans how each lesson will be varied according to the needs of different groups of children. However, there remains a need to raise the level of challenge for some higher attaining pupils in order that they achieve their expected levels of attainment.

48. The procedures for assessing pupil's attainment and progress, as distinct from monitoring, are satisfactory. These are applied before pupils begin work on the National Curriculum when their achievement is checked against the early learning goals. This enables appropriate support to be given to improve areas of weakness. The school uses a wide range of tests and keeps accurate records of pupils' progress and achievement in English, mathematics and science. For example, in Year 5, there are precise details of each pupils' standards matched against National Curriculum expectations, with, in many cases, aspirations for improvement. Assessment procedures are also in place for achievement in religious education, which is also used effectively to support children's personal development as with, for example, lessons focusing on using personal gifts to support others and 'things I need to change in myself'. The system of assessment used in religious education is currently being adopted to cover all other subjects. Overall, in respect of both academic achievement and personal development, teachers know individual pupils well. However, this does vary from class to class and some of the value of the hard work done in assessment in some classes is depreciated by the inconsistent use of it in others.
49. The use of assessment to plan the curriculum is satisfactory. Tests are analysed and teaching is directed towards identified weaknesses. While pupils' academic progress is tracked as they move through the school, the use of assessment to support pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory. For example, there is no agreed system in place to identify group and individual targets for raising standards in English, mathematics and science, nor is there any reference to these on the annual report to parents. No method is yet in place for identifying variations in the achievement of distinct groups such as girls and boys or higher attaining pupils. Assessment is also not regularly used to make sure that work in the classroom is matched effectively to what pupils of differing abilities know and can do.

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

50. Since the last inspection report, the school's partnership with parents has continued to be good. Parents have a positive view of the school. Questionnaires returned prior to the inspection showed that 97 per cent of parents say that their children like school and 99 per cent appreciate the fact that the school encourages their children to achieve well. Inspectors were given a positive view of the school by parents spoken to during the inspection.
51. The school has good links with parents to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. The impact of parental involvement on the life of the school is good. During the inspection, several parents were helping in school and one gave an illustrated talk to a class about the history of the seaside. Parents are given an opportunity to know about their children's learning through "Link with Learning". Recently a numeracy evening was organised to keep parents informed about the teaching of mathematics.

52. Overall, the quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Home School Agreements are in place. Reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory but they do not always state clearly what pupils need to do next to improve. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are both generally satisfactory but two items are missing in the governors' annual report to parents - a comment on the professional development of teachers and a summary of the school's targets for Key Stage 2 assessments. Parents are kept informed about all school activities through the publication of a very good weekly newsletter that has just celebrated its one-hundredth publication. This newsletter is very useful because it is clear and helpful and provides an opportunity for parents to share in the life of the school.
53. Parental contribution to pupils' learning at home and at school is good. The school has a supportive Friends Association that raises valuable funds to support pupils' education. Parents of children with special educational needs are now fully involved in discussions about their children's progress and this enables them to have a good understanding of the additional support that their children receive.

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

54. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory at present. This has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection when senior managers and governors had failed to set a clear educational direction for the school and management was judged to be poor. Since then, acting headteachers, including the current acting headteacher, have worked successfully to begin to deal with the most serious issues of the last report. A new headteacher has been appointed recently to take up her position in September.
55. As a result of the determined efforts of the current acting headteacher, the governing body and the majority of staff, members of the school are now beginning to function effectively as a team and this new and positive outlook is beginning to be recognised by parents. In the past, the senior management team and co-ordinators had little or no awareness of, or responsibility to develop their individual roles. They are now beginning to take on the challenge and most have made good progress in learning to monitor, evaluate, develop and guide the progress of their subjects or areas of responsibility.
56. The deputy headteacher has yet to come to terms with his new responsibilities and to acquire the necessary skills of leadership that were not given the opportunity to develop in the past. There is a clear need to raise expectations of what the role involves and to monitor and evaluate the progress made on a regular basis. It is to his credit that he has recently commenced a period of professional leadership training.
57. The special educational needs co-ordinator has worked hard to address shortcomings identified in the previous inspection. A clear development plan is

now regularly checked for progress. There is now a greater involvement of the governor responsible for this area and the monitoring of current practice. There is now a good system for identifying and recording the special needs of pupils and comprehensive assessments are carried out regularly. The co-ordinator checks that appropriate resources are available and aims to ensure that the necessary professional training for all staff now takes place. However, the school does not currently have a team of assistants working under the supervision of the special needs teacher and trained specifically to support pupils with special needs.

58. The acting headteacher and the majority of staff are successful in ensuring that the school's aims and values are reflected in all that they do. Most teachers have strengthened their understanding and expectations of what pupils of different abilities can achieve in English as a direct result of the introduction of the literacy hour. However this understanding is not yet complete with all teachers and more work has yet to be done to change long established patterns of expectation, particularly in mathematics and science for higher attaining pupils. Teachers place considerable importance on the need to develop pupils' self-esteem and work hard to ensure that all feel happy and comfortable about coming to school. Effective systems for introducing new staff to the routines of the school and for supporting the development of newly qualified teachers do not yet exist.
59. The governing body is led by an informed chairman and fully supports the actions that the acting headteacher is taking to move the school forward. Both the governing body and the acting headteacher are clear about what needs to be done to improve the school further. Many of the governors are new to the position and readily admit that they are on a steep learning curve. However, they have already taken some very difficult decisions regarding professional positions and financial problems. They show a willingness to listen to and take advice from appropriate authorities and now have a strong, shared commitment to improvement, together with the capacity to succeed.
60. A number of committees now exist and governors are taking up opportunities for training to improve the effectiveness of their work. They have recently completed training on how to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and recognise that this remains an area of weakness, both for them and for the senior management of the school. They do not yet have a secure system for appraising the work of the headteacher to ensure that targets are set or to see that progress made towards them is monitored each year.
61. The governing body generally fulfils its duties and ensures that the school complies with the majority of statutory requirements. The annual report to parents does not include a comment on the professional development of teachers or a summary of the school's targets for Key Stage 2 assessments. Governors have increased their involvement in the composition of the school development plan since the last inspection. The plan was written following a training day involving both staff and governors. A new system for monitoring the effectiveness of the plan is being introduced but this remains in the early

stages of development and further refinement is necessary before the process becomes effective.

62. The acting headteacher has initiated some monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and learning throughout the school with particular reference to the development of literacy and numeracy. However, this remains an area for further development, particularly with regard to the level of monitoring of teaching by co-ordinators within their particular subjects. The school does not have a firm strategy for assessing and analysing the needs of individual pupils so that clear targets for their individual progress can be set.
63. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving most areas of concern since the last inspection. It has successfully delegated responsibilities to the senior management team so that they can begin to support colleagues and evaluate critically how well their areas are responding. This is a new concept for most members and some have developed their skills more securely than others. There is now a clear structure of management and improved communication has led to the development of a positive team spirit. The school has not yet been successful in making sure that all of the monitoring responsibilities of the senior management team have been strengthened to raise standards of teaching and learning.
64. The school has started to provide co-ordinators with time out of class so that they can take an active role in developing their subjects but much remains to be done. However, co-ordinators do now have appropriate roles and responsibilities. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects of the curriculum apart from music. The school has not yet introduced an appraisal system that sets clear guides for development but it has increased staff training to meet subject and personal needs. Staff morale has definitely improved since the last inspection, particularly as a result of the perceptive approach to the development of teamwork and responsibilities by the acting headteacher. The voluntary fund is now properly run and audited regularly and each co-ordinators now has a small annual budget responsibility.
65. The school is making sensible use of computers and secure systems are in place to ensure that the financial and administrative work of school management is efficiently carried out. This is due largely to the effective management of the office by the school secretary. All resources, specific grants and other funding are used correctly and the school applies appropriate principles of best value when purchasing stock. All of the main recommendations of the last financial audit have been acted upon.
66. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has made sure that all staff have job descriptions, although a refined and developed whole-school system for teacher appraisal has yet to be put in place. Teachers are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to co-ordinating roles is generally secure. Training for the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been successful in providing a structured and effective programme of learning that has a positive effect on the quality of both teaching and learning achieved.

67. The accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms have sufficient space and some have attractive displays of pupils' work and information. The nursery unit is particularly attractively designed and displayed and provides a welcoming and secure place for children to begin their education at school. The library area is satisfactory and computer work- stations are in the process of being developed. The outside areas are appropriate for the needs of all pupils and the site supervisor is an asset to the school. He ensures that the school is kept in a clean and tidy condition and enhances the quality of the learning environment for pupils in other ways that include a willingness to help teachers with practical support when asked, such as with the construction of extra shelves, for example.
68. Overall, the provision of resources is satisfactory for all subjects except geography where a lack of maps and computer software restricts the quality of teaching. However, computer hardware has been improved recently thus allowing for more opportunities for pupils to increase their learning. The school has plans for a further increase in this provision in the near future.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

69. **In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff with management responsibilities should:**
- A.** Continue to improve the leadership and management of the school by:
- Clarifying the role and responsibilities of the deputy headteacher and setting clear management targets with explicit criteria for ensuring that these are achieved at a level commensurate with this position of seniority.
  - Further extending the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators so that they become increasingly effective in monitoring and developing the quality of teaching and learning.
  - Implementing a clear strategy for judging the performance of both the staff and the school.
  - Building on the enthusiasm and willingness of the new governing body to become more effective by increasing its knowledge and understanding of its duties and responsibilities.
  - Developing a firm strategy for assessing and analysing the needs of all pupils so that clear targets for their individual progress can be set.

- Ensuring that there is a constructive and positive system for introducing new staff to the expected codes of practice of the school.

*(refer to paragraphs 18, 27, 49, 56, 60, 62, 63, 64, 66, 95, 107, 113, 124, 127, 139 and 144)*

- B.** Make sure that all teachers increase the depth of their planning and practice to take account of higher attaining pupils - particularly in mathematics and science.

*(refer to paragraphs 22, 23, 47, 58, 97, 98, 104, 105, 110 and 111)*

- C.** Reconsider the current structure of the curriculum to ensure breadth and balance both within and across all subjects.

*(refer to paragraphs 31, 127, 136, 137, 139, 141, 148 and 149)*

- D.** Improve equal opportunities for all pupils by

- Making sure that pupils of the same age group in different classes receive identical opportunities to have the same learning experiences.
- Making sure that higher attaining pupils are expected to work as hard as others to achieve their expected levels of attainment.
- Considering the wisdom of placing individual pupils in classes ahead of their age group.

*(refer to paragraphs 14, 22, 36, 47, 59, 97, 99 and 111)*

70. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Consistency of marking                                   | <i>refer to paragraphs 28, 95, 135,</i>  |
| • Use of ICT across the curriculum                         | <i>refer to paragraphs 108, 117, 138</i> |
| • Greater awareness of ethnic diversity of British society | <i>refer to paragraph 44</i>             |
| • Presentation skills in writing                           | <i>refer to paragraph 91</i>             |
| • Science – fine tune two-year programme                   | <i>refer to paragraph 116</i>            |

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	29	49	13	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	217
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	51

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	48

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	22	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	17	20
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	45	43	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (89)	86 (100)	92 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	21
	Girls	26	26	28
	Total	45	47	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (89)	94 (97)	98 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	17	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	16	13	16
	Total	27	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (86)	71 (81)	91 (97)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	16	15	17
	Total	27	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (86)	82 (89)	91 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	186
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	27.1

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	143

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.0
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
----------------	------

	£
Total income	470931
Total expenditure	491241
Expenditure per pupil	2263
Balance brought forward from previous year	51322
Balance carried forward to next year	31012

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	296
Number of questionnaires returned	72

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	39	8	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	46	7	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	40	13	1	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	0	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	35	26	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	40	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	46	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	55	14	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	28	55	13	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	39	3	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	27	15	7	8

**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**

71. The school makes good provision for the education of children under five. The resources and accommodation both contribute positively to the success of this provision. The curriculum is now well planned and of good quality. Teachers are well supported in the nursery by trained staff who enrich the learning opportunities of the children, assisting the children in practical ways and developing their language skills. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there were insufficient qualified support staff. Children are admitted to the nursery class at any time after they reach the age of three years and attend on a part-time basis. During the term in which they are five, children transfer to a reception class in the main school and attend full time. The majority of children in the nursery were four years old during the inspection period. Their attainment varies considerably when they are admitted to school but, for the majority, it is broadly in line with that expected for children of this age. By the time they are five, most children reach standards outlined in the desirable learning outcomes for their age. Those with special educational needs make progress commensurate with their ability. They are well supported by assistants who ensure that, with additional attention, their progress and understanding improves.
72. Children under five make generally satisfactory progress over time both in the nursery class and the reception classes, although, during the inspection, the quality of their learning was good because of the good quality of teaching seen. Two-thirds of the teaching seen was good and one third was very good. This level of progress applies to all areas of learning. The difference between achievement over time and the progress that children now make with their learning is due to recent improvements in curricular planning and the present good quality of teaching. The curriculum is now based on the Cornwall Early Years Plan, which ensures that learning will be progressive from Nursery through to the end of Reception. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children attain the early learning goals in their mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. In their personal and social development and their skills of speaking and listening, most children achieve above the levels expected for their age. There are good arrangements to assess children's attainments and their progress and the reception class teachers use these to predict what a child might be expected to achieve by the time they are seven years old. Assessments are well used in planning and in adjusting the curriculum. During the school year, reception class teachers link children's learning with the early requirements of the National Curriculum, preparing them well for their future learning in Key Stage 1.

**Personal and social development**

73. As a result of the good relationships between children and adults, children learn that they are safe and quickly settle into the nursery class and feel secure. Many children forge good relationships with each other and build good friendships. They learn to play well, to share equipment and to co-operate in small groups. They work happily together or individually and become engrossed for relatively long periods in their activities. During the inspection, children were observed playing comfortably in the puppet theatre. They took turns to speak for the puppets and made each other laugh with their antics. Others happily experimented with sand and shared tools fairly. They develop initiative and independence in choosing resources and at the end of a lesson in tidying equipment away. Children in the reception classes know what the necessary rules are and can understand when there is sufficient space for them to take a turn on an activity or when they must wait. They behave very well when listening to the teacher and the classrooms are orderly and calm even though there are sometimes many different activities occurring simultaneously. Children are trained patiently with regard to classroom routines in order that they fully understand the guidelines for the day. Many build high self-esteem and are very confident. Their progress in personal and social development is a strength of the school.
74. The teaching of personal and social development is good. The three teachers and support staff in the early years classes are very effective in creating a caring atmosphere of mutual respect which fosters positive relationships and builds confidence in children. Teachers are very successful in organising appropriate tasks for the children in order that they can be successful and feel a pride in their achievements. Staff build very good relationships with parents and welcome them into the classrooms. They fully recognise the benefits for children in involving parents in their children's education and this process has been formalised in the Home School Agreement.

### **Language and Literacy**

75. Although children do not come into the nursery with high attainment in speaking and listening, staff involve the children quickly in activities that will develop these important skills. Consequently, children are greeted individually at the beginning of every session and staff pay particular attention to the conversations which take place. Every opportunity is taken to promote speaking in a variety of classroom situations. For example, children talk about what they have done at the weekend and are encouraged to take part in discussions. Speaking is developed as something in which everyone can share, and children sit in a circle, passing around a shell which indicates who is to have the next turn at speaking. They are encouraged to listen out for sounds at the beginning of words and to hear rhymes and rhythms in poetry. They have fun joining in with rhymes they have learned together and clearly enjoy guessing games that arise from this. Children enjoy playing in stimulating play areas that encourage role-play and extend their speaking skills. Steady progress is made in acquiring reading and writing skills in the reception classes. Children's enjoyment of books is promoted by staff through the whole-class sharing of books, and through the special book display areas

that enable children to sit comfortably and become engrossed in reading. They talk about the pictures and enjoy browsing repeatedly through their favourite stories. Fiction books and poems are often linked very imaginatively with a topic. Nursery rhymes about 'Mary Mary' and the story of the very Hungry Caterpillar are all part of the topic on 'Growth' in the reception classrooms. The vocabulary from these books becomes a part of children's increasing vocabulary. They make good progress with their reading of simple books that they read with some pride. The youngest children start to make marks on the page with a variety of drawing tools and they gradually understand that marks on the page convey meaning. Children in the reception classes are learning to form their letters correctly and to write simple words that they make into short sentences. They hold their pencils correctly, form their letters with increasing control and begin to space words well on the page.

76. There are two children in the foundation classes who speak English as a second language. The teachers of these children fully recognise how to best provide for their needs. In particular, they ensure that children acquire the skills they need through a rich balance of first hand experience and words that describe them.
77. The teaching of language and literacy is good, overall. In particular, teachers stimulate discussion by providing attractive resources and this encourages and motivates the children effectively. In the reception classes, teachers had prepared small storybooks in which children could match the words of the 'Ugly Duckling' story. The high quality of the books sets very high standards and indicates to the children that the teachers expect work of high quality.

## **Mathematics**

78. Teachers in the nursery provide opportunities for counting, matching and sequencing activities to promote learning. Children use a variety of two-dimensional shapes when making patterns and posters. They sort and classify objects according to colour or size and many count confidently up to ten. They explore capacity through sand and water play. In the reception classes, children learn how to gather information and learn new vocabulary such as 'survey'. They understand how to represent their findings in different formats, such as pictograms and pie charts. They develop an understanding of the terms more and less and apply this when playing in the Café and serving the customers. Children handle real coins and are learning how to add two-pence and one penny.
79. All teachers extend and consolidate children's mathematical knowledge well. Numeracy is taught not only in mathematics lessons but also in various other subjects. Teachers extend children's mathematical language by referring constantly to terms and numbers in various situations. For example, when children are having a fruit break or when the register is called, these occasions are used to extend children's mathematical knowledge.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

80. A variety of experiences is provided for children and linked to the current topics. For example, in the nursery class, children learn about pets. They draw them and write about their own pets, cut out animal pictures, and create stories when playing 'in role' in the Pet Rescue Area. They discuss what is wrong with the animals in the surgery, answer the telephone as receptionists and type out new appointments for the pet owners. In the reception classes, children learn about growth in both plants and animals. They discover the conditions that are best for growth, make collages of sunflowers with seeds, learn the names for the parts of plants and carry out investigations about eggs. They acquire good observation skills and are developing skills of reasoning. When learning about animals that lay eggs, children talk fluently and look at illustrations in well selected books. They develop rich vocabulary whilst experimenting with eggs when cooking and suggest words such as 'yoke, slimy and solid'. Children use the computer regularly and are developing the skills required. Many can control the mouse well and are able to select and move items around the screen.
81. Teachers plan thoroughly in order to link activities well and create topics to link the various areas of learning. They prepare materials and resources of a high standard and engage children's interest in this way. They organise practical activities very well in order that children receive all the opportunities they need to have first hand experiences. Teachers show skill in questioning to challenge and develop children's thinking.

## **Physical development**

82. Children use a wide range of outside play equipment well and develop good control of vehicles as they ride around the extensive play area. Children show increasing control and co-ordination when using a range of tools such as crayons, paintbrushes and scissors and they enjoy sawing wood at a workbench. They fit construction toys and jigsaws together well and predict what the final picture will become. By the time they move into the reception classes most children have developed very good skills in movement. In one physical education lesson, children were moving like a caterpillar in, over and through the apparatus. They showed very good understanding of their bodies in order to squeeze themselves into a tight shape and then extend into a humped back shape whilst moving confidently along a beam. They 'held' their position in a controlled, still pose when they emerged from the egg as a 'butterfly.'
83. The teaching of physical development is good. Teachers give very clear and simple instructions to the children, which can be readily understood. They also use opportunities to extend children's vocabulary as in the physical education lesson where five-year-olds learned the word 'metamorphosis'. The high level of teachers' expectations enables children to achieve very well.

## **Creative development.**

84. Children in the nursery enjoy dancing in time with the music and celebrate 'good news' through dancing, singing and waving flags and streamers. They move in a controlled way and respond well to the music. While using a full range of materials such as fabric, paint and paper, they begin to choose colours that will look most striking. Children in the reception classes develop their skills further and show an increasing ability to use scissors, paintbrushes and chalks with confidence. In one class, the teacher regularly plays the flute and the guitar to accompany singing and children develop very good skills in singing in tune, recognising rhythms and clapping them back accurately.
85. The teaching of creative development is good. Teachers carefully plan and prepare opportunities for children to experiment with a wide variety of objects and materials in order to extend their experiences. The teaching of skills is very good, and sometimes opportunities are given for children to use these experimentally. However, more occasions could be made for children to design their own learning experiences, to make decisions and to seek their own solutions to problems.

## **ENGLISH**

86. Standards in reading and writing are average by the time pupils are seven. This is similar to the results from the 2000 National Curriculum tests for reading and an improvement on the writing results. The improvement in writing is a direct result of the analysis done by the co-ordinator in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the teaching programme. Standards are above average in English by the time pupils are eleven and this is similar to the results of last year's tests.
87. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning over time in both key stages. However, in Years 5 and 6, progress is good because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are very high and they ensure that pupils develop very good attitudes towards their work. The quality of pupils' learning during the inspection, however, was good as a direct result of the quality of teaching seen. Compared with the last inspection, standards appear to have dropped. The most likely cause is that, in the past, there have been a number of temporary teachers in some classes. Also, a considerable number of pupils have left and joined the school in recent years.
88. By the end of Year 2, speaking and listening are well developed and many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop these skills both in literacy and in other subjects such as history. A good example of this is when a local engineer, in the guise of Richard Trevithick, visited the Year 2 class. Pupils listened very well to what he had to say and asked very sensible questions of him to deepen their understanding of life 200 years ago.
89. By the time they are seven most pupils read accurately from a range of texts and average and higher attaining pupils predict outcomes of stories and

express thoughts about the books they have read. They develop a keen interest in books and have good reading habits. Lower attaining pupils have not yet developed this interest and, although they read regularly in school and at home, they do not show the same level of interest. Library skills are well developed for most pupils. They display a good understanding of how to use the library and how to find information in books by using the content and index. Higher attaining pupils use and understand a glossary. Pupils develop a reasonable phonetic approach to new words and use their knowledge of phonemes to aid this process.

90. In writing, most pupils use full stops and capital letters reasonably accurately and some higher attaining pupils attempt to use other punctuation such as speech marks occasionally in their work. Spelling of most monosyllabic words is accurate and pupils are encouraged to have a go before using their wordbooks. All pupils are given regular spellings to learn as part of their homework.
91. Pupils learn to write for different purposes. They record their weekend diaries, they retell familiar stories and use their literacy skills in subjects such as history and science for recording their findings. Most pupils write in a legible and fluent style. However, very few are using a joined style of handwriting. The co-ordinator is aware of this and is already beginning to deal with the problem. Presentation skills also vary at this stage and insufficient attention is paid to this aspect of writing in order to ensure that a consistent standard is achieved.
92. By the time they leave the school at eleven, most pupils become very confident in speaking and listening. They engage in conversation with adults willingly, expressing themselves well and often give reasons for their opinions. They listen to stories, poems and texts of various kinds and express opinions on favourite books and authors using extracts from texts to illustrate their views.
93. By eleven the majority of pupils are avid and enthusiastic readers. Many have begun to favour certain authors and give good reasons for their preferences. They enjoy the moods and emotions that books can generate. One Year 6 girl explained that her books could change her mood no matter how she was feeling and could take her wherever she wanted to go. Pupils read a range of books for pleasure and for information and extract the information they need. They have developed good research skills and know how to interrogate books, CD-ROMs and documents for information.
94. Pupils become confident writers by the time they are eleven and they write with the reader in mind. They use formal language for instructional texts as well as persuasive language, as in a letter to their parents regarding the addition of a pet to the household. Pupils write poems such as Haiku as seen in Year 4, book reviews and they know how to rewrite well-known stories in their own words. Their work is generally well presented in a neat, legible writing style. They use words for effect and written work is well punctuated with paragraphs, commas, speech marks and possessive apostrophes. Spellings are generally

accurate. They use word-processing to aid their writing, particularly when creating posters. They learn to enrich their writing with the use of similes, adjectives and adverbs.

95. The quality of teaching in English is good overall across the school with a significant amount of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of both pupils' behaviour and the work they produce. Clear time limits are set to ensure that the pace is not reduced. Learning objectives are clear and precise and are shared with pupils so that they have an understanding of what is expected. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they use it to set appropriate but challenging tasks for the different ability groups within the class. In the Year 5/6 class, the teacher's own love of language inspires pupils, as seen in their work on similes. The best lessons are well organised and taken at a good pace that sustains pupils' interest. During lessons, teachers give very good positive comment that urges pupils on to greater efforts. However, marking of work is inconsistent throughout the school. At its best, it is excellent and gives pupils a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses within their writing and indicates how they may improve. At its worst, it is poor, with a perfunctory tick or one word comment. In some lessons, the behaviour of some pupils is negative and potentially disruptive and is not dealt with firmly or consistently enough in line with the school's agreed behaviour policy. In the best lessons, the plenary session is often used to assess pupils' learning and the clear learning objectives are used as the criteria upon which to make judgements
96. Targets for English are appropriate and clearly reflect the different abilities of each year group. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by extra adult help and generally by work that has been adapted for their ability level and this enables them to make good progress. Literacy skills are used to good effect in other subjects such as history, science and religious education.
97. The management of the subject is good. In the last twelve months, the co-ordinator has totally revamped the approach to the teaching of English. She has rewritten the scheme of work, has introduced a new approach to spelling, is introducing a new scheme to raise standards in writing and is implementing a new marking policy. She has begun to analyse test results in order to target groups of pupils and also to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching programme. Although she monitors pupils' progress by regular work sampling, she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching of other colleagues. The co-ordinator is a very able teacher who has the drive, knowledge, understanding and subject knowledge to develop English still further and to raise standards even higher.

## **MATHEMATICS**

98. Standards are average when pupils are seven years of age. This is a significant improvement from the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000 when standards were very low in comparison with all schools nationally

and below average in comparison with similar schools. Basic skills in addition and subtraction, knowing addition and subtraction facts by heart up to at least ten, the two, five and ten times tables and being able to explain methods when finding answers are major factors in the improvement. More pupils are now reaching better than expected standards although this could be improved further if all lessons provided higher starting points in tasks and more challenging targets for higher attaining pupils.

99. Standards are average when pupils are eleven years of age. These are similar to the results of the 2000 National Curriculum Tests for Year 6 pupils that were in line with all schools nationally and above average in comparison to similar schools. While overall these standards have been maintained, approximately 30 per cent of pupils are now attaining higher than expected levels, which is better than last year. Particularly good skills, knowledge and understanding are evident in basic number work involving decimals, fractions and percentages and the application and use of these in solving problems.
100. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning over time throughout the school. The quality of pupils' learning during the inspection, however, was good as a direct result of the quality of teaching seen in most classes. While few pupils with special needs reach the standards expected for their age they make satisfactory progress and, in some lessons, it is good. In these lessons there is a better match of tasks to ability and more effective use of classroom support staff. The weakness in several classes of failing to match tasks closely to the range of abilities results in some variation in the levels of learning of different groups of pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils. For instance, in a Year 3 lesson, much time was spent in defining lines of symmetry, which pupils had learned in previous lessons, and a similar task, preceded by lengthy instructions, was given to most pupils. This provided little time and few opportunities, especially for higher attaining pupils, to progress to new learning by, for example, checking the accuracy of lines of symmetry by careful measuring.
101. Most seven-year olds understand place value up to 100 but not enough are confident with numbers to 1000. While they read amounts of money correctly, many are not yet secure in the understanding of simple decimal notation linked to the £ sign. They have sound mental methods for adding and subtracting, although few have a firm understanding of subtraction as the inverse of addition. Knowledge of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes, which was judged to be very low last year, has improved but there is some weakness in measure, particularly in the use of simple standard units such as centimetres and grammes. Some good work is evident in grouping information and drawing and interpreting simple graphs, for instance in the different ways pupils travel to school.
102. By the time they leave school the majority of pupils have good basic numeracy skills. They understand place value of figures to at least two decimal places and apply this confidently to mental and written problems involving the four rules of calculation. They use methods such as doubling, halving, rounding of

numbers and ordering by size to discover quicker and more efficient methods. Most have a sound knowledge of both imperial and metric measure, the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and the use of degrees to measure angles. They use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary when explaining answers and this contributes effectively to the development of literacy skills.

103. The use of numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. This is seen in activities based on the Story Club by younger pupils and the use of time in geography by older ones to illustrate a typical day in the life of a child living in India. Numeracy is often used in science for example, when measuring force due to gravity, angles of reflection of bouncing balls, the growth of sunflowers and the temperature of water in differently insulated containers.
104. Most teachers provide good opportunities for using and applying basic skills in mathematics. For instance in Year 1, after learning to order two numbers by size, pupils learn to apply this to improve mental skills of addition. In Year 2, they use their knowledge of time to list events in the day. In Year 6, they draw straight line graphs to represent equations by applying their understanding of coordinates.
105. The quality of teaching is good, overall. In the lessons seen, it was very good in Year 6 and unsatisfactory in Year 4. Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics, although the best teaching of basic numeracy skills is in Years 1, 5 and 6. Some good examples of this are; building good new learning on the understanding of ordering numbers in Year 1; using place value to teach pupils how to multiply and divide decimal numbers by 10 and 100 in Year 5; a Year 6 lesson extending pupils' basic skills by challenging them to use and explain various mental ways of calculating answers to decimal problems. In the latter, learning was enhanced by words such as origin, equations, and precision. Pupils were taught the importance of accuracy when joining coordinates. This was in contrast to a lesson with Year 2 and 3 pupils when the freehand drawing of capital letters did not match up to answers about their symmetry. It is less successful in lessons such as those in Year 3 and 4 that lack pace, do not promote new learning and fail to interest pupils.
106. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and what is to be learned in a lesson is usually clearly defined. However, too little attention is given in some classes to matching work closely to the full range of pupils' abilities. The lack of high expectation, particularly for higher attaining pupils, is a weakness in much of the teaching. For instance, in the unsatisfactory Year 4 lesson, where pupils were using place value to break down two-digit numbers to make multiplication simpler, lower attaining pupils had difficulty understanding the process while some of the higher attaining pupils found the work they had to do too easy. Similarly, in the Year 3 lesson, while most pupils showed a good understanding of mirror symmetry from previous lessons, they were given routine tasks that failed to promote new learning. Better practice was seen in a Year 2 lesson. Good use was made of the classroom assistant to support

lower attaining pupils in a more practical task about time that enables them to make good progress. Teachers' high expectations in Year 6 lessons results in a large number of pupils showing independence in their learning for example, when selecting their own ways of solving problems.

107. Overall, teachers manage pupils and resources efficiently. This is clearly better in lessons where teaching style and lesson content enable all pupils to take part and inspire them to succeed. Where this is the case, pupils show good attitudes, concentrate hard, are productive and show the confidence to tackle difficulties without too much recourse to the teacher. In these lessons, for instance in Year 1, skilful questioning such as 'Is it easier to add by counting on from the bigger or smaller number?' builds learning securely on what pupils already know. Informal observations, marking and regular mental tests are used to assess their attainment. The quality and the use of this are inconsistent throughout the school, particularly in identifying short-term targets and the grouping by ability of pupils in lessons to improve their learning. Homework is set regularly in most classes but again there is some inconsistency and in one class it is not always marked.
108. The leadership of the subject has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator now has a satisfactory overview of the teaching, learning and standards in the subject. This has included observation of lessons to judge the quality of the teaching of the National Numeracy Framework that has resulted in relevant training being organised. She is aware of the weakness in the use of ICT in mathematics and this is now a priority for development.
109. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There is a good curriculum in place and the role of the co-ordinator has been strengthened. After the fall in standards during the last two years they are beginning to rise again. Assessment needs a more consistent, whole-school approach to match tasks better to pupil's abilities and to identify individual and group targets for improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

110. Standards are average by the time pupils are seven and eleven years of age. These are lower than those identified at the last inspection. Teachers' assessments for pupils who were seven and eleven in 2000 indicate test results that were average compared with all schools. However, compared with similar schools, results were well above average by the time pupils left at eleven. Since the last inspection, there has been a considerable movement of pupils to and from the school and this, to some extent, has altered the overall ability of the year groups taking the tests.
111. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning over time in both key stages overall. The quality of pupils' learning during the inspection, however, was good as a direct result of the quality of teaching seen in most classes.

The lower rate of progress over time is the result of frequent changes of teachers in some classes and less effective planning in the past.

112. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of this subject that enable them to extend pupils' learning of various aspects of science with confidence. The quality of teachers' planning is secure in that the objectives of lessons are clearly thought through, identified and taught effectively. There is also a reasonable balance in the teaching and planning of the various aspects of science with a suitable emphasis on the investigative nature of the subject. However, the main weakness lies in the lack of teachers' understanding of the need to plan different levels of work for pupils of higher ability in particular. As a result, although these pupils make good progress with the learning, it could be better. Apart from that, planning for pupils, including those with special educational needs, is secure.
113. Most teachers expect pupils to listen carefully and work hard and they use a variety of methods successfully to ensure that this happens. For example, in a Year 2/3 lesson focusing on the investigation of plants and their importance to human life, the teacher approached the subject with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. As a result, this had a positive effect upon pupils' attitudes and the quality of learning achieved. When the pace of a lesson is slow and the expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, as in a lesson on insulation in Year 4, the progress that pupils make is unsatisfactory as a result.
114. By the time they are seven, pupils know of the basic conditions necessary for living things to grow successfully. They are aware of some of the differences between living and non-living things and sort them into groups according to simple common characteristics. Pupils know that forces are needed to push and pull objects and they understand the concept of an electrical circuit and relate this to the light switch and its function. Pupils know that ice melts when it becomes warm but they are not clear about what happens to water when it is heated. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a fair test as they seek to determine why some materials are better than others at keeping liquids warm. By Year 6, pupils are developing a clear understanding of some of the properties of gases. They increase their knowledge of scientific words and have the confidence to question and predict what might happen before a test is started. The quality of teaching at this level is very good. This is particularly because of the high expectations of what pupils can achieve, as shown by the level of questions asked throughout the lesson observed, and the opportunities given for pupils to follow up research in the library, through experimentation and by use of the Internet.
115. At present, although oral assessment on a one-to-one basis with pupils is good, detailed written records on how well individual pupils have mastered specific aspects of science are not in place consistently throughout the school. The quality of marking of pupils' work is also variable. Where it is good, as in Year 3 and Year 6, written comments make clear to pupils how they may improve their work.
116. The co-ordinator for science is having a positive effect on the development of this subject because she has a very clear understanding of what her role involves. She leads by example and has developed a clear scheme of work since the last

inspection. This covers a two-year rolling programme to ensure that pupils in mixed classes do not cover the same aspects twice as they move from year to year. However, there remains a need to fine tune this scheme to ensure that, where the programme covers the same topic for two year groups, the work set is clearly defined at different levels of learning. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of what needs to be done next to develop the subject further in terms of tests for each level, booklets for each unit, work samples and analysis of data.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

117. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in art and design. By the time they leave the school, standards are broadly in line with that expected of pupils aged eleven. However, in the one lesson observed during the inspection some pupils were attaining higher standards as a result of the very good teaching. Pupils observed, including those with special educational needs, made good progress during the lesson. Pupils throughout the school participate in local art competitions and festivals and they regularly win prizes at such events. They are clearly motivated to produce work of a high quality and have a sense of pride when it is shown in local art exhibitions. There are some examples of work where ICT has been used to support pupils' learning in this subject. However, as yet, this aspect of the curriculum is not fully developed or applied consistently throughout the school.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 display work undertaken to celebrate the Millenium and the Mousehole Cat. They use a range of drawing, printing and painting materials and use their sketchbooks to show their developing skills over a period of time. They draw from first-hand observations as well as using their imaginations. They experiment when using clay to make models of Saint Michael's Mount and are beginning to talk critically about their work. They describe what they achieved when working together with a professional artist and used appropriate vocabulary such as 'likeness, accuracy and shading', to describe their portraits framing the Millenium Wall Project.
119. In Years 3-6, pupils use a wider range of techniques and their work includes watercolour paintings, collages created with seeds and three-dimensional work with card, wood and clay. They develop their skills of designing, making and evaluating and make pots that are of a high standard. Some pupils in Year 6 make good progress and their paintings of boats on the sea convey a real sense of movement. They have opportunities to study the work of other artists and apply this knowledge to their own work. For example, having studied the work of Picasso, including the Cubist style portrait of "The Weeping Woman", pupils then created their own pastel portraits.
120. It was not possible to see enough lessons in art to make a judgement about the quality of teaching overall. However, discussions with pupils and teachers about their work, and observations of teachers' documentation and pupils' art, indicate that this subject is taught appropriately throughout the school. The teaching of art in the one lesson observed was of a very high standard. A

striking poem had been selected to provide a stimulus for the pupils to communicate the imagery in a visual form. The teacher's own knowledge and enthusiasm were highly motivating and pupils concentrated well for a sustained time. Teaching demonstrated clear and thoughtful planning to enable pupils to develop their skills over an extended period of time through a series of lessons. The teacher has very high expectations of the work pupils can create and this raises the standard of work.

121. The art co-ordinator shows good leadership and supports colleagues well. Since the last inspection, improvements have included the introduction of sketchbooks and the development of three-dimensional work. There is an art and display policy and a clear curriculum framework. In Years 3-6, teachers plan work together and then teach their own unit of work to the different classes. This approach ensures equality of provision. The co-ordinator teaches the subject to the majority of the older pupils, making good use of her own expertise. School visits are used extensively to enrich learning opportunities and the school makes very good use of the prestigious art galleries in the locality.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. It was possible to see only one lesson in design and technology but evidence from pupils' past work and from discussion with pupils and teachers show that standards are at a level expected for pupils who are seven and eleven years of age. This maintains the standards from the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress with their learning in both key stages.
123. Pupils have a good understanding of the processes involved in design and technology. They are familiar with looking at existing models to see how they are made, what they are made of and how they work. In the one lesson seen, the Year 3 teacher showed pupils several picture frames. They discussed the design of different frames, how they were able to stand up and how the photograph was secured within the frame before they set about designing their own. Pupils are encouraged to think about the materials they want to use and their suitability for the task. On completion of their design, they evaluate it, ask questions to find out whether it fulfils its purpose and whether the finished product meets the requirements of their original plan. In the Year 6 class, where they had designed and made slippers, one pupil had noticed that the stitching she had used to secure the sole to the upper was not strong enough so she had added another row of stitches. All pupils are encouraged to say how their design could be improved next time.
124. Although it is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching, in the one lesson observed the teaching was very good. The teacher prepared a very interesting and challenging lesson that engaged pupils' interest and, through

very good questioning, ensured that learning was very good and that pupils gave due attention to the process involved.

125. Provision for the subject has been enhanced by a visiting artist who has helped pupils design and make costumes for a forthcoming local carnival. Another artist will be visiting shortly to help younger pupils design and make banners and flags for the carnival.
126. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is keen and reasonably knowledgeable. She has prepared a new policy, a new scheme of work and assessment strategies. However she has not yet had time to implement all these aspects and as yet she has not monitored the work of other teachers.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

127. No geography lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on analysis of pupils' work, discussions with seven and eleven year old pupils, the subject co-ordinator and the scrutiny of curriculum planning.
128. By the time they leave the school, standards in geography are at a level expected for this age group and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress with their learning. This is similar to the achievement reported at the last inspection. Eleven-year olds have sound knowledge of where they live. They can define the location of Penzance using correct geographical terms such as coastline and compass points and its position in relation to other places such as Exeter, London and Europe. They describe the town in terms of occupations and weather, knowing why, for instance, some sub-tropical trees can only be grown in this part of England. Through studying rivers, they recognise physical processes, such as erosion, that lead to landscape features such as valleys, gorges, waterfalls and meanders. They have good knowledge of the planets of the solar system, although are not entirely sure of how the earth's orbit around the sun results in seasons. They understand environmental issues such as the problem of pollution and waste and make sensible suggestions as to how these might be resolved. Overall, their geographical skills are less secure. For example, they are unsure about climate, the use of scale on maps and how geographical factors influence human activities. While they have studied regions that contrast with Penzance, such as India and Egypt, this has not been done in sufficient detail to enable pupils to develop an understanding of why they differ geographically - for instance, owing to landscape, location, local resources and climate. ICT is rarely used to develop geographical skills, particularly those associated with map reading, interpretation of aerial photographs and rainfall and temperature graphs.
129. The subject is used reasonably well to support literacy and numeracy. For example, literacy is encouraged through the use of vocabulary such as *environment*, *landscape*, *pollution* and written responses to geographical

questions. Numeracy is encouraged through map work involving coordinates. However, in some classes, there is not enough attention to marking for it to have a positive influence on learning in these areas.

130. There was criticism in the last report about the role of the subject co-ordinator being underdeveloped and the lack of a whole-school scheme of work. While this has improved, the co-ordinator has yet to be given time to assess the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. A good whole-school scheme of work has been introduced based upon a nationally agreed document. This builds new learning on what pupils already know and can do as they move through the school. A major weakness is the lack of an adequate amount of teaching time for the subject. This means that very little of the work in geography is studied in enough depth to meet all the demands of the National Curriculum. Resources are inadequate. This restricts the teaching in map work and learning through the use of ICT.

## **HISTORY**

131. By the time they are seven, and when they leave the school at eleven, pupils' standards are in line with those expected for these age groups. These are similar to those at the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
132. Good use is made of members of the community to provide extra interest for younger pupils. They become very good at questioning visitors in order to find out more about their lives and times. This was very well illustrated in a Year 2 class when a local engineer came dressed as Trevithick, the inventor of the first steam driven car. Pupils asked very sensible questions about the life and times 200 years ago and about how the local area had changed. Similarly in Year 1, a parent, who is studying the area, visited the class as part of their study of the local beach. Through effective questioning, pupils were able to find out many interesting facts about the history of their area.
133. Older pupils have researched the Ancient Greeks using CD-ROMs and books. In the Year 5/6 class, very good use was made of historical documents such as old census returns and local almanacs to research the changes that occurred locally during the reign of Queen Victoria and the reasons for those changes.
134. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are well prepared and the use of visitors with good local knowledge provides very good stimulation for pupils and provides them with opportunities to find out about the past in an interesting and exciting way. Teachers are skilled at encouraging pupils to ask questions or to intervene or help when questions are moving off track. They use plenary sessions effectively to summarise what pupils have learned. It was only possible to observe one lesson of history in Years 3-6 so it was not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching for those years. However, the one lesson seen was excellent. The teacher provided a wide

range of stimulating historical documents, which the pupils interrogated to find out about the changes that occurred in the local area during the Victorian period. The teacher's enthusiasm, very good preparation, organisation and excellent relationships with the pupils all contributed to a very successful lesson.

135. The able co-ordinator is doing much to promote the subject. She has reviewed planning and has developed a new scheme of work and associated assessment strategies that are already in operation throughout the school. She has not yet had the opportunity to observe the quality of teaching and learning in this subject.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

136. Attainment in ICT is at the level expected for pupils both at seven and eleven years of age. The quality of pupils' use, knowledge and understanding of the subject is similar to that described at the last inspection.
137. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress with the development of their computer skills as they move from year to year. Younger pupils develop the basic skills of simple word-processing and know how to save and print out their work. They understand that information may be obtained from a number of technological devices such as computers, telephones, fax machines and television.
138. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a limited understanding of how to use software programs to record information from experiments and investigations. They do not have the confidence to develop ideas to make things happen, such as giving a series of instructions to a screen or floor turtle to make it move in a certain direction. Pupils in Year 3 learn how to set out their poetry in an attractive way for others to see, although, as with other classes throughout the school, the amount of time that they have to practise and perfect their computer skills is limited.
139. By the end of Year 6, pupils' strengths are primarily in the area of word processing. They make good use of their ability to cut and paste writing and pictures to develop attractive presentations such as their booklets and posters on the Globe Theatre in connection with their history work on Shakespeare. Similar developing skills are seen in displays connected with work on the Ancient Greeks. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils began to use research engines through the Internet to find out more information about their experiments on gases. They have an awareness of the need to take care in framing questions so that their research rewards them with the information that they seek. However, as with younger pupils, the opportunities for them to have regular practice to develop and hone their computer skills are limited. As a result, their progress, although satisfactory, could be better.

140. Very little actual class teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection. However, discussions with teachers and pupils about their work, observations of documentation and displays, show that, apart from the limited range of experiences in aspects of the subject, teaching is satisfactory overall and that pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to explore and create. It is a credit to the teaching staff that they have made a concerted effort to increase and improve their own abilities in the use of computer programs in particular and this is having a positive effect on the progress that pupils make.
141. At present teachers do not have a consistent whole-school system for recording what individual pupils can and cannot do in ICT. This detracts from teachers' ability to guide and prepare pupils for the next stage of their learning. The co-ordinator has a secure personal grasp of the subject and offers advice and training to teachers as required. However, he has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school to ensure that there is a balance in learning and sufficient practice in developing specific skills in all classes.

## **MUSIC**

142. The progress that pupils of all abilities make is satisfactory. By the time they leave the school, pupils attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy the music they make. They listen with increasing attention to a range of music and mostly respond appropriately using voice, instruments or parts of the body. In particular, they sing confidently and with good expression and clear articulation. Pupils compose simple rhythms to accompany their singing, but their skills in composition are generally less well developed than their skills of singing. Written recording of their work is weak. Pupils explore the sounds made by a variety of instruments and begin to evaluate the differences between them.
143. The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory and there has been some improvement in the quality of the lesson planning since the last inspection. A specialist teaches music in many classes and, in addition, two peripatetic teachers teach in the school on a weekly basis. Opportunities are made to link music teaching to other subjects. For example, one lesson using Tudor music was deliberately planned to support a history topic. In design and technology, pupils have planned and made musical instruments. The music teacher ensures that there are clear learning objectives in lessons and pupils are reminded of what they should achieve. A greater sense of pace in some lessons would enable pupils to complete the activity and make greater progress. Although a scheme of work exists, it is incomplete. As a consequence, some areas of the curriculum, such as composition, are not taught comprehensively and there is insufficient progression in the skills which pupils develop throughout their time in school. Resources to support the lesson are well prepared in advance. Overall, the music teacher manages pupils well although her management techniques were not strong enough to

deal with difficult pupils in Year 4. Regular practical activities are organised that are essential for learning in this subject.

144. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn a variety of songs and hymns and play non-tuned percussion instruments with enthusiasm. They memorise words and melodies well and perform music with confidence and a developing sense of rhythm and pitch. When working in groups, they listen very carefully to each other and respond correctly with movements that are long and sustained or short and jerky. Pupils enjoy the effects they create together. They handle instruments carefully but are not yet able to describe all the sounds they make.
145. Older pupils make satisfactory progress so that they work more independently by the time they are in Year 4. They explore sounds individually and increase their musical vocabulary. For example, they experiment with an electronic keyboard and use it to vary dynamics, tempo and pitch. Pupils have the ability to control sounds well in order to create particular effects. However, they rarely record their work and are not yet developing simple notation skills. They begin to build a sufficient repertoire to compare music of different styles and this includes some limited knowledge and understanding of music from different cultures. They classify instruments according to the groups that make up an orchestra, or according to the way sounds are produced. Pupils begin to appraise music critically, such as 'Peter and the Wolf', but they have not yet developed sufficient skills to do this well. Mostly, attitudes are good and pupils respond positively when asked to listen or perform. However, in one class some inappropriate behaviour prevented all pupils from learning effectively.
146. Older pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the guitar or the electronic keyboard, and a significant number of younger pupils learn to play the recorder. The school choir meets regularly and contributes to events outside the school such as singing in local festivals or performing to residents in a local home. Last year, pupils responded very enthusiastically when they had the opportunity to compose and record music for the Harvest Assembly. This was produced as a CD and played on a local radio station. The music teacher is developing assessment tasks to conclude each unit of work, but currently there are too few examples of assessments for the school to be able to effectively evaluate the progress of pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

147. By the time pupils leave the school at eleven years of age, their physical skills are at a level expected for pupils of this age except in swimming where standards are well above the level expected. Two swimming lessons involving Year 5 and 6 pupils and one Year 2 games lesson were observed during the inspection. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection when achievement in swimming was judged to be very high. Most pupils swim unaided for a sustained period of time and use correct arm and leg actions in a range of recognised strokes. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils in swimming. Achievement

by seven-year olds in games is at a level expected for pupils of this age. They demonstrate sound skills when throwing, catching and fielding a ball.

148. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time but they made good progress with their learning during the inspection because of the quality of teaching seen. This was shown in swimming as they learned how to pace themselves in response to the challenge to swim two lengths of backstroke without stopping. In games, learning is extended as pupils develop over-arm throwing techniques.
149. The quality of teaching is good. A suitably qualified instructor teaches pupils to swim. Lessons are well planned and identify clearly what is to be learned. Swimming lessons are well structured with a good balance between periods of sustained vigorous activity and skill development. The instructor is very good at assessing pupils' performance and uses this very effectively to improve style and techniques - for example, identifying the need to improve leg actions in small group of Year 5 non-swimmers. Lessons contain a range of activities that motivate pupils and inspire them to succeed. For instance, the Year 6 lesson ended with pupils swimming with an inflatable rudder which, in addition to improving stamina, brought a new dimension to their swimming experience. The good teaching in the games lesson was highlighted by activities increasing in difficulty, the introduction of teams to develop simple competitive skills and the opportunity given to pupils to assess the progress they had made. In all the lessons pupils were well managed and resources used effectively.
150. The management of the subject has improved since the last report, although the co-ordinator is not yet fulfilling all aspects of her role. A sound scheme of work makes sure that learning is based securely on what pupils already know and can do. An evaluation of the curriculum and the effectiveness of teaching has not yet been undertaken.
151. Almost half of the teaching time for physical education is allocated to swimming and this imbalance clearly needs to be rectified in order to make sure that other elements are being effectively taught. Pupils are able to take part in a good range of extra-curricular sporting clubs and the school competes with others in a range of activities, doing particularly well in swimming galas. Eleven-year olds are taught outdoor and adventurous activities during the annual camp on the Scilly Isles. These include orienteering and water sports. Resources are good.