

**KENNALL VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Ponsanooth, Truro

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111820

Headteacher: Mr S Auty

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Baxter  
25217

Dates of inspection: 4-6 March 2002

Inspection number: 243024

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Crescent  
Ponsanooth  
Truro  
Cornwall

Postcode: TR3 7HY

Telephone number: 01872 863672

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Barry Carter

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25217	Paul Baxter	Registered inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities English Science Geography History Physical education Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9789	Leigh Barclay	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17766	Eira Gill	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology (ICT) Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This county primary school for pupils who are aged between four and eleven years is below average in size. It serves the village of Ponsanooth in Cornwall. It has 94 full time pupils on roll; 57 are boys and 37 are girls. The number of pupils attending the school has increased by over 20 per cent since the last inspection in 1997. At the time of the inspection there were two children aged under five in attendance. Most pupils come from the local area, which is broadly average in socio-economic terms, but several come from further afield. At present approximately a third of the pupils have special educational needs, an increase of about 25 per cent compared to the time of the last inspection, and this is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below that found nationally. No pupils come from homes where English is an additional language or from ethnic minority backgrounds. Approximately five per cent of the pupils are registered as eligible for free school meals, a well below average proportion. The children's attainments on entry generally match those found nationally but vary substantially from year to year.

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

Kennall Vale is now an effective school. It is establishing a stronger commitment to raising standards of pupils' academic attainment and it continues to develop and extend the pupils' very good attitudes to school, to learning and to one another. The performance of the pupils has fluctuated significantly in the national tests and teachers' assessments in recent years, often reflecting the pupils' differing prior attainments and backgrounds. Several potentially higher attaining pupils have underachieved and a few pupils have not been performing as well as they should in tests, even though their work in class is of the required standard. In response the school has sharpened its focus and has improved the quality of education and the challenge offered to pupils. As a result most pupils now achieve satisfactorily overall by the time they leave the school. The headteacher and chair of governors are involving staff and governors more effectively in promoting a clear educational direction. As a consequence standards are rising, especially in literacy, and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school's excellent partnership with parents and very good links with partner institutions enrich the pupils' learning.
- The excellent accommodation is very well maintained and provides a first class learning environment.
- The pupils' enthusiasm and very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships have a beneficial impact on their learning.
- The provision for the pupils' moral development and the procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and eliminate bullying are very good and enrich their enjoyment of school.
- The headteacher nurtures a caring ethos and the school's aims and values are very evident in supporting teaching and learning across the school.

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

- The standards reached by the pupils by the end of Years 2 and 6, in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are below average.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn through independent research and this is particularly restricting the achievement of a few potentially higher attaining pupils.
- The attendance rate is well below the national average.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection in 1997 and most pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. This is the case in English and mathematics but achievement is unsatisfactory in science. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and in planning the curriculum are now promoting higher expectations of what pupils can and should attain. Strengths in nurturing the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships, in promoting beneficial partnerships with parents and with pre-school and secondary colleagues continue to enrich the pupils' experiences. Key issues of the last inspection have been addressed effectively, especially staff training and development planning, and these are promoting a clear educational direction. Staff and governors now monitor standards more purposefully and share an effective commitment to improvement. They are well placed to continue this into the future.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
top 5 per cent	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
lowest 5 per cent	E*

Care must be taken when evaluating the pupils' performance in national tests due to the often small number in each year group, since substantial variation occurs from year to year. Varying proportions of pupils with special educational needs and of boys in relation to girls also cloud the analysis of test results as an accurate indicator of pupils' performance. However, evidence indicates that several pupils in Year 6 have not done as well in tests as they should have done in recent years and as a result the school has recently strengthened its focus on National Curriculum tests, and standards are set to improve this year. Standards, especially in literacy and mathematics, are now rising throughout the school and are average overall. Weaknesses in practical research continue to restrict standards in science, ICT and religious education and these are below average. Standards are above average in history, singing and physical education, and are average in all remaining subjects by the end of Year 6. Children achieve satisfactorily in the Reception class and meet expectations in all areas of learning. Most pupils also achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and generally attain average standards overall by Year 2. By the time they leave the school all pupils achieve well in history, physical education and in swimming but many, especially the higher attainers, do not achieve satisfactorily in science, ICT and religious education. Overall most pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, as they did at the time of the previous inspection, and are on course to attain the appropriate literacy and numeracy targets set for them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show very positive attitudes and are extremely enthusiastic about school. These qualities enrich their enjoyment and learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in all areas. Without exception, pupils respond willingly to the first class examples set by all the adults working in the school.

Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils readily accept responsibility but have too few opportunities to do so as they get older, and this limits their independence.
Attendance	Below average due to holidays taken in term time and a particularly virulent illness in March 2001 which affected pupils last year.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Evidence from observations of lessons and from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching is now good. Most of the teaching and learning seen during the inspection was good, reflecting recent improvement stemming from improved planning and higher teachers' expectations. It ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. Teachers and support staff respond warmly to pupils, promoting very positive attitudes and behaviour and good learning. Numeracy skills and mathematics are taught satisfactorily, but the pupils' data-handling and problem solving skills could be enriched by more independent study. Due to the timing of the inspection it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology and geography across the school or in religious education in Years 5 and 6. The teaching is good in English, especially writing; it is also good in history, music and physical education. Teaching is unsatisfactory in science due to weaknesses in investigation and in promoting pupils' understanding through recorded ideas, but is satisfactory in all the remaining subjects where judgements are made. Teachers promote the pupils' learning by focusing on specific objectives and use discussion to challenge the pupils' thinking. The quality of marking is satisfactory; targets for improvement are identified well in English but are lacking in several subjects. Teachers meet the needs of most pupils, including those with special educational needs, effectively. Learning opportunities for potentially higher attaining pupils are restricted at times.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in all parts of the school. Very good pre-school and secondary links and good extra-curricular activity. Although curriculum time is satisfactory overall there is scope to reduce swimming time to support ICT, science and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision with particularly focused individual educational plans that target the pupils' needs successfully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good for the pupils' moral development. Good for social, spiritual, cultural development, but insufficient opportunities for the older pupils to learn through independent research.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The staff know their pupils well and respond warmly to their needs. They generally provide good care with very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance. Satisfactory assessment and use of assessments of pupils' work aid future teaching.

The school's excellent partnership with parents is a strength that significantly promotes the pupils' very positive attitudes.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. Good pastoral leadership by the headteacher. Improved subject co-ordination by staff in literacy, history, ICT and special educational needs is raising standards. Co-ordination is less effective in several other subjects and limits improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall: good leadership by the chair and improved monitoring by the governors promote effective action. Governors support the school's educational direction well, but there are a few statutory omissions in the governors' annual report to parents and in the prospectus.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school now evaluates its performance satisfactorily. This is helping to promote higher standards, especially in writing.
The strategic use of resources	Generally satisfactory but earlier delays in updating ICT facilities and in using available funds have limited the pupils' learning and independent research skills, especially in science.

The accommodation is excellent and it is extremely well maintained. Decisions, although weakened at times by delays in the past, are now increasingly based on the principles of best value and are effective. The school is staffed satisfactorily and resources for learning are good.

## 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>• The children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• The extent to which the school works closely with parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of work given to pupils to do at home.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team support most of the parents' very positive views expressed above but find that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and could be better in science, religious education and ICT. The school is already improving the consistency of the homework set for pupils. A few parents did not agree that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors felt that, for a small school, the range of extra-curricular activities is good and that the quality of them is equally effective.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

*'Standards', the judgement of how well pupils are doing compared to others of the same age nationally, may be judged from national test results, or against the levels defined in the National Curriculum or the Early Learning Goals as 'expected' at certain ages. The other judgement, 'achievement', is a judgement made against pupils' starting points. The achievement judgement shows whether, long term, enough progress is being made*

1. Care must be taken when evaluating the pupils' performance in national tests and teachers' assessments due to the often small but changing number in each year group at this school. Substantial variation can occur from year to year. For example, there are five children currently in their Reception Year whilst there are 21 pupils in Year 6. In addition the often very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the changing number of boys in relation to girls in several year groups further cloud the analysis of test results as an accurate indicator of pupils' performance. Comparisons with the pupils' prior attainments in Year 2 with the attainments in Year 6 in national tests are equally unreliable at times, given the movement of pupils into and out of school that has affected some year groups.
2. The National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments completed by pupils in Year 6 last year showed below average standards in English and well below average standards in mathematics and science, and overall. When compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools in last year's tests standards were very low. These standards represent significant lower levels of attainment when compared with the results in the previous year but matched the results of 1998, indicating the significant fluctuations from year to year outlined above.
3. However, evaluation of the performance of individual pupils as they progress through the school shows that most have achieved satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Evidence of the pupils' performance in Year 6 in recent years also shows that several potentially higher attaining pupils have underachieved and a few pupils have not been performing as well as they should in tests, even though their work in class is of the required standard. As a result the school has recently strengthened its focus on National Curriculum tests, and standards are set to improve this year.
4. Results in national tests for pupils in Year 2, over the past four years, also showed variation but are generally improving in line with the national trend. The pupils' performance in last year's National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments were average in reading, writing and mathematics but were well below average in science with little difference between the performance of girls and boys. Compared to similar schools, results were below average in mathematics and well below in reading and writing. Again, however, analysis of the pupils' attainments on entry to school in relation to their attainment in these tests shows that many pupils achieved satisfactorily except in science, where there is underachievement.
5. Inspection evidence shows that the children's attainments on entry to school are broadly average. Productive links with the local pre-school ensure, however, that most children start school with positive attitudes and a willingness to develop warm relationships.
6. Standards, especially in literacy and numeracy, are now rising positively through the school and are average overall. Weaknesses in enabling the pupils to learn through practical research continue to restrict standards in science, ICT and religious education and these are below average. Standards are above average in history, singing and physical education, and average in all remaining subjects by the end of Year 6. Children achieve satisfactorily in the Reception class and meet expectations in all areas of learning. Most pupils also achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and generally attain average standards by Year 2. By the time they leave the school all pupils achieve well in history and physical education but many do not achieve

satisfactorily in science, ICT and religious education. Overall most pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. With guidance from the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, teachers have sharpened the targets within the pupils' individual educational plans and this is helping pupils to achieve satisfactorily. Most potentially higher attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently through focused questioning in subjects such as English and history but many have insufficient opportunity, especially as they get older, to learn by formulating their own ideas, initiating their own experiments and conducting their own research and this is limiting their achievement. This is especially the case in science and religious education. The teachers in Years 1 to 4 are increasingly addressing this aspect but the teachers' organisation of the large classes and over emphasis at times on whole class teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6, contribute to the restricted opportunities for the pupils.

7. The headteacher is now analysing the pupils' performance in national tests more precisely than in the past. Such evaluation is helping to identify the particular needs of the pupils and is indicating a level of underachievement in test situations by several pupils. In response teachers are raising their expectations of what pupils can and should attain and are working more effectively together to raise standards. The successful effort to improve the pupils' writing is a good example of what can be achieved when provision is consistent across the school. The school is now looking to improve the pupils' performance in tests. Potentially higher attaining pupils have some opportunities to work at their own level in mathematics, music and sport. However, older pupils especially, have too few opportunities to initiate their own learning on a regular basis and this is not helpful in developing the pupils' confidence and ability to perform at their best in test situations.
8. Teachers plan the curriculum together in more depth now. Co-ordination in subjects such as English, mathematics, history and physical education is helping to establish more progression in the pupils' learning as they move through school and this is raising standards to more acceptable levels. Over time teaching has supported satisfactory achievement but observations of lessons now show that good teaching is increasingly promoting good learning, particularly in literacy and language, and is beginning to have a positive effect on the pupils' rate of achievement. Inspection identified no significant differences between the performance of the boys compared to the girls; all appear equally involved and motivated.
9. The school has agreed appropriate year group targets in English and mathematics for pupils to attain by the end of Year 6. Whilst these reflect the prior attainment of pupils, they do not reflect sufficient expectation for some potentially higher attaining pupils and target setting is not used rigorously enough to promote even higher standards. Assessment in English and mathematics is most effective but, in other subjects, there is little use of setting targets for individuals or for groups of pupils and this is a weakness.
10. The teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy well. The implementation of the school's 'Literacy Action Plan' that identified writing as a key area for development, particularly in Years 3 to 6, has had a positive impact on the pupils' writing skills across the school. Most pupils attain average standards overall but observations of the pupils' work in lessons and in their writing books shows that many pupils are attaining above this standard in poetry, especially in Years 5 and 6. Achievement over time is satisfactory in English, but pupils now learn well in lessons as a result of well-planned and effective teaching. This more consistent teaching is raising expectations of what pupils should and can attain and standards are rising. The higher expectations of teachers and pupils are also raising standards in spelling. The pupils' literacy skills are used and promoted further in other subjects; for example, in history when writing as evacuees. Writing in science and religious education, however, is under-developed and is not used sufficiently to provide opportunities for the pupils to reflect about their feelings and ideas and this is restricting their understanding.
11. Standards in mathematics are average in Years 2 and 6, matching those found at the time of the last inspection. This represents an improvement compared to the well below average standards reached by the pupils the Year 6 tests in 2001 and has been achieved by careful

analysis of the pupils' performance, followed by well targeted teaching. Potentially higher attaining pupils are challenged to work with a parent at a higher level. Most pupils now achieve satisfactorily.

12. The teachers implement the numeracy strategy effectively. Improved teaching is leading to more effective learning and, for example, pupils are beginning to be able to visualise numbers and shapes in their heads. Teachers provide opportunities for numeracy skills to be used and consolidated in other areas of the curriculum, such as when recording the weights of ingredients in cooking instructions. In geography also, pupils produce bar charts by hand and also use the data-handling program on the computer.
13. The establishment of the new ICT suite in the library area has just been completed. This has disrupted the use of the library, contributing to its insufficient use during the days of the inspection. This is restricting the pupils' opportunities and skills to learn from independent research. Teachers are beginning to promote the use of the new ICT suite, though, and it is already having a positive effect on the pupils' learning across the range of subjects. Gaps remain, however, in the pupils' skills and this is limiting the impact of its support of pupils' learning.

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

14. Pupils' responses to school are very good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Attitudes and behaviour are very good in lessons throughout the school as well as in the playground and at lunch-time. The pupils appreciate the impact of their behaviour on others. Their enthusiasm for school is outstanding. They are very interested in learning and involve themselves in all activities. Where pupils are given the opportunity to take responsibility or exercise initiative, they display a high level of mature and responsible behaviour. Such opportunities are limited, however, for older pupils and this is a weakness. The pupils work together co-operatively which has a positive effect upon their learning. All groups of pupils, including children in their Reception Year and pupils with special educational need and higher attainers, enjoy coming to school and this aids their learning.
15. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work. They are enthusiastic about school and arrive in the morning eager to work well. They are keen for lessons to start. Their interest and involvement in activities are very high, supporting the view that they perform at a higher standard in class than they do in tests. The younger children derive great pleasure from their literacy lessons and can't wait to continue with yesterday's story. All the pupils join in hymn practice with joyful singing and clearly derive a lot of pleasure from it. Throughout the school the pupils are able to apply themselves to tasks for extended periods. This contributes very positively to their attainment. Lessons were observed in all areas of the curriculum – National Curriculum subjects, performing arts and swimming – that demonstrated the pupils' positive responses towards their learning. Their desire to achieve makes a significant contribution to their attainment. Pupils are attentive, enthusiastic when answering questions, and keen to make progress.
16. Behaviour is very good across the school, both in lessons and around the site. The pupils are very polite and pleasant towards each other, their teachers and visitors. The quality of adult-pupil relationships is very good, which contributes positively to the pupils' good behaviour in class. Good behaviour is celebrated throughout the school and particularly in assemblies and in whole class discussions known as 'Circle Time'. Bullying or oppressive behaviour are extremely rare. The school has an admirable record of tolerance and inclusion. There have been no exclusions for the past eight years. The school's behaviour policy is well understood and is applied consistently.
17. The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs are positive and constructive. Pupils collaborate and co-operate well. They are naturally trustworthy and respectful. The relationships between teachers, classroom assistants and pupils are very good. They listen to each other with mutual respect for different

opinions and values, although this could be further developed in religious education lessons. The quality of the pupils' personal development is good. Where pupils are encouraged to use initiative and take responsibility, they respond to the challenge very well, but there are insufficient opportunities provided. From an early age, pupils take responsibility for caring for their classrooms. They use their initiative to consult dictionaries and other reference books when they need them. There are class forums in the two lower classes where pupils can meet together to express their views. These are very positive developments but, as yet, they are not available in all classes and this is a weakness.

18. Attendance in the year prior to the inspection, at 93.3 per cent, was below the national average. This rate of attendance is not typical of the school's normally satisfactory rate of attendance and is a consequence of a significant number of parents taking their children for holidays during term-time. Attendance for that year was also affected by a virulent illness that affected the school community in March 2001. The rate of attendance is not a reflection of the provision, for the school does all it can to promote good attendance. The level of authorised absence is above, and unauthorised absence is broadly in line with, the national average. Pupils generally arrive punctually for school and classes, and there is no truancy.

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

19. The quality of the teaching and learning in the lessons observed during the inspection was good overall. This represents a recent improvement that is beginning to impact positively on the pupils' attainment and achievement. The teaching in almost all of the lessons seen was at least satisfactory, and in six out of ten lessons, the teaching was good or, on a few occasions, very good and this represents a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Lessons proceed at a good pace, and the teachers' effective questioning and their warm management of the pupils' behaviour in particular, contribute well to the pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff respond warmly to pupils, promoting very positive attitudes and behaviour and good learning.
20. Improvements in teaching have come about partly because in English and mathematics lessons the skills and content are systematically planned through the use of the National Literacy and Numeracy frameworks. The teaching of literacy is good. The whole school's focus on writing in combination with a continued emphasis on individual reading is raising standards in literacy across the school. Numeracy skills are taught effectively, but the pupils' data-handling and problem solving skills could be enriched by a more independent study. Overall, the strong emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy within the daily timetable has enabled the teachers to strengthen the development of the pupils' basic language and number skills. This is also supporting good learning in most lessons and is having a positive effect on the pupils' achievements.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also good overall. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve effectively. Class teachers and learning support assistants help pupils effectively in class, promoting warm relationships and thereby raising the pupils' self-esteem and confidence in learning, as in the last inspection. Teachers work closely with assistants to develop appropriate learning opportunities that address the pupils' needs. The pupils' individual educational plans contain clear and relevant targets but very occasionally they receive too much direction and, as with other pupils, lack opportunities to initiate their own ideas. This hinders their achievement on occasion. Potentially higher attaining pupils are increasingly enabled to work to their best levels, although there are several areas where tasks could include greater challenges for some pupils. This happened, for example, in a science lesson where the skills required to complete the task and the level of intellectual challenge were insufficient.
22. The quality of teaching and learning for children in their Reception Year is good overall. It is good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development, teaching is satisfactory. Planning for the curriculum is detailed and is particularly well organised in this classroom containing three different year groups. The use of

assessment in the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class to monitor the development of the children is good. For example, the reading record books that move between the teacher and home show ongoing assessment of the children's reading skills. The management of the children is very good and the teachers work closely with the classroom assistants to provide caring support and help to stimulate children's learning. However, the assistants have had no training and at times there is some over-direction of the children, particularly when involved with artwork and in the role-play area. This is not allowing the children enough freedom and guidance to express their ideas and feelings.

23. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the school's cycle of planning, there were insufficient opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology and geography across the school and in religious education in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is good in most other subjects where judgements are made. Teaching is satisfactory in ICT overall and in religious education in Years 1 and 2 but it is unsatisfactory in science. Teachers have improved their planning in most subjects since the last inspection and share learning objectives productively with the pupils at the beginnings of lessons. This has brought a consistent quality to the teaching and, as a consequence, pupils are learning more progressively as they move through the school. Weaknesses remain, however, in the teaching of science and in the insufficient emphasis placed on religious education and these are limiting the pupils' skills. Approaches to the teaching of science are inconsistent across the school for example, the improving emphasis placed on practical investigation is not continued sufficiently in Years 5 and 6 and inappropriate expectations of neat, reflective recorded work are not promoting the pupils' understanding throughout the school as they should.
24. The quality of teaching in English is good and is underpinned by adherence to the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils are taught to use and respect books and to enrich their learning by developing a wide vocabulary of appropriate technical terms and this promotes their use and understanding of language even more. The teaching of mathematics is also good. Teachers develop mathematics lessons at a good pace. They establish appropriate expectations and challenge the pupils effectively through questioning, enabling them to extend their facility with numbers and to improve their learning in mathematics.
25. Potentially higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively in most lessons, particularly by the use of correct terminology, by discussion and by valuing the pupils' responses. These strategies are having a beneficial impact on pupils' literacy, language and numeracy skills. They are not supported in Years 5 and 6, however by sufficient opportunities for the pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry and to develop independence in their learning. As a consequence, attainment in science and religious education is below expectation and several pupils could be performing at a higher level across the range of subjects.
26. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. Many of the effective features identified for children in their Reception Year continue into these years. The teachers use their good knowledge of subjects and of the pupils' developmental needs and value pupils' responses in discussion to promote effective learning. For example, the teacher in the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class often uses the Cornish language to take registration and encourages the pupils to respond in any language, which promotes positive attitudes and enriches the pupils' cultural awareness. In other lessons, the teacher in the Years 2, 3 and 4 class uses role-play opportunities, for example, to interview 'Abraham' in religious education and to act as if in Tudor times to extend the understanding. Such productive opportunities, especially in history, are a strength and are also supported by the pupils' reflective and expressive writing. There is inconsistency between these classes in the quality expected of pupils as they present their ideas on paper and this is inhibiting achievement.
27. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is also of good quality now. The teachers work together and plan well to ensure a smooth progression in learning for the pupils in subjects such as English, mathematics, history and physical education but progression is less effective in a few other subjects. This is especially the case in science where the developing emphasis on learning through research promoted in the Years 2, 3, and 4 class is not developed at a higher level in

the Years 5 and 6 class. This is restricting the pupils' attainment. Equally quite advanced discussions about religious issues initiated in Years 3 and 4 tend to be superseded by discussions about citizenship. These are of value but do not sufficiently advance the pupils' knowledge skills and understanding of religious belief and practice, again limiting the pupils' attainment. The teachers use questioning rigorously but warmly to challenge all pupils, including potentially higher attainers, and emphasise 'quality words' to good effect in extending the pupils' vocabulary. They set very high expectations of expressive writing and this is used successfully to promote the pupils' learning in history and geography. Some of the teaching in this class is most successful but given the large number of pupils and the wide range of prior attainments, too much of the teaching is directed by the teachers and pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn by initiating their own ideas and from independent research. For example, the library and new ICT suite are adjacent to this class but pupils were not observed moving independently to and fro to use these facilities during and out of lessons to support their learning. This is limiting their skills.

28. Overall the teaching observed was supported by the teachers' very good management of the pupils' behaviour and by their warm relationships with the pupils. These create and sustain a productive learning environment where pupils are motivated and concentrate well. Such was the case in most English and mathematics lessons. Teachers have good knowledge and promote specific and technical vocabulary well to extend the pupils' thinking - a real strength of the focus on literacy across the school. Class teachers generally use assistants productively, especially in supporting pupils with their reading, but there is scope to plan their work more closely to provide appropriate support but less direction and so encourage the pupils' independence. Teachers use parental help to promote the pupils' learning. This was seen to very good effect in a history lesson in Years 5 and 6 where six parents assisted in helping the pupils to cook using only ingredients available during World War 2. This was helpful in extending the pupils' historical understanding. Occasionally too much time is spent in discussion and this limits the time available for practical investigation and to enable pupils to reflect on their work in their writing.
29. Teachers make appropriate use of learning resources. A few lessons were strengthened by the teachers' use of a video-recorder, of an overhead projector and of a digital camera, but there is scope generally to extend the use of resources during group activity to support learning. Now that the ICT suite is available, teachers are using ICT effectively. The teachers also make effective use of laptop computers to support individual pupils in their literacy work. The teachers know their pupils well and use this to plan an appropriate curriculum. However, with the exception of the Foundation Stage curriculum and work in English and mathematics, teachers make insufficient use assessments of the pupils' skills to inform future teaching and learning. The teachers' marking and assessment of the pupils' work in English is of a high quality and is not used to best effect as an exemplar for work in other subjects. Homework is given regularly in accordance with the school's policy and generally has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. The home-school reading diaries are very well supported by parents, provide a good record of books read by the pupils at home, and help to maintain the excellent partnership between home and school that supports the pupils' learning.

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

30. The quality and range of the school's learning opportunities for promoting high standards are satisfactory. The curriculum provided is suitably broad, balanced and relevant and reflects well the aims of the school. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. The curriculum fully meets the statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and collective worship. The extra-curricular activities organised by the school such as the academic, sporting and musical links with teachers from Penryn College and the visits the pupils make to a variety of locations enrich the curriculum significantly.
31. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Reception class in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Planning for the children is good and takes full account of the six areas of learning as recommended in the curriculum guidance. Planning is linked to

appropriate themes, such as 'Growing Up' or 'Machines'. A strong emphasis is placed on providing first-hand experiences and on helping the children to acquire language skills.

32. The overall allocation of time for the curriculum meets the nationally recommended minimum throughout the school and this is an improvement from the last inspection when teaching time was below recommendations and identified as a weakness.
33. The formal allocation of time for most subjects is broadly in line with that of most schools. However, the allocation of time to physical education is well above average due to the significant amount of time taken to travel to the swimming baths in Pool. This is affecting the time given to other subjects, such as ICT, science and religious education where standards of attainment are below average. Religious education, in particular, lacks emphasis in Years 5 and 6. There is some scope to review the organisation of swimming generally as a high percentage of pupils have already been successful in exceeding the 25 metre goal at the end of Year 6 and need to develop their full potential in other subjects. In addition, in the large class of 36 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the actual weekly allocation of time to art and design and design and technology is occasionally restricted. Due to the large number of pupils in the class, the school organises these subjects so that only a few pupils at a time can paint or construct models. As a result some pupils have less opportunity to develop their skills. This needs reviewing as there are other rooms in the school available where pupils can develop their skills.
34. The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and the Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. The opening sessions of the numeracy hour are being taught effectively in most lessons and pupils' mental mathematics skills at the end of Year 6 have improved. Both strategies are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' attainment, particularly in English. The introduction of an excellent self-assessment strategy in English for the pupils throughout the school has resulted in a noticeable improvement in standards in writing. There are links with literacy in pupils' work in ICT, design and technology, history and geography. There was evidence of specific time allocated for cross-curricular links with ICT and this is proving effective for moving the pupils' learning forward. However, there is little evidence of the pupils being taught how to write in appropriate scientific language or to describe their findings in science. There are very limited opportunities to reflect in writing about their findings and views in religious education and this is restricting their attainment.
35. Appropriate policies are in place for all subjects. In addition to the schemes for the literacy and numeracy strategies, effective schemes are now in place for all subjects that are mainly based on a range of nationally produced guidance. There is a two-year cycle of topics within all subjects to ensure that the pupils are not experiencing the same units of work when they stay in a mixed age group class for a second year. This supports effective progression in learning for the pupils.
36. The curriculum is planned effectively to ensure that all pupils enjoy equal access and opportunity. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and have their needs assessed and developed well.
37. An after school enrichment club extends learning opportunities for some potentially higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics where the pupils are given challenging tasks. A small number of pupils are also being given the opportunity to take the higher Level 6 in the national tests in mathematics at the end of Year 6 and are being supported by a helpful parent. Pupils who are talented musically are given opportunities to extend their skills in lessons given by visiting teachers and the music specialist employed by the school. The annual musical production enables those pupils who are talented at acting and singing to celebrate those talents and also improve them. Pupils who are talented at sport have the opportunity to have their skills extended at after school clubs and also by the visiting sports teachers from Penryn College who visit the school in blocks of time throughout the year. The teachers ensure equality through careful questioning in lessons but there is scope to challenge older, potentially higher attaining pupils more through opportunities for independent research to aid their learning.



38. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. It is taught in accordance with the requirements of the governing body and there is a good policy document that is helpful to all staff. Sex education is taught to Year 6 pupils and, when appropriate, through the science curriculum. Attention to drugs misuse is taught throughout the school in accordance with the policy. The PSHE programme also includes 'Circle Time', when pupils sit in a circle and have the opportunity to discuss personal and global issues. Good opportunities are made to invite visitors to the school, for example, the school nurse. An annual visit to the 'Flashpoint Centre' in Bodmin enables the older pupils to be further challenged about safety and how to assess dangers.
39. The provision for equality of access and opportunity is satisfactory and is supported by a school policy. The curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their ability, gender or social circumstances. In Classes 2 and 3, in particular, the skilled classroom assistants ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to make a good contribution to lessons. However, in some subjects, pupils do not have the most effective access to the intended learning experiences planned in the curriculum. This is affecting standards in ICT, science and religious education.
40. The range of extra-curricular activities is good for the size of the school. They include drama, pottery, craft, football and badminton and an enrichment club for Year 6 pupils. Violin lessons are organised by a visiting teacher and there are blocks throughout the year when teachers visit from Penryn College to teach music and different sports. A wide range of visits to various locations are arranged by the school and enrich the English, geography, science and history curriculum.
41. The school has good links with colleges and the pre-school group. The school values the links with Penryn College, in particular, and the teachers in the college enjoy good liaison with the school and this, in turn, benefits the pupils significantly. Staff from the college teach the pupils different types of sport and music in blocks of time throughout the year. The school also benefits academically when courses are arranged for teachers from both the primary sector and the college to be together, learning about teaching practice in the different phases of education. Induction procedures for children entering the school are good. There are very good links with the village pre-school group. The leader makes regular visits to the school to observe teaching and to include the skills she has learned from the teacher in the reception class in her own teaching, for example, the teaching of phonics. The pre-school children visit the school on special occasions such as sports day, when the children have their own race, and this supports a happy start to school life.
42. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. It has been improved since the last inspection and makes a significant contribution now to the caring ethos and to the very strongly shared aims that are evident in the day-to-day life of the school. Collective acts of worship comply with legal requirements, are broadly Christian in nature and promote the community aspect of school life effectively.
43. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. The teachers are more aware of the need to create interest and joy in learning and are quick to respond to opportunities as they arise in lessons. Younger children in their Reception Year and pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy regular role-play opportunities and sense each other's awe and wonder when sharing ideas in literacy, history, geography and music, for example by dressing up as characters from 'Harry Potter'. Effective opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality are also provided during assemblies and in a limited way in religious education lessons. Older pupils derive spiritual enrichment from their shared texts, view a video recording of an erupting volcano with excitement and respond to the teachers' good knowledge and positive links with their everyday experiences. Pupils discuss issues of tolerance and feelings with sensitivity and understanding. Work in citizenship promotes discussions about rights and responsibilities that promote moral and spiritual awareness successfully. The teachers use whole class discussions entitled 'Circle Times' to good effect in raising self-esteem and in highlighting the importance of valuing each other and each other's contributions.

Annual Christmas plays are particularly successful in creating awe and wonder and in promoting the pupils' spiritual development. The teachers are very aware of the need to promote the pupils' spiritual development and whilst this is developed effectively in many lessons, there is scope to include such opportunity more precisely in the planned curriculum. Insufficient emphasis is placed on religious education, however, especially with older pupils and this represents a lost opportunity to promote the pupils' spiritual development further.

44. Pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They abide by the class rules. They care for each other. They treat the school and their learning materials with great respect. The school environment is beautifully maintained by pupils, as well as staff, which is conducive to learning. Teachers actively promote opportunities for discussion of moral issues during lessons, assemblies and during the whole class 'discussions' about moral and social issues known as 'Circle Times'. These encourage pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude. In a lesson on citizenship, the older pupils demonstrated considerable depth of feeling for the importance of respect and appropriate community behaviour. Good behaviour is reinforced with praise and is celebrated warmly by teachers and their assistants.
45. Provision for the pupils' social development is good. The school fosters the pupils' understanding of living in a community. The pupils accept the rules of the school community. The teachers provide good role models with their warm, friendly relationships. Pupils are encouraged to find answers to their questions for themselves. The approach to the teaching of phonics to the younger children emphasises this and assists their early reading. Further attention needs to be given to providing more opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility and exercise initiative in their learning, for this is restricting their achievement.
46. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Opportunities to promote the pupils' cultural development are planned well and the emphasis on citizenship is a positive improvement since the last inspection that is enriching the pupils' learning. They learn about their own and world cultures through the curriculum in subjects such as history, geography and literature. For example, they develop an understanding of the culture and lifestyle of people who live in Europe through discussion about the 'EURO' in citizenship and through e-mail links with a school in Germany and they consider wider cultures through their topic study of ancient Egypt. They extend their wider cultural awareness in their studies of Indonesian, Australian and Japanese art and costume and in their use of Bangla drums from India in music. A member of staff provides direct experience of Britain's multi-cultural heritage and pupils are further informed through a teacher's links with a school in Hounslow, London. The pupils' local cultural heritage is strongly promoted through local poets, reference to local saints such as St. Piran and through studies of the local and Cornish environment. This strong and first hand experience across the range of cultures supports the school's inclusive ethos where all groups are valued equally.

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

47. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good overall, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The support for the pupils' personal welfare is very good, reflecting the caring, family ethos of the school. The school achieves its aim to create and sustain a social environment within which children feel safe and happy and are able to work and play confidently. All procedures relating to health, welfare and safety are very good, including the storing of medicines, maintenance of registers, fire drills, accident book, and first aid arrangements. The designated teacher responsible for child protection has been trained. There is a comprehensive and effective personal, social and health education curriculum across the school, including sex education and citizenship. Whilst the provision for child protection is satisfactory overall, aided by the teachers' good knowledge of individual pupils, there are gaps in staff training, particularly learning support staff, in identifying signs of child abuse and this needs to be addressed. The school makes insufficient use of personal development targets for all pupils to aid their achievement.

48. The school monitors and supports pupils' personal development closely, although not all pupils are set targets for improvement. Teachers know the pupils and their families very well. Pupils find it easy and comfortable to turn to the school for help. All members of staff provide very good role models in their warm relationships with the pupils. Teachers listen to pupils and this results in pupils learning to listen and respect the views of others, too. Teachers use praise well to enhance pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The family community that the school creates gives the pupils a secure sense of belonging and encourages pupils to work co-operatively. The pupils are proud of their school. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy, backed by clear procedures. The governors are committed and thorough; they work with the headteacher to ensure that hazards are identified and addressed. Pupils are taught to identify risk and to deal with danger in their citizenship course. External agencies are involved appropriately when required. There are, however, missed opportunities for pupils to take on further responsibilities and to exercise initiative in their learning and this represents a lost opportunity to enrich pupils' academic achievement through their personal maturity.
49. The procedures for promoting and improving attendance are very good. Last year's well below average rate of attendance does not reflect this due to the unusually high level of pupils' illness last year and holidays taken during term time. There is systematic daily monitoring of attendance with phone calls home for unexplained absences. The headteacher has emphasised to parents the importance of continuity of attendance, both in newsletters and at an 'Open Morning' where the headteacher and parents met to discuss issues of concern.
50. The school fosters tolerance, friendship and co-operation and discourages violence, antagonism and anti-social behaviour. These published precepts are followed in practice. The procedures for eliminating bullying or other oppressive behaviour have been completely effective. There is a collective and consistent approach to behaviour which is very effective. There are good systems in place to promote and celebrate good behaviour by positive reinforcement. Merit points may be awarded by any member of staff for academic achievement, for good behaviour or for showing initiative. When a Merit card is full, this is publicly acknowledged in assembly. Care is taken to recognise achievement, but this is not yet promoted effectively in all subject areas.
51. The monitoring of personal development is satisfactory and relies mainly on the good knowledge of the teachers and support assistants of the individual pupils. The Reception Class teacher keeps good records although there are limited formal records in other years, except for those of pupils with special educational needs and pupils' annual reports. Throughout the school, the teachers and assistants constantly reinforce the pupils' personal development. The good personal, social and health education programme develops positive attitudes towards other pupils and adults both in the classrooms, in assembly and in the playground. The teachers discuss the attitudes of the pupils with their parents at the termly meetings and reference is made to their personal development in reports.
52. The procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic performance are satisfactory. This is an improvement from the previous report that identified assessment procedures as a weakness. Recent initiatives in assessment have established a reliable database of the results of the end of Year 6 national tests. There is now a robust tracking system in place to identify the progress of pupils throughout the school in English and mathematics. An analysis of this data has led to more rigorous procedures for teaching English and mathematics and this has had a noticeable impact on improving standards, particularly in writing in English. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning is inconsistent. In English, it is excellent and the school is using what the teachers and pupils refer to as 'assessment ladders'. These are small slips of paper with guidance such as 'Have I included all the punctuation marks?' This system provides a two-fold benefit. Firstly, the pupils are aware of their own learning due to their self-assessment and, secondly, the teachers check the pupils' marking and make appropriate comments that will move the pupils' learning forward.
53. Assessment in other subjects is inconsistent with pockets of good practice in some classes. For example, in Class 1, the teacher's assessment of the youngest children and the pupils in Year 1 and 2 informs planning well. Good records of the children's progress are kept in English,

mathematics and ICT. In Class 2, the teacher who is also the ICT co-ordinator, has useful assessment sheets that have been formatted into the various strands of the ICT curriculum and the reader knows instantly which skills the pupils need to learn next. However, the whole school has not adopted this procedure. In Years 5 and 6, apart from English and mathematics, assessment procedures to inform curricular planning have not been adopted formally and are inconsistent. In Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils know their individual targets for learning in English and mathematics but mathematics targets are not clear to all pupils in Years 5 and 6.

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

54. Parents' views of the school are very good overall; parents are very supportive of the school, even more strongly than they were at the previous inspection. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is outstanding. Working as a partnership, the school staff and the parents make an excellent contribution to the school community.
55. The vast majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire believe that their children like school, are taught well, and make good progress. They consider that their children are expected to work hard and do their best, and are helped to become mature and responsible. They value the contribution that the school makes to their children's academic and, particularly, their personal development. They see the school as very approachable and feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. They also praise the children's behaviour. Although inspectors feel that attainment could be higher in science, religious education and ICT, and would like to see pupils being given more responsibility, they agree overall with this picture. There are two areas where some parents feel that the school could be better. These parents feel that their children are not getting the right amount of homework; some feel that there is too much homework, while others would like to see more. Inspectors found the school's homework policy clear and the arrangements satisfactory. A few parents did not agree that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors felt that, for a small school, the range of extra-curricular activities is good and that the quality of them is equally effective.
56. The quality of information provided for parents is unsatisfactory due to the gaps in the statutory information supplied to parents in the prospectus and in the governors' annual report. The annual reports to parents are also inconsistent across the years and within year groups. Some are very comprehensive, indicating pupils' performance against national attainment levels, and including individual (academic and personal) targets for each child. Most reports are not so comprehensive. They either do not make reference to national attainment targets or they do not set targets which parents and pupils could address. Other forms of communication with parents are good. The newsletters are very informative. Parents are well informed at the beginning of the year about their children's curriculum. The 'Open Mornings' when parents are invited to attend assembly in the school and then the headteacher talks to them about current issues - such as homework and attendance - after which they are free to join in the classes at work, are very well attended. Forty-nine parents attended a recent 'Open Morning'.
57. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school, and their contributions to learning, are very good. Parents subscribe to the home-school agreement. They are invited to contribute to lessons and to join in school trips. Parent governors are very committed. The number of parents who help in school is commendable: during the inspection six parents came in to participate in a cookery lesson using utensils and ingredients available during World War II. Parents of pupils in Class 1 are encouraged to come in to the classroom at the beginning of the school day to share the selection of their children's reading books. The Parent Teacher Association is very active, organising social events for the pupils and raising considerable funds for the school. There is a strong sense of a close school community.
58. The school's links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are equally effective. Parents are fully included in the process of identifying pupils' needs and in reviewing their progress towards targets in individual education plans. The school's excellent partnership with parents is a key factor in promoting the pupils' very positive attitudes to school and learning.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher, governing body and staff with responsibilities provide satisfactory overall leadership and management for the school. The previous inspection's key issues of improving the organisation of classes and establishing appropriate whole school and staff development plans have been developed satisfactorily. There is still scope to improve the effectiveness of co-ordination in a few subjects but the carefully constructed individual performance management targets for the teaching staff are already having a beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and learning through the school.
60. The headteacher, with good support from colleagues, now provides an effective vision for the future development of the school. He monitors the quality of teaching satisfactorily and this is aided by the promotion of teachers' clear and purposeful individual performance targets that are also closely and constructively linked with priorities in the school development plan. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is being enriched by consistent and effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and appropriate management structures support ongoing development. Weaknesses remain, however, particularly in science and religious education and in the co-ordination of several subjects but these are increasingly being identified as future targets for improvement. As a whole, the leadership and management of the school have shown satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1997. Evidence shows that the leadership and management became less effective for a period following the last inspection. Over the last twelve months, however, with the appointment and re-deployment of key staff and with increased involvement from governors, particularly by a relatively new chairman, increased collaboration by all parties concerned has renewed the effectiveness of leadership and management.
61. The headteacher plays a key role in promoting the caring ethos of the school. His personal example in developing the curriculum for citizenship and in promoting an excellent partnership with parents represents good leadership in these aspects. Weaknesses in leadership have been strengthened in recent times by improving lines of communication and by sharing areas of responsibility with colleagues and governors and utilising their expertise. This has led to improved provision in areas such as the planning of the curriculum, including the Foundation Stage curriculum for young children in their Reception Year, improved subject co-ordination in subjects such as English, mathematics, ICT, physical education, history and geography and improved whole school development and financial planning. These developments are now having a positive influence in restoring standards that have slipped in recent years, especially in national tests.
62. As a result of the increasing bureaucratic demands placed on his administrative time the headteacher has tried to fulfil too much responsibility himself in previous years and has been less successful in devolving additional responsibilities to colleagues in other subjects or in other areas of management. As a result, weaknesses in co-ordination and in the assessment of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics and provision in science and religious education have been insufficiently addressed. Ineffective monitoring of the school's performance led to delays in allocating and using the finance available to the school efficiently and the creation of an unnecessarily large carry-forward of funds. Day-to-day activity took precedence over other areas of school development and as a result gaps appeared in the overall provision. Over the past twelve months the headteacher has employed additional teaching to reduce his teaching commitment and has strengthened his clerical support. As a consequence, most weaknesses are all being addressed effectively now, especially as the structures and expertise available to the school are being co-operatively utilised. The latest auditor's recommendations have been fully implemented.
63. The educational direction of the school is now plotted appropriately in a school development plan and clear and agreed priorities support development. This is an important improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher and chair of finance, aided by the services of a bursar purchased from the local authority, now provide the governing body with accurate

budgetary information. The vast bulk of the surplus funds are now clearly ear-marked for specific projects, such as the development of the school grounds and to support part-time and specialist teaching. The cost of the newly opened ICT suite has yet to be deducted from the budget. Due to a falling roll, budgetary needs are uncertain, hence the school has retained a significant contingency fund to maintain a stable staff during this period. Monies allocated to additional teaching support for Year 6 pupils in preparation for their National Curriculum tests have also yet to be deducted from the budget. However, given the below average standards and weaknesses in science, ICT and religious education and given the large mixed age classes, the retention of such a large carry-forward has not constituted best use of finance. There was scope to use some of the funds earlier in the school year to provide additional teaching staff in the subjects mentioned in order to raise standards.

64. Through the headteacher's reports, through improved co-ordination in some subjects, and through their more regular visits to the school, governors now have a clearer and satisfactory vision for the future development of the school. They are more able to make decisions efficiently in a shorter period of time. Financial management and control and the governors' awareness of best value are satisfactory overall.
65. Specific grants to raise standards, for example additional literacy and 'booster support', and funds for pupils with special educational needs are used well. They receive additional impetus by the improved whole school focus on raising standards in literacy and writing. The co-ordinator for special educational needs works closely with colleagues and the designated governor and provides good leadership. The school administrator works efficiently, promotes the school's caring ethos well with visitors and is active in promoting more effective information management systems, for example to monitor attendance. The management of provision for children in the Foundation Stage by their teacher is good. The quality of relationships between the adults working in the classroom and the adults and children is warm and friendly and ensures that the children and their parents are happy and content.
66. The members of the governing body have developed effective ways of monitoring and evaluating the ongoing work of the school, for example through focused visits to observe specific curriculum areas and to discuss provision with subject co-ordinators. As a consequence, governors are more informed of the quality of teaching and learning than at the time of the last inspection and are increasingly able to help teachers in targeting the effective use of the facilities, for example ICT in order to raise standards. Governors are less effective in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met, for example the weaknesses in reporting the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs, the procedures for the admission of pupils with disabilities and the school's sporting achievements in their annual report to parents and in the school's prospectus. Governors and staff are most successful, however, in ensuring that the school's aims and values are met and that the excellent accommodation and good level of resources for learning are well maintained. Governors are also successful in ensuring good provision for pupils with special educational needs and full compliance with the requirement for daily acts of collective worship. Recent work in providing individual management performance targets for teaching staff that are linked to staff development and whole school initiatives are promoting improvement, for example the good pupils' writing across the school, but there is scope to develop these for non-teaching staff also.
67. The staff and all adults who work in school know their pupils well and are careful to ensure satisfactory access to the curriculum and to sustain equal opportunity. All staff value pupils and their responses equally and in class discussions are open to all pupils. In this small school individual pupils are respected and are included with care. Pupils are taught to respect each other and through good cultural provision are aware of the need to maintain racial harmony.
68. The school is appropriately staffed, in the main, although there is scope to provide additional teaching support in the large classes. Teaching, support and administrative staff co-operate well to meet the pupils' needs. All teachers make very good use of the impressive number of parents and other adults who help in school on a regular basis. Their contribution is valued and aids pupils' learning. Staff readily share their expertise and this improved involvement and

collaboration contributes strongly to the improving provision evident across the school. The accommodation is excellent and is extremely well maintained. All classrooms are large and have good access to the library and new ICT suite, which is light and spacious and conducive to co-operative learning and to additional support in groups from adult helpers. It is, however, not yet fully operative as an important aid to pupils' learning through independent research and this is limiting the attainment of several pupils. The hall is equally welcoming and useful and is enriching work in physical education. The outdoor facilities are very spacious and enrich the work in physical education although there was little evidence of its effective use in promoting practical work in science.

69. Learning resources, including those for ICT, are good and meet the needs of the National Curriculum. The teachers make good use of the resources provided locally and further afield and enrich the curriculum through very good links with pre-school and secondary colleagues and through the strong partnership with parents and the local community.
70. Inspection shows that the school is now using its resources and facilities productively and this is benefiting pupils. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Bearing in mind the improved learning made by pupils in an increasing number of lessons, in response to the increasingly effective teaching and in relation to the funds available, the school is providing satisfactory value for money. This matches the value found at the time of the last inspection and it is supported by an effective commitment to improvement and a good capacity to succeed into the future.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- 1) Raise the pupils' attainment and achievement by the end of Years 2 and 6 in science, \*ICT and religious education by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn by following their own lines of enquiry;
  - ensuring that pupils are taught their skills progressively as they move through the school;
  - providing sufficient opportunities for the pupils to express their ideas and to reflect about their learning in their recorded work.

(See paragraphs: 1-13; 19-29; 106-114; 139-145; and 156-163.)

- 2) (P) Ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to learn through challenging independent research and investigation at levels that match their prior attainment by:
  - provide additional teaching support so that pupils can work more frequently in groups based on their attainment;
  - enable pupils to make more independent use of the library and ICT suite to support their research.

(See paragraphs: 1-13; 19-29; and 106-114.)

- 3) \*Continue to promote higher levels of attendance by encouraging more parents to take their annual holidays during the school vacations. (See paragraphs: 54-58; and 59-70.)

In addition the following points for improvement should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that the information provided in the governors' annual report to parents includes details of the effectiveness of the school's provision for special educational needs and physical education, and that information in the prospectus explains how pupils with disabilities are admitted and accommodated. (See paragraphs: 54-58; and 59-70.)
- Review the balance of the curriculum, specifically the time allocated to swimming within the curriculum for physical education for older pupils, so that they have more time and opportunity to develop the necessary skills, particularly in the subjects identified above where standards are below expectation. (See paragraphs: 30-46; 106-114; 150-155; and 156-163.)

\* Issues already identified for development by the school.

(P) Issues identified at the time of the last inspection.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

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

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	15	11	1	0	0
Percentage	0	10	50	37	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	89
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

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

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

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

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (67)	65 (75)	71 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (75)	69 (83)	75 (75)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Key Stage 1 figures are omitted because there were fewer than ten pupils overall in the year groups.

Key Stage 2 figures are omitted where these were fewer than ten boys and ten girls.

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	87
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	29.7

**Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	207,137
Total expenditure	186,882
Expenditure per pupil	2,032
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,498
Balance carried forward to next year	55,753

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	89
Number of questionnaires returned	64

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	37	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	50	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	33	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	44	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	69	30	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	50	3	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	45	3	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	53	44	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	48	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	48	8	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents think highly of the school and value the many and varied opportunities to communicate and work with the school in support of their children's education.

## **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**

72. Provision for children in their Reception year in the Foundation Stage is effective. The attainment of the children when they are admitted to the school covers a wide range of ability and is average overall. From this starting point, the children make sound achievement and broaden their knowledge. By the end of the Reception Year, most of the children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection. The curriculum gives the children an appropriate range of experiences and a good basis for learning. Assessment of their progress is good. The teacher is experienced and knowledgeable about teaching very young children. There are three assistants who all work part-time with the Reception group. Their support of the children's personal and social needs is effective but none of the assistants have been trained to work with this age group and this is a weakness. The children are admitted into the Reception and Year 1 and Year 2 class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They settle into full time school very quickly. Most of the children have attended the village pre-school group and have visited the school on several occasions with their parents before they begin school. There are five children in the Reception Year.

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

73. All the children will attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year and their achievement is satisfactory. The well-organised procedures help the children to develop self-confidence and to take care of their own needs. Most are confident to try new activities although one or two children find it difficult to share and take turns. The behaviour of the children overall is good and this was particularly noticeable when they sat on the carpet with the older children and were expected to listen and learn. All the children settle quickly to more structured activities such as the literacy hour and show they can concentrate for appropriate periods of time. They can all undress and dress themselves when changing for physical activities and, sometimes, they are quicker than the older pupils in the class. They enjoy coming to school and are confident to leave their parents.
74. Teaching in this area of learning is good and personal, social and emotional development is strongly promoted in the planning of the whole of the curriculum. The adults provide good role models for the children and treat each other with courtesy and friendship. This leads to trusting relationships.

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

75. Most of the children will meet the recommended early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year and achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is good in this area of learning and activities are planned well to encourage children to talk to each other and to give verbal responses. During each day there are many opportunities for the children to talk to adults, to each other and to the older pupils in the same class. Most speak confidently and in whole sentences. A few are more hesitant and use single words and phrases in response to questions.
76. Phonic skills are taught very well and are planned in short, focused sessions every day. The teacher uses very good methods to teach phonics using a hand puppet who behaves in a very silly manner, mispronouncing the words. The children love this activity; they listen very well and cannot wait to come out to the whiteboard to fit in the letter 'a', for example, in the appropriate place in a word. They make good progress in these sessions. Good planning ensures that the teaching of reading to the five children in the Reception class is given a high priority; a few children can read some of the more familiar words and can say the names and sounds of most letters. The same few children are just beginning to write independently and one higher attaining

child can join her letters. The children have learned to use the simple word bank independently of their teacher although they still need help with more difficult words.

77. During role-play activities in the 'Baby Nursery' supervised by an assistant, questions such as 'How shall we dress the babies today?' extend the children's ideas and develop their language. However, the girls were allowed to dominate one session and the boys hung back and were not quite sure of their role. One boy said audibly to himself, 'My baby is called Baby Jack', but the opportunity to develop his language skills was not taken.

### **Mathematical development**

78. Teaching is good in this area of learning and the planning ensures that the children have appropriate opportunities for developing their skills. For example, they made soup with the support of an assistant and a helpful parent and the children practised counting the ingredients as they were being prepared. The children can count how many people there are in their families and compare the sizes of their sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers using words such as shortest and tallest. There are plenty of good resources in the classroom for practising number; for example, number snakes, large floor puzzles and number lines. The children use beads to make patterns on strings, can match objects to people and lay a table for the 'Three Bears' with appropriate cutlery and crockery. Most of the children will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year and are achieving satisfactorily. They can count up to TEN and some can count on from that number comfortably to 20. A few children can decide which number is missing from a number square and solve very simple number problems. One of the children can tell the time using the o'clocks only. Opportunities are included in the curriculum to practise counting when they are singing number rhymes, such as 'Ten Little Monkeys'.

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

79. Children enter the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class with average general knowledge. Most achieve satisfactorily and will meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of the curriculum by the end of the Reception year. The teacher's good planning ensures that the children are beginning to learn about the world around them and planning during the inspection was linked with babies and growth. In the lesson observed, supervised by one of the assistants, the children were encouraged to look and talk about the photographs of themselves as babies. The assistant drew the children's attention to the interesting display of photographs, baby clothes and of a baby being bathed in school. A few of the children were able to talk about the photographs and discuss what happened when the baby was brought into their classroom. One or two children were quiet and others were allowed to dominate. Good resources were used to encourage the children to think about how babies eat and whether they have teeth or not. Babyfood containers were opened and tasted but opportunities were missed to encourage every child to talk about the containers and their contents and how babies eat this food without teeth. Teaching was satisfactory in this lesson. The children have been given opportunities to test different types of fabric to find out which will stretch and which will make the cosiest fabric for babies. Planning shows that the children have constructed houses using large construction sets, they have used playdough to make shapes and they have made 'new baby' cards with paper and envelopes.

### **Physical development**

80. By the end of the Reception Year, the children will attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning and achievement is satisfactory. There is a secure outdoor play area with a climbing frame and a soft surface. Big toys such as wheeled vehicles are available for them to gain confidence and develop skills of balance and steering. Time outdoors is planned as part of the everyday activities provided for the children. However, the children were not observed outside during the inspection week as it rained continuously. A physical education lesson was observed in the hall when the five children were with the older pupils in the class. Teaching was satisfactory in this lesson and the children responded well to the music played at the beginning

of the lesson as a warm up. They walked or ran around the hall appropriately and were not at all concerned about being with Years 1 and 2. When the music built up into a crescendo, the children showed that they could listen well and reached up into the air, moving their arms gracefully. Appropriate opportunities were made for the children to work together and they practised their aiming skills using beanbags, balls and hoops. In the classroom, good opportunities are provided for the children to develop their finer manipulative skills in modelling, using scrap materials to make collage, threading beads and using brushes for painting. The children have also made effective mathematical patterns in trays using small pieces of equipment such as wooden pins and small tiles. They are demonstrating increasing dexterity and control in the use of construction sets and puzzles.

### **Creative development**

81. A good range of activities is planned in this area of learning and children make appropriate gains in their learning. By the end of the Reception Year, they are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals and achievement is satisfactory. The children are beginning to use a wide range of tools to express their ideas. For example, they showed that they are developing skills in making printed patterns using paint and different wooden shapes. Their attempts at painting daffodils in a vase were effective and colourful and showed an appropriate use of the paintbrush and colour. Working in pairs, the children created bold collages using a variety of materials, such as fur, paint, fabric, paper, shiny paper and sequins. One of the least articulate children explained, with much prompting, how the large collage had been created. However, there is some over-direction of the children both in art activities and in the role-play area and they are not always able to fully express themselves and communicate their ideas and feelings. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning.

### **ENGLISH**

82. Inspection, based on the work seen, shows that standards have improved marginally since the last inspection in 1997 and continue to match the national average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. These represent an improvement over the below average standards attained by Year 6 pupils and match those attained by Year 2 pupils in last year's National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments.
83. The performance of the pupils has fluctuated considerably in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments in recent years and overall standards, particularly in Year 6, have fallen and not kept up with the rising standards found nationally. This has occurred for several reasons, but chiefly the significant differences between the year groups of pupils tested, in terms of: the number of pupils, the gender of pupils and the differences in levels of prior attainment, with an increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Comparisons of the pupils' prior attainments in Year 2 with their attainments in Year 6 in national tests are equally unreliable at times, given the movement of pupils into and out of school that have affected some year groups.
84. Detailed analysis of the performance of individual pupils who have moved through the school shows, however, that most achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment by the time they leave. However, additional observations of the work in lessons and of the scrutiny of the pupils' work suggest that several pupils have not been attaining at appropriate levels in national tests in recent years, indicating a degree of underachievement in the past and especially in test situations.
85. Pupils with special educational needs receive sensitive support and follow clear and effective strategies to reach the appropriate targets set out for them in their well-formulated individual educational plans. As a result they too achieve satisfactorily in relation to their lower levels of prior attainment. Girls have outperformed the boys in recent years but no more than found nationally and this was not a significant issue in the pupils' learning in the lessons observed.



86. The school has analysed the pupils' performance in national tests very carefully, especially at Year 6 last year, and has recently strengthened its focus on National Curriculum tests as an important indicator of performance. Standards are set to improve even more this year. There is still scope, however, for the school to establish stronger expectations of pupils' attainment in tests and to more strongly emphasise the independence and responsibility offered to the pupils so that they can demonstrate their full potential. Inspection shows, however, that in response to good teaching, an increasing proportion of pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, are now achieving well.
87. Over the last twelve months, the school has significantly improved its implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Writing has been a main thrust of the school development plan and as a consequence teaching and learning practices have been more consistently applied throughout the school. Positive aspects such as the teachers' high expectations of neatly presented work, their clear emphasis on expressive writing and their ongoing and consistent promotion of reading have been retained. As a result, this effective whole school focus on improving pupils' writing has helped to re-establish a culture aimed at improving standards, not evident in the school in previous years.
88. Most pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards that are average in speaking and listening, matching those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are taught and are encouraged to learn and use a range of unusual vocabulary, for example, 'synchronise' and 'alliteration'; this helps them to explain their opinions and ideas about poems and stories and significantly enriches the quality of the discussions and the effectiveness of their learning. Several pupils in Year 6 speak with well above average skill but occasionally they are the first to respond to teachers and can dominate discussions, and this limits the standards reached by other pupils. Teachers place a clear emphasis on discussion. They use questioning effectively, in the main, to involve and to motivate pupils. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily as they progress through the school. In the lessons observed, whilst discussions were successful in promoting the pupils' thinking about the objective of the lesson, at times too much was whole class based and was strongly directed by the teacher. As a result younger or lower attaining pupils had less opportunity to develop their speaking skills compared to higher attaining pupils. Overall most pupils achieve appropriately in speaking and listening skills because the teachers and the pupils themselves value each other's contributions and this aids their learning.
89. Standards in reading are broadly average for pupils in Years 2 and 6, with most pupils' achieving satisfactorily by the time they leave the school as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive good individual help and also achieve appropriately. All pupils receive good support individually from class teachers and learning support assistants and derive benefit from the regular opportunities to read and discuss literature with an adult. Most pupils also receive good support from parents at home and the reading record books enrich the pupils' progress and the school's strong and effective partnership with parents. Pupils observed reading by the inspectors did so confidently and with enjoyment. Given the current proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups, standards in reading remain average overall.
90. Younger pupils have more opportunities to read and work in groups than older pupils do and derive additional understanding from shared ideas. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 respond well to their teachers in class and enjoy sharing texts as a whole class, often presented by overhead projection. This is successful in promoting their wide vocabulary and several pupils excel at reading out aloud to such a large group. Other pupils, particularly the younger or less confident pupils in the class, are more reticent about such whole class reading. This limits their reading development and there is scope to provide more group opportunities such as shared group reading for these pupils. The library was underused during the inspection, possibly restricted by the recent creation of the ICT suite in the same room. Nevertheless, evidence from discussion with pupils also shows that pupils have too few opportunities to use the library independently, both for reading for pleasure and for research, and this is limiting the pupils' reading skills. The

school's increased emphasis on poetry and expressive writing is enriching the pupils' vocabulary, however, and this is strengthening their ability to use and enjoy books.

91. The implementation of the school's 'Literacy Action Plan' that identified writing as a key area for development, particularly in Years 3 to 6, has had a positive impact on the pupils' writing skills across the school. Most pupils attain average standards overall but observations of the pupils' work in lessons and in their writing books shows that many pupils are attaining above this standard in poetry, especially in Years 5 and 6. One very good example of descriptive writing received praise from a member of the 'House of Lords' at Westminster! Achievement over time is satisfactory but pupils make good progress now in the lessons observed across the school in response to well-planned and effective teaching. This positive response by the pupils to the more consistent teaching is raising expectations of what pupils should and can attain and standards are rising. The higher expectations of teachers and pupils are also raising standards in spelling.
92. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils in Year 2 write appropriately in clearly demarcated sentences. The accuracy of their spelling is commensurate with that expected of pupils of this age. The pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are variable and are below those expected, reflecting a lack of consistency across the two classes with Year 2 pupils. The pupils are encouraged to write across the range of writing genres and good examples were evident in instructional writing; for example, directions to control a floor robot, and guidance on how to behave properly in class. The pupils respond to the teachers' good evaluative and informative marking and generally attain average standards overall. By the end of Year 6 the pupils produce good quality work in poetry and descriptive writing. They use an impressive range of quality words, describing volcanoes vividly and using phrases such as, 'swallowing the boys into a world of loneliness, emptiness and wastefulness' when describing 'Dotheboys Hall' and writing with feeling as evacuees during World War 2. Marking is of a high quality and offers clear ways for pupils to improve their work. The pupils respond well to the teachers' good evaluative marking and overall they make good progress in their imaginative writing in lessons, particularly in their skills and in their ability to use descriptive words with clarity.
93. However, too much time is still taken up in drafting and re-drafting pupils' writing in Years 5 and 6 and insufficient time is available to the pupils for them to research and follow their own lines of enquiry or initiate learning from their own ideas. The result is that too many pupils rely on direction from their teacher before they can start writing and are slow to produce well-presented writing to their highest standard. This restricts their ability to perform well in test situations and also limits their wider exploration of other people's written ideas to aid their own learning. As a consequence several higher attaining pupils are capable of reaching higher standards across a wider range of writing.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is good in all classes and is a key factor that is promoting the raising of standards across the school. All teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy well. They share clear learning intentions with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and following careful plans develop good plenary discussions to particularly good effect at the end of lessons. These strategies ensure that the pupils build progressively on previous learning. The teachers are knowledgeable and place a very strong emphasis on using specific vocabulary well to promote the pupils' thinking and understanding. For example in the Years Reception, 1 and 2 class the teacher identified 'exclamation marks', 'direct speech' and describing 'characters', the teacher in the Years 2, 3 and 4 class used terms such as 'pluralisation' and 'glossaries' and the teachers in the Years 5 and 6 class emphasised 'adjectives' and 'onomatopoeic' words to enrich the pupils' learning. This strong guidance and clear expectation is helping to raise standards and is building an improved progression in the pupils' learning. It is also capturing the pupils' imagination, for they enjoy the challenge and interesting ideas and these enrich their spiritual development also. Teachers manage the pupils' learning well and promote warm relationships. They value the pupils' responses and this encourages the pupils to be fully involved and to enjoy their work. This sustains good levels of concentration and promotes achievement. The teachers' marking in this subject is a strength and pupils receive

good guidance that aids their steady improvement. Support staff are fully involved in all classes and contribute well to the pupils' learning.

95. The curriculum is firmly based on the National Literacy Strategy and meets the requirements in full. The teachers assess their pupils extremely well and use these effectively to inform future teaching and learning. This has a positive effect on the pupils' skills. The teachers' marking is particularly supportive in this aspect and often involves precise assessments of the pupils' attainment and invites an element of self-evaluation from the pupils - a good exemplar that could be usefully extended into other subjects. Literacy receives good emphasis in the school's action plan and the relatively new co-ordinator is building well on her predecessor's efforts to raise standards across the school. Assessment strategies, the scheme of work and the policy statement have all been updated and the headteacher has monitored some literacy lessons. Overall the subject is led well and the good level of consistency achieved across the school is an important element in promoting rising standards in this subject. The excellent partnership with parents is very supportive in developing the pupils' reading skills.
96. The subject is well resourced and all classes have a good supply of books. The library too has a good range of books but these were underused during the week of the inspection, especially during wet playtimes and to support independent research, and this is restricting the pupils' achievement. Resources for ICT are good now that the ICT suite is completed. Teachers make good use of lap-top computers and overhead projectors to interest and motivate the pupils. There is scope to make even more good use of ICT to and to develop the pupils' research skills to support more independent and group work in English. The pupils' improving literacy skills are used and developed well in history and geography but there is scope to encourage more reflective writing in science to aid the pupils' understanding. Overall the improving provision in this subject and its positive impact on standards illustrates what the school and pupils can achieve when there is a united effort and this augurs well for the future.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Standards in mathematics are average in Year 2 and this is in line with the findings of the last report and the results of the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments in 2001. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
98. Standards in Year 6 are also average and, again, this is in line with the findings of the last report. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. However, this is a different picture from the test results at the end of Year 6 in 2001 when standards were well below average. The explanation for this improvement is twofold. Firstly, the school has made significant efforts to analyse just why the pupils' results were poor and, secondly, following that analysis, a clear focus has been made on improving standards. The pupils' attainment and achievement is now recorded at regular intervals and tracked to ensure that skills and knowledge are built up progressively as the pupils move through the school.
99. The quality of teaching is good. The teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and a greater proportion of good lessons was observed across the school than during the last inspection, reflecting an improvement that is leading to more effective learning. For example, pupils are beginning to be able to visualise numbers and shapes in their heads. Teachers provide effective opportunities for numeracy skills to be used and consolidated usefully in other areas of the curriculum, such as when recording the weights of ingredients in cooking instructions. In geography also, pupils produced bar charts by hand and also used the data-handling program on the computer. In design and technology, pupils measured pieces of wood before cutting accurate lengths to make a photograph frame. In one mathematics lesson, the teacher took the opportunity of teaching the different sounds 'c' makes at the beginning of some words. The work scrutiny showed that all the strands of the mathematics curriculum are covered appropriately throughout the school.

100. The quality of the teaching and learning observed in Years 1 and 2 was good, indicating that recent improvements are increasing the pupils' rate of achievement. In one lesson, all pupils were given a mental mathematics test by the teacher who kept up a good pace with high expectations of the pupils' ability to double and half numbers. As a result, practically all of the pupils made good progress in the lesson and attained good results. The teacher used very good methods when she revisited each question to ensure that pupils' learning moved forward. Good resources were used in this final session of the lesson when pupils used individual number resources to help check their answers. In this class the teacher gives the pupils a small number of mathematical problems to solve each week when they can snatch odd moments during the day. The support assistant typed the list on the laptop computer and printed them out as the teacher was informing the pupils of the week's problems and this was a good opportunity for the pupils to understand first hand the usefulness of ICT.
101. In a different class, the teacher's good organisation ensured that, by the end of the lesson, the Year 2 pupils' knowledge of three-dimensional shapes increased. Most pupils were able to name a cube, cuboid, cone and a cylinder although a few were confused between a cube and cuboid. The teacher's expectations were high and this resulted in the pupils being well motivated to think carefully, count all the faces and feel their shapes. The work scrutiny showed that Year 2 pupils can add and subtract in tens and fives, they can add coins and can work out how many ice-creams, at five pence each, cost. Pupils can also use a ruler to measure in centimetres and can tell the time in o'clocks.
102. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 was good overall indicating that teaching has also been improved over the last two terms. It is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' achievement. Planning for the different year groups from Years 3 to 6 is effective and ensures that all pupils are working at a good pace and produce an appropriate amount of work. As a result, the tasks interest the pupils; they work steadily, are focused well and approach the tasks carefully. In one very well planned lesson pupils learned which drawings of six squares will or will not make a cube when cut out; they learned how different shapes with the same perimeter of, for example, 24 centimetres, can have a different area and it was evident that their mathematical thinking moved forward well.
103. The teachers use discussions to promote pupils' understanding effectively and these also promote the pupils' developing literacy skills. High expectations in the opening sessions of the mathematics lessons ensured that pupils thought quickly, used their number resources well and, as a result, have developed good strategies for finding, for example, 144 divided by eight. Most pupils by the end of Year 6 know that to find the answer to that problem they must halve 144 and halve it again and again! This is good achievement. In a good lesson for Years 2, 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher's good organisation for the different age groups of pupils ensured that all were working at an appropriate level. Pupils in Year 4 worked well together organising a collection of data of the different pets owned by all the pupils in the class. During this lesson, there were opportunities for all pupils to work on a mathematics program on the computer that continuously gives the pupils feedback on their success, or lack of it, answering the questions on all strands of the curriculum.
104. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and is now ensuring that standards improve in the subject by focusing more sharply on the attainment of pupils and tracking their progress. The pupils' ability to answer mental mathematics questions has improved considerably as a result of including these more frequently in lessons. Improvements are relatively new, however, and have yet to impact on overall attainment. The co-ordinator is now working on methods to assess mathematics and will concentrate on the progress pupils make in learning the key objectives in lessons. Overall the assessments of the pupils' work and the use of these assessments to aid pupils' learning is satisfactory. At this time, however, there is insufficient monitoring of the teaching and learning and this is a weakness. Pupils' work is regularly marked but there are very few comments designed to help individual pupils to improve their work and this is a weakness that is limiting the pupils' achievement. The co-ordinator organises a club after school that includes activities for extending gifted mathematicians and this is enriching the curriculum.

105. Resources for learning are satisfactory. ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to the subject and is particularly evident in Class 2. Younger pupils have used a floor robot to learn about direction and shape and pupils in Year 4 have produced several different graphs illustrating the colour of hair and eyes in the class. They have also produced graphs showing locations in the school grounds where rubbish has collected. Pupils in Class 2 also use the laptop in their classroom to assess their own progress in mathematics. The subject meets statutory requirements.

## SCIENCE

106. Standards in Year 2 and 6 are below the national average and have fallen overall compared to the average standards identified at the time of the last inspection. To some extent this decline in standards represents the lower levels of attainment on entry to school shown by several pupils but in the main it reflects inconsistencies in the teaching the subject across the school. These factors also contributed to the well below average standards attained by pupils in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in the last two years. The performance of boys in relation to girls has also fluctuated in recent years but inspection identified no significant reasons, other than perhaps lower starting points for some pupils with an increased proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Evidence shows, however, that most pupils, including those with special educational needs and potentially higher attaining pupils, do not achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Whilst there has been some improvement in the planned curriculum, inconsistent teachers' expectations have resulted in insufficient improvement since the last inspection. The below average standards identified represent an improvement over recent tests and assessments, indicating a degree of positive movement.
107. Learning is purposefully based on first hand experience for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and all involves discussion, investigation and exploration. For example, pupils in Year 2 conduct practical experiments to test the whether fabrics are waterproof and set up investigations to explore the way plants absorb water through their roots and stems. Through this, they discover that different fabrics are woven in different ways and have different properties and that plants need water and nutrients to remain healthy. Whole class discussions are often too heavily focused on the older pupils in the class and leave insufficient time for younger pupils to work at their own level. Although they enjoy the work and show some understanding of the concepts involved, their methods for recording their ideas and for evaluating the quality of their investigation and findings are insufficiently developed. They do not support their acquisition of skills or the teachers' efforts to assess and promote their achievement. The teachers of Year 2 pupils do not set the same high expectations regarding the quality of pupils' recorded work. As a consequence, too many pupils are not yet able to record their findings in a systematic way, and more could be expected from higher attaining pupils in this area.
108. The scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 2 shows a range of quality. Some is reasonably presented and uses varying forms of recording strategies, such as ordering sentences to describe the air pressure in a balloon. Most is untidy, reflects low expectations of presentation and places too little emphasis on pupils reflecting over their findings and this restricts their achievement and understanding. There is an increasing and beneficial emphasis on 'fair testing' and on practical investigation for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and this is helping more pupils to understand the nature of an investigation. Due to gaps in their prior experience, however, several pupils tend to accept what they find at face value, and do not explore questions such as "why" or "how" in sufficient depth. The teacher's learning intention is that pupils should learn at their own level but there is often too much discussion and this restricts higher attaining pupils from exploring their own ideas practically. Their work is poorly presented and does not lend itself to secondary consideration or promote further ideas. Hence the pupils' skills and achievement, although improving, are under-developed.
109. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 lack appropriate experiences to learn effectively from practical investigation. Too much of the work is set by the teacher; pupils have insufficient opportunities to plan and learn from their own lines of enquiry, to choose their own equipment, to set up their own 'fair tests' and to develop their ideas and findings to the full. Consequently pupils in Year 6

lack the expected level of practical scientific skills to conduct an investigation, to understand its importance, to analyse results and to formulate their own hypotheses for further exploration. Their numeracy skills are not fully utilised in plotting graphs or in exploring results of measurements. Discussions with pupils shows that several have appropriate knowledge of scientific facts, of life and living creature, of materials and their properties and of forces, but without the skills to investigate their ideas their achievement is unsatisfactory.

110. The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 4 but it lacks challenge and focus for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and is unsatisfactory in this class. The teachers of younger pupils are increasingly matching the level of work appropriately to the pupils' age and prior attainment and this is helping more pupils to improve their learning in conducting fair tests. Their expectations in terms of what should be recorded and at what standard varies, however, and restricts the pupils' overall achievement. The teacher in the Years 5 and 6 class gives too much direction and this limits the rate at which the pupils' learn, and is especially restrictive for potentially higher attainers. Expectation of the quality of the presentation of recorded work is higher in this class than other classes but the content lacks depth and pupils have too few opportunities to predict outcomes and to propose new investigations and to formulate and test original hypotheses to extend their learning. Overall, there is too little opportunity for pupils to record their work independently, so that they can reflect on what they are learning and use the skills they are acquiring in literacy and ICT, and this is restricting their achievement.
111. In all classes, particularly in English and history, the teachers use questions effectively to enthuse the pupils and to stimulate discussion. The teachers value the pupils' responses and include them purposefully whenever possible. The teachers promote warm relationships and manage the pupils' behaviour well; as a result the pupils enjoy their work and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. All the classes contain wide age ranges of pupils and two classes contain large numbers of pupils and in subjects this often restricts the teachers' willingness to develop more practical approaches to learning. There is considerable scope to develop more group teaching, especially in science, to match the challenge, particularly for older pupils, more closely to their prior attainment and to promote higher standards. In subjects such as religious education and science, many older pupils especially, are deserving of higher levels of trust to follow independent lines of enquiry and to choose and collect their own equipment to enrich their learning.
112. Procedures for assessing the pupils' work are unsatisfactory. National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments are increasingly evaluated to useful effect but the school has not developed a systematic method for recording the results of assessment, which provides a picture of what pupils have achieved. Assessments are not used sufficiently to help teachers to consistently plan challenging work for the higher attainers, or to contribute to teachers' knowledge of the progress that individual pupils make and this is inhibiting improvement. The quality of the teachers' marking is variable and fails to establish high enough expectations for the pupils.
113. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and is strengthening the focus on the subject across the school. In her own class she is already instrumental in promoting practical approaches to learning. She is very new to the position and the subject is identified as a target for improvement in the school development plan. At this time, however, in the absence of a consistent approach, leadership is not effective in improving teaching and learning across the school. The planned curriculum is satisfactory and includes all the required strands. With the newly equipped ICT suite, the school is now able to fulfil areas relating to data-handling and using sensory equipment. Work in the subject is now supported by an appropriate policy statement - an improvement since the last inspection.
114. Learning resources are satisfactory. The library has a plentiful supply of science books but it was not fully used during the inspection limiting its effectiveness. The school lacks a well established out-door environmental area, reflecting the insufficient emphasis on pupils, especially older pupils, learning from independent investigation, and this is a weakness.

## ART AND DESIGN

115. It was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design during the inspection as lessons were timetabled on days after the inspection had been completed. Judgements about attainment are drawn from the ongoing and previous work of the pupils throughout the school, displays of work and discussions with teachers. No secure judgements can be made on teaching.
116. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are developing appropriate skills in the use of different types of pencils and the higher attaining pupils are able to execute pencil drawings well. They know which pencils have the softest lead for producing shading. For example, after a visit to the church, the pupils drew detailed drawings of the patterns in the church and the ceiling rose. As a natural progression of the drawings, pupils then worked effectively producing clay tablets to make a three-dimensional sculpture of the detailed patterns observed. There is good use of sketchbooks in Year 2 and pupils show developing skills in drawing objects, such as a Roman lamp and a child's scooter. Pupils had also tried hard to draw a distant view and one higher attaining pupil had produced a very sensitively drawn key with well thought out symbols.
117. At the end of Year 6, pupils have experienced a wide range of art media. For example, they can make attractive masks using card and many other different types of fabric and paper. Their World War II posters using pastels and paint giving a healthy eating message are bold and colourful and attract the viewer. Pupils have worked together producing very large background paintings of 'The Blitz' and a 'Victorian Street Scene'. These show a good use of colour and skills of drawing as well as a knowledge of how to achieve perspective in the street scene, for example. A very few pupils are making puppets this term using papier mâché, card and fabric. Good skills and techniques using clay, batik and other media are evident in the work of the pupils who attend the pottery and art clubs. Higher attaining pupils in the pottery club show good skills in claywork and are able to use their fingers dexterously to create, for example, an attractive fold in a witch's cape and a small pointed hat. Equally, boys have created clay football players with good skills of shaping the shirt and shorts and the players' well-developed muscles. However, sketch books in Year 6 are not used often and the pupils have very little opportunity to learn how to paint individually.
118. At the end of Year 4, the pupils' attainment in the painting strand of the subject is above average. Pupils show good skills in reproducing the lines and perspective shown in Van Gogh's 'Chair' and Picasso's 'Femme a la Fesille'. Pupils have been taught to look carefully at the prints by these famous artists and, in particular, to think how the techniques used have enhanced the paintings. As a result, their efforts to reproduce the paintings using their own ideas are very successful. Pupils have been encouraged to practise the brush strokes and curved lines and whorls of Van Gogh's 'Starry Night' and have used the skills they have learned well. This is a good contribution to the spiritual development of the Year 4 pupils when they can express their own feelings about the paintings in their own work. The good results enhance their self-esteem.
119. There are good links with other subjects and art and design. For example, in history, studying the World War II topic and also following a visit to the church when studying the history of the village. There are also links with English and the pupils will use the puppets they are making to produce a play later this term.
120. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the subject and runs the art club after school. Very little monitoring takes place other than informally. However, in a small school, it is relatively straightforward and effective to assess the progress some pupils are making by observing the displays. The displays around the school are organised well with teachers arranging the paintings and objects effectively. Pupils feel valued as a result. Interviews with staff and pupils

show that discussion is an important element in lessons and this helps to promote the pupils' literacy. There was little evidence to show that numeracy skills are promoted sufficiently in art and design. The use of time in the teaching of art in Year 6 is not used effectively and pupils do not always enjoy sufficient time to develop their skills to the full in all aspects. There are practical difficulties due to the very large number of pupils in one classroom but opportunities are not taken to fully utilise the other rooms available in the school for small groupwork. The curriculum is enriched by the art and pottery clubs but not all pupils attend. Talented pupils have the opportunity to extend their art skills by attending the clubs. Assessment in this subject has not been developed fully or consistently and is unsatisfactory. The subject meets statutory requirements.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection as lessons were timetabled on days after the inspection had been completed. However, judgements about attainment are drawn from the ongoing and previous work of the pupils throughout the school, photographic evidence, discussions with teachers and a scrutiny of the planning documents. No secure judgements can be made on teaching although it is clear from the good evidence available for pupils at the end of Year 2 that teaching is at least satisfactory.
122. Indications are that standards of attainment are average in Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement, including pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is in line with the judgements of the last inspection. At the end of Year 2, pupils are developing their ability to use simple tools to cut and shape materials such as wood, fabric, paper and card. With the good support of the teacher and learning assistant, pupils had made a hinged photograph frame out of wood, carefully marking the wood before sawing to the required length. Photographs showed that there was careful use of the benchlock to ensure safety when sawing. Similarly, perspex had been used to protect the photograph in the frame rather than glass. Good resources had been supplied for the task and the pupils had responded well by taking care to glue triangular card pieces to secure the photograph in the frame. Measurement is a vital ingredient in some of the work and this enriches the pupils' numeracy skills. Pupils were able to make appropriate evaluations of their finished product and made comments, such as, 'We decided to make an extra side to our frame to stop it falling over' and, 'Next time I will try to make the sides fit a little bit better.' This term the pupils are making money containers using their sewing skills and felt fabric. The work showed that their skills of planning are developing well and progress from last September is clearly evident. These discussions promote the pupils' literacy skills effectively. The teacher's good methods ensured that the planning sheet contained prompts that enabled the pupils to develop their design skills, such as, 'What fastenings should I use? What special features will my money container have?'
123. The pupils in Year 6 had made bus shelters in the previous term. Photographs showed them working in pairs and groups to design their shelter on large squared paper. The finished bus shelters were not available for scrutiny but their written descriptions of the process of planning and evaluating showed an awareness of the need to plan carefully. The pupils' skills of evaluating are not as well developed as their ability to write a description of the process. A few pupils were able to give a simple evaluation, such as, 'I wouldn't have made so many rooms in my shelter because it was very difficult to make and was not successful'. This unit of work was linked effectively to English and literacy and the pupils had also used ICT to word process their descriptions of the whole process. The pupils' self-assessment of their descriptive work is good but their evaluation of the design element of the work is not as well developed. There was very little work to scrutinise from this term for very few pupils had made musical instruments. These are still in the process of being made and no evaluation has been completed. Although achievement is satisfactory in Year 6, nevertheless, it is affected by the lack of time allocated to the subject and the 'hands on' experience of the pupils. This was a weakness noted in the last inspection.
124. The co-ordinator has only been responsible for the subject since November and no monitoring of the subject in classrooms has taken place. This is a weakness that restricts achievement.



However, she provides satisfactory leadership by acting as a good role-model for teaching the subject as the scrutiny of work in her class shows that the whole process of designing, making and evaluating the product is in place securely. The co-ordinator is using a formatted assessment sheet to record the progress of the pupils in her class but this is not consistently used throughout the school and this is inhibiting the development of consistent practice. The school bases the scheme of work on materials from the national guidelines and planning for each unit of work is appropriate. The subject contributes well to the pupils' social development when they work collaboratively designing and making their products. The subject meets statutory requirements.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

125. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the school's cycle of planning, few lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based on evidence gathered by talking to pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator, by looking at pupils' work and by examining teachers' planning. These show that, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils continue to attain average standards in Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, build appropriately on their prior attainment and achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the school.
126. Evidence also shows that since the last inspection, the school has reviewed and updated the subject policy statement and has strengthened the long, medium and short term curriculum planning. As a consequence, pupils are able to build on previous learning more systematically and there is an appropriate emphasis on pupils acquiring geographical skills such as map reading. These skills are developed effectively as the pupils progress through the school, from drawing plans of the classroom, routes to the local church to the use of maps to locate famous mountains, rivers and places of high and low rainfall. The scrutiny of the pupils' work showed that by Year 2, pupils are able to compare different environments appropriately. For example, they share and contrast their holiday experiences abroad, noting differences and similarities in weather, customs and buildings. Year 6 pupils identify the mountainous areas of Britain and can locate accurately the major desert regions of the world. The teachers place an appropriate emphasis on studying man's impact on the environment and pupils develop a good understanding of how the need to provide transport and mains water affects the local environment. In their studies of water, the pupils study plans and measure and map the waterflow through the school, showing appropriate knowledge and skills.
127. The pupils acquire an appropriate understanding of environmental issues and are increasingly deepening their knowledge and understanding by writing expressively in the subject; for example, by keeping 'water diaries' describing when and where they have seen water usage. In addition pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce good quality work when writing about volcanic eruptions and hurricanes. These analytical and descriptive exercises enhance and utilise the pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills effectively, although there is scope to promote these aspects more systematically through the school to raise standards even more. ICT is used to enrich the presentation of the pupils' topic work, for example, when studying important buildings in London and by highlighting the changing environment using different fonts sizes and occasionally for graphical representations of data such as rainfall, but overall this technology is not yet used to the maximum to support the pupils' learning.
128. An insufficient number of lessons were observed from which to judge the quality of teaching. Discussions with the pupils show that they enjoy the work, though, and show positive attitudes to learning in the subject. Examination of the pupils' work, both in books and on display in classrooms and around the school, indicates that achievement is satisfactory over time and that the pupils undertake an appropriate amount of work. Over the last twelve months, the school has adopted the scheme of work suggested by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this is strengthening the provision. The curriculum is planned effectively over a two-year cycle and this ensures that pupils have the opportunity to acquire appropriate skills. The pupils are provided with good opportunities to undertake fieldwork; for example, to measure local traffic flow or to study the coastal and contrasting environments during their summer term residential visits.

129. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Recent work in updating the planned curriculum and in auditing and establishing an appropriate amount of learning resources is having a beneficial effect in supporting teaching and learning across the school. As yet, however, the co-ordinator has insufficient time to monitor teaching across the school and this is inhibiting improvement. The staff of this small school meet together regularly though, and this enables them to share and utilise each other's expertise and this is having a positive impact by promoting the pupils' skills. The co-ordinator gains a sound overall view of pupils' attainment and teachers' work by discussing the pupils' work and teachers' planning with colleagues and uses these effectively to review planning. Teachers have their own individual assessment procedures which assist them to plan on a short-term basis, but the school lacks a whole school system of assessment and recording of pupils' work in this subject to inform teachers of the standards children attain and to inform future planning. There is scope also to improve the use of marking of the pupils' work to inform future teaching.
130. Discussions with teachers and pupils show that work in this subject contributes well to learning in other subjects and also to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. A good example of this was seen in an English lesson in Years 5 and 6 where the pupils' descriptive writing was significantly enriched by their interest in observing a video of an erupting volcano and by their discussions about its impact on the environment. Although little teaching of geography was seen it is clear that, as with history, the subject receives clear emphasis across the school and as the pupils' literacy and ICT skills improve and are used so standards are rising.

## HISTORY

131. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards that are above the national average. These standards represent a significant improvement over the average standards found at the time of the last inspection and reflect the positive impact of improved curriculum planning and subject co-ordination. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and potentially higher attainers, are included equally and achieve well by the time they leave the school.
132. Observations of lessons and the scrutiny of the pupils' work revealed that strengths, such as thorough discussions about why things happened and the open sharing of ideas in the search to explore reasons for occurrences, continue effectively. This is helping pupils of all ages to develop a good understanding of chronology and to acquire an above average awareness of the need to question then interpret historical evidence. In addition pupils are being taught systematically to conduct their enquires as genuine historians would and to consider a range of evidence before coming up with their ideas. For example, observation of lessons showed that from a young age, pupils have good opportunities and are encouraged to interview people who make important contributions to the local community. As a result the pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain a useful insight into how life in their community has changed during the course of a lifetime. They formulate their own questions effectively and establish a good understanding of changes over the recent past. In other lessons pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 are encouraged to challenge the appropriateness of sources of evidence; for example, by querying the accuracy of comic stories about life in Tudor England.
133. The scrutiny of work showed that the pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop an above average understanding of life in Britain during the World War II. They develop appropriate knowledge of what it was like during the 'Blitz' but have a good awareness of time and context in relation to the present day. The pupils' examination of census materials from Victorian times and their consideration, for example, of 'family trees' also enrich this awareness. Increasingly the pupils' work and learning is strengthened and enhanced by their improving literacy skills which enable them to write with good expression, for example, about life as an evacuee during World War 2, or as rich and poor people in Victorian times.
134. The teaching is securely based on the QCA guidance and this ensures continuity and an appropriate range of learning opportunities as the pupils move through the school. As a consequence the pupils acquire good skills, build well on their previous learning and achieve

well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special needs are supported effectively by learning support assistants and have full and equal access to learning and also achieve well. Higher attaining pupils are encouraged to reflect and to write their ideas at a higher level, also supporting good achievement. Pupils consider time lines and examine census material and this helps them to extend and use their improving numeracy skills.

135. The quality of teaching is good across the school. The teachers place a consistent and effective emphasis on pupils learning through practical work and this is helping to promote their very positive attitudes and achievement. The pupils are taught to be 'historians' and to question and consider and this underpins their good understanding. All teachers are knowledgeable and are well prepared. They share clear lesson objectives with the pupils and as a result the pupils understand the purpose of the lessons and this aids their effort and learning. In a lesson in the Reception, Years 1 and 2 class the teacher's involvement of interview techniques promoted the pupils' learning well and several pupils demonstrated good thinking, for example when questioning an elderly local resident about her life as a child.
136. All the teachers manage the pupils' behaviour very well and promote very positive attitudes, as in a lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4 where the teacher used overhead projection equipment effectively to discuss the validity of comic stories in describing life in Tudor England. Warm relationships and thorough organisation were also clearly evident in a lesson in Years 5 and 6 where at least six parents assisted in cooking items such as rock cakes and scones using only the ingredients that would have been available during World War 2. These carefully considered practical teaching methods have a successful impact on the pupils' learning. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to write extensively and this is an improving aspect of provision that is not only helping to raise standards in the subject but it is also enriching the pupils' literacy skills.
137. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership - a significant improvement since the last inspection - and has reviewed and updated the subject policy statement to give more guidance to colleagues. In addition she has completed a thorough audit of and has increased resources, including those to support ICT, so that the carefully planned two-year curriculum cycle is sufficiently resourced to support the pupils' skills. Colleagues are encouraged to use artefacts as evidence and this is helping to raise standards across the school. There is still scope, however, to enable older pupils to complete more research independently. The teachers know their pupils well and marking is satisfactory in recording the pupils' acquisition of skills. However, the subject lacks formal assessment procedures and, other than their day-to-day assessments of the pupils' work, teachers do not use assessments sufficiently to inform future learning. The subject is enhanced by a number of visits and cross-curricular links.
138. Now that the ICT suite is in place pupils are beginning to make more effective use of ICT to support their work. It is used well to enhance the pupils' topic booklets; for example, plans of famous buildings in London. The teachers used the school's digital camera most effectively during the inspection, particularly to record the practical work, and this form of technology is enriching the pupils' learning by enabling them to revisit their research at a later date. There remains much scope, however, to use and develop the pupils' ICT skills more effectively to support individual research. Resources for learning are satisfactory in the main and support teaching and learning effectively across the curriculum. The school's success in teaching history provides clear exemplars that would be equally effective in other subjects.

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

139. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, reflecting the insufficient level of resources available in the past. This appears to be a decline from the last inspection when standards were judged to be average but, since then, expectations in this subject have risen significantly. Three weeks before the inspection a new ICT suite was installed in a designated room in the school and pupils, with the support of assistants and occasionally teachers, are already using it during lessons. This is a significant improvement. However,

arrangements have yet to be made for more extensive use of the suite, for example, at lunchtimes and after school, and the full benefit of these new facilities has yet to impact on the pupils' skills.

140. At the end of Year 2 most pupils can use the mouse confidently, a few are familiar with the keyboard but not all are totally confident at logging on to the machines. Several pupils can draw simple pictures and infill them with colour and patterns. Some pupils can select from an on-screen menu, can identify the right keys for simple punctuation and can write two or three sentences of a story. Approximately half of the pupils can load and save programs. Most pupils can direct a moving floor robot although they have difficulty using the instruction of 90 degrees to make a right or left hand turn. All pupils have had a little experience of loading CD ROMS and a few have used an encyclopaedia program in researching for information about Henry VIII. Most can make decisions when interacting with an adventure game and, with support, can enter data to produce text. Several pupils can only do this with close support, however, either from fellow pupils or an adult.
141. At the end of Year 6 pupils have made clear progress with their word processing skills; several use two hands confidently on the keyboard and know how to use the back space to delete and the space bar. However, they are still unfamiliar with some functions of the toolbar. For example, they are not quite sure how to use the cut and paste icons and do not automatically think of the most appropriate font and typeface to word process their poetry. They are uncertain how to import pictures or photographs from the Internet or other programs onto the hard disk of the machines. They do know how to print and were delighted to hear the printer go into action when they gave it instructions through their own machines. The experience of the pupils during the last year or more has been very limited as they have been in a class of 36 pupils with one computer. In discussion with a group of high attaining pupils it was evident that they have had no experience in school this year of creating spreadsheets or using a turtle graphics program to extend their skills on giving repeat directions. They have had very limited experience sending emails or exploring the Internet. They have had no experience of using sensors to help in science experiments.
142. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6 and this is similar to the findings of the last inspection. However, in the opening sessions of two lessons in Year 2 and Year 4, the quality of teaching and learning was good when the teachers instructed the pupils before they moved into the suite. All teachers have had training, and 'on the spot' training is available to the support assistants from willing teachers. However, during the inspection, the support assistants took a major role in the ICT suite supervising the pupils carrying out tasks previously taught by their teachers. The assistants were very supportive and encouraged the pupils to access the correct program but, overall, their knowledge and ICT skills are generally limited. Some of the pupils had difficulty in making progress in the lesson but the assistants' patience and appropriate instructions ensured that all pupils finally managed to finish the task. The assistants moved around the suite effectively ensuring that all pupils were on task.
143. Good links have been established with mathematics, history and geography in Year 2. In geography, pupils investigated how much litter they could find around the school site and in which locations. The pupils produced some interesting horizontal bar graphs and learned how information can be presented in different ways. In history pupils used the word processing program to write about the difference between poor and rich soldiers in Tudor times and, with the help of an assistant, downloaded a picture into their text. In mathematics, also, good links were made with ICT when pupils used a data handling program to print out graphs of colour of eyes and hair. In Year 6, good links with English are in evidence and pupils have produced stories and poems using the word processing facility.
144. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the opening sessions of two lessons in Years 2 and 4 when the teachers used the ICT projector for approximately 15 minutes to instruct the pupils how to use the various icons on the toolbar and the keyboard and mouse. This method of teaching was effective and resulted in all pupils listening attentively and watching the screen with concentration. They were very eager to answer any questions and demonstrate their new

knowledge. Both teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilled in using their laptops on their knees. Their clear explanations ensured that all pupils moved forward in their learning. Teachers used ICT vocabulary such as 'scrolling through' and 'icons' and this increased the pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils in Year 2 were fascinated as they watched the teacher use the symmetry tool very carefully. They were amazed to see that when the teacher began to draw 'Joseph's Coat' on one side of the symmetry line, the outline of the coat appeared by 'magic' on the other side. By the end of the lesson the pupils' learning had moved forward and they knew that they had to ensure that the symmetry line was placed on the screen first or the process would not happen. The high expectations of the teacher in Year 4 resulted in pupils learning by the end of the lesson that a red line appears under a misspelled word and a green line when incorrect grammar has been written. The behaviour of the pupils was very good in both lessons. Good methods of teaching were also observed in Year 4 when all pupils are given the opportunity during the day to use a mathematics program on the laptop. This is a good program that gives the pupils instant feedback on their skills in all strands of the mathematics curriculum and the teacher's good organisation ensures that all pupils in the class experience the program.

145. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and, although no time has been allocated for monitoring the subject, leadership is increasingly effective. The subject meets statutory requirements. A satisfactory scheme of work is in place using the national guidelines although no policy has yet been written to ensure that the pupils have sufficient opportunities to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge of ICT at an appropriate level. All the teachers have undertaken the training organised by the school and have clearly made good efforts to upgrade their own skills and knowledge. Resources are very good for ICT. There are sufficient computers in the suite for a large group of pupils and the teachers use their laptops and projectors very effectively in the classrooms. There is effective use of the digital camera when teachers take photographs of the pupils working on various topics to record the process of learning. Although the co-ordinator is using a well-formatted assessment sheet that breaks down the skills under the separate strands of the ICT curriculum, this is not yet being used consistently by other teachers. This weakness was identified in the last inspection also. The subject contributes to the social development of the pupils when they learn to work together.

## MUSIC

146. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and this is in line with standards at the time of the last inspection. The achievement of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. No judgements can be made on standards, teaching and learning in Year 6 as music lessons were timetabled on days after the inspection had been completed. However, the standards of the pupils' singing heard in a hymn practice and during a rehearsal of a school musical are above average.
147. The curriculum is taught regularly by a visiting specialist and in the lesson observed in Year 2, most pupils could keep a steady beat using hand gestures and untuned percussion instruments. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this is an improvement from the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge ensures that the pupils are learning a musical vocabulary, such as pulse. The lesson was well planned with a good pace and the pupils learned that the beat can be represented by symbols on a whiteboard. As a result of the teacher's very high expectations, most pupils were able to perform as a whole group keeping their own beat going well. Most pupils were able to follow the pattern of 'clap, rest, repeat'. By the end of the lesson, the pupils' own knowledge and skills in music had moved forward well and they knew, for example, that a certain symbol means that they need to repeat the piece again. The very good methods used by the teacher ensured that the pupils' concentration and interest in performing was maintained well. The pupils enjoyed moving from hand gestures to using untuned percussion instruments and one pupil led the whole group by keeping a very steady beat on the big drum. Pupils were able to evaluate their own performance and not all pupils could change from a 'four/four' beat to a 'three/four' beat. Keeping such 'time' enriches the pupils' numeracy skills and discussion promotes literacy skills well.

148. At the end of Year 6, standards in singing are good. During a hymn practice pupils showed an ability to all start singing on time without any signal from the teacher. They can sing in a round easily and concentrate well on their particular part. When singing the American spiritual, 'This Little Light of Mine', the pupils interpreted the rhythm well and showed that they can sing softly or loudly and are sensitive to the words and spirit of the hymn. In the practice observed of the musical production, 'Alice in Wonderland', pupils were able to sing high and low and also performed more complex tunes competently and, at the same time, moved around the stage appropriately. The soloists interpreted their parts very well, had learned the words of their songs by heart and radiated much energy and pleasure in their singing. The production of the musical is shared between one of the teachers who has been trained in drama and the school secretary who is very experienced in taking part in musical productions. They make a good team and the pupils respond well to their teaching. A visiting violin teacher teaches a few pupils regularly. Her excellent musical knowledge ensures that the standards the pupils attain are very good. They can manage their bows well, know and use a good range of musical vocabulary and can play their pieces competently. The pupils can read music, play scales and their standards are well above average.
149. The management of this subject has only recently been changed and the new co-ordinator, who has several other responsibilities, has not been involved in any formal monitoring of the subject. However, she does lead the hymn practice weekly and, in this small school, has a good knowledge of the progress the pupils are making in their music lessons and this is satisfactory. The subject contributes well to the spiritual development of the pupils and it was clear that the violinists, the production group and the pupils in hymn practice are aware of how music can express personal thoughts and feelings. Their success in singing and performing also contributes well to their self-esteem. There is an appropriate scheme of work and planning is satisfactory. However, there is no system in place for the assessment of the pupils' progress and this is a weakness that is limiting pupils' achievement. The subject meets statutory requirements.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

150. Standards are broadly average for pupils in Year 2 and are above average for pupils in Year 6. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. As they grow older pupils benefit from the well-organised opportunities provided through the 'Penryn Partnership' and extra-curricular clubs, and achieve well during Years 3 to 6. By the time they leave the school, most pupils, including higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs, have achieved well. The majority of pupils attains above average standards and achieves well in swimming. These findings show that standards have been maintained in Year 2 since the last inspection, but in response to improved provision, standards have risen in Year 6.
151. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 benefit from two terms of swimming provision. This takes place at an extremely well equipped sports complex some distance from the school. Swimming is generally taught well and most pupils learn to swim the expected 25 metres well before they leave the school. The effectiveness of the provision is restricted, however, by the significant amount of time taken travelling to and from the pool, by the very limited time the pupils actually spend in the pool and by the large size of the groups of pupils being instructed.
152. Work in the subject is given consistent emphasis throughout the school. It is significantly enriched through links with the local sports college and by the school's active involvement in the partnership with local schools. Participating schools receive help from specialist teaching staff including instructors and coaches. Sports such as 'Tag Rugby', tennis, football, basket ball, and dance are just a few of the sporting activities supported by this very good partnership. Most activities take place during school time but a few are also promoted during after-school clubs of which the football club is a good example. About half of the pupils benefit from this additional provision that is well supported by the staff of the school. These 'extra' opportunities significantly enrich the pupils' learning and several pupils go on to represent their sports at a higher level after they leave the school.

153. Evidence from lessons and observations of pupils at play and participating in after-school clubs show that most pupils develop their skills effectively as they progress through the school. They enjoy the work and respond enthusiastically to their teachers and instructors. The pupils develop good co-ordination when running and attain average ball skills during ball games. The pupils enjoy competition and the teachers and coaches use this beneficially to increase the pace of work, to challenge and to increase the pupils' skills. During the football club and during tennis coaching sessions, for example, the pupils showed good awareness of space and passed the ball intelligently and skilfully. These approaches promote the pupils' learning and improve standards. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have positive attitudes towards sport and know how to benefit from individual or collaborative exercise.
154. There were too few opportunities to judge the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is generally good in Years 3 to 6 and it is aided considerably by the use and support of qualified coaches and instructors. Not only the pupils benefit from this specialist provision, for class teachers have received good training especially in promoting the pupils' specific skills and this is helping pupils to achieve well in a variety of sports. The teachers use the subject carefully to promote the pupils' social skills and this has a particularly positive effect on the pupils' attitudes and effort. The pupils respond to the good management of their behaviour, work hard and make good progress in swimming, football and tennis lessons. All adults working with the pupils give lots of praise and this enriches their learning. There is scope to encourage the pupils' evaluation of their own and each other's efforts and to identify more specifically areas where balls can be used. At present ICT is not used sufficiently to promote the pupils' understanding and learning in this subject; for example, by measuring the impact of exercise on the body using heart monitors.
155. The curriculum is generally planned satisfactorily and it is supported by a good number of out of school clubs and by sporting links with other schools. A significant amount of teaching time is allocated to this subject, however, and much of this is taken up by the time used to take pupils swimming. There is considerable scope: to sharpen the use of the swimming time in the water that is available to pupils when they are at the pool and to reduce the size of the groups when pupils swim. There is also a need to review the effectiveness of pupils swimming when they can already swim the expected distance since this takes up time that could be used more efficiently to raise standards in other subjects such as science and religious education. The teachers know their pupils well and use their observations of the pupils' skills in lessons to enrich learning. These are not sufficiently recorded, however, and the school lacks appropriate strategies for using assessments of pupils' work to plan future teaching and learning progressively. The subject is led well and receives strong whole school emphasis. Resources for learning are good and the accommodation represents an excellent facility both indoors and outdoors to promote physical education successfully. There is scope to utilise coaches, instructors and staff more effectively in recording and assessing the pupils' acquisition of skills over the longer term to inform future teaching and learning. Day-to-day assessment in lessons is good though. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social development and is a strength of the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

156. Standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6. These standards are below those found at the time of the last inspection. This has occurred because of the insufficient emphasis placed on the subject, especially in Years 2 to 6, and the resulting lack of opportunities for pupils in Years 2 to 6 to reflect in writing and in other forms of recording that has restricted the pupils' knowledge and skills. However, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 receive an appropriate introduction to major world faiths such as Christianity and Judaism and show an appropriate awareness of religion as a consequence of the teachers' effective use of story to promote discussion. The effective use of discussion to consider issues continues in Years 3 to 6, but the pupils' rate of achievement becomes more unsatisfactory due to the lack of emphasis placed on pupils recording their work and ideas. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to reflect in writing about how religious belief can affect people's lives. In the main most pupils do not achieve satisfactorily by the time they leave the school. This also includes

pupils with special educational needs and is especially the case for potentially higher attaining pupils whose achievement suffers significantly due to very restricted opportunities for them to reflect individually at a deeper level in their writing.

157. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 considered the parables of Jesus and made effective links with meanings in other stories. They enjoy the work and their discussions about, for example, why the man built his house on the rock, enabled the pupils to learn effectively by making meaningful links with their own homes and experiences. Continued discussion enabled the teacher to make useful connections with other stories from the Bible and helped the pupils to advance their awareness of religious belief and practice. Given the wide age and attainment range, however, there was insufficient opportunity for the older or higher attaining pupils to explore their ideas further. Very little work is recorded and whilst this is appropriate for the larger number of young children in this class it represents a reduced challenge for some pupils. Generally by the end of Year 2 most pupils have an appropriate awareness of religions but have insufficient knowledge of specific beliefs and customs.
158. Learning is similar in the Years 2, 3 and 4 class where whole class discussion is the main teaching format. Too often, though, these sessions are 'tucked in' after swimming visits – a time that is frequently disrupted due to variable journey times to and from the swimming pool. Again, whilst there is meaningful discussion that enables particularly the younger pupils to extend their awareness of religion, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to explore ideas in writing or through art. Discussions with teachers showed that role-play and drama is occasionally used to good effect to explore the pupils' ideas and to promote positive attitudes, but not every pupil is inclined to share their deepest thought in this way and this limits learning. Pupils discussed the story of Abraham but whole class discussions can wander away from specific learning objectives when they are used to 'fill in' variable situations and this occurred, again restricting the pupils' learning. As a consequence the pupils are not building on their knowledge and understanding of particular beliefs and practices and this is restricting their ability, as they grow older, to reflect on why people believe and follow certain customs.
159. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 tend to focus more on citizenship and personal, social and moral education than on the religious element of the locally agreed syllabus and whilst this is of value to the pupils it does not develop the pupils' knowledge skills or understanding of religious belief and practice to the required standard. The pupils continue to enjoy and respond well in discussion, but as already mentioned sensitive pupils are not always inclined to explore their ideas in such a public forum and wider learning opportunities are limited by the insufficient emphasis on writing expressively in the subject. In many ways this represents a lost opportunity for the pupils to advance their learning by using their rapidly improving literacy skills.
160. Gaps in the pupils' knowledge when pupils in Year 6 were questioned and the lack of recorded work shows that the subject has received insufficient emphasis in the Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 classes in recent years. The pupils have developed some awareness of religious beliefs, however, through whole school assembly themes such as 'Famine' and through their frequent discussions in class, for example about what is happening in other parts of the world. The discussions with Year 6 pupils also indicated that several pupils are unable to identify features of main religions and have difficulty attributing practices to specific religions accurately. They readily admitted that they 'don't do a lot' about religion but readily talk about their discussions of rules, rights and responsibilities. In the main most pupils have appropriate knowledge of the beliefs of Christianity and Judaism, but lack understanding of religious ceremonies and of other faiths. Work on display shows that pupils have studied famous Bible stories about Moses and John the Baptist and have some knowledge of Christianity. Evidence shows, however, that the insufficient opportunity to write reflectively about religious belief and practice is restricting the pupils' progress and attainment in the subject and is also limiting the subject's contribution to the pupils' literacy skills.
161. Due to the timing of the inspection in relation to the school's cycle of planning there were insufficient opportunities to observe or judge the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6. The teaching in other years was satisfactory. Strengths include good questioning and interesting



discussions that promote the pupils' thinking. The teachers make good links with the pupils' previous experience and promote warm relationships that are effective in sustaining the pupils' positive attitudes towards the subject. Especially for older pupils, however, the lack of recorded work indicates an incomplete approach to the teaching of the subject. Younger pupils occasionally record their work imaginatively by ordering a series of cartoon pictures but overall there is no developing or increasing expectation that pupils should record their ideas or reflect over the views and beliefs of others in writing or to communicate their own ideas in this way. This restricts the pupils' attainment and also reduces the impact the subject can have on the pupils' developing literacy skills. Not all pupils feel confident about sharing their ideas in whole class or group discussion and so the lack of written work also reduces the impact the subject can have in promoting the pupils' views and ideas, for example by celebrating pupils' contributions.

162. The curriculum has satisfactory breadth and balance and meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. It is strengthened by close links with whole school assembly themes such as 'Sharing' and 'Taking Responsibility' and by the school's focused emphasis on citizenship. It is significantly weakened, however, by an unclear and variable time allocation and by unsuitable placement in the daily timetable. Subject co-ordination is not effective at this time. The school lacks appropriate strategies to record and assess the pupils' attainment and progress and this is also limiting the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Resources for learning are adequate. The school has a limited collection of religious artefacts and sufficient books about the major world faiths. ICT is not used to best effect in promoting the pupils' ideas and learning and there is very little contribution to the pupils' numeracy skills.
163. Occasionally the subject makes a useful contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, but generally the opportunities present in the subject are not explored sufficiently to enrich the pupils' spiritual development. Many pupils are capable of attaining at a higher standard in this subject.