

INSPECTION REPORT

**NANSLOE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Helston

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111832

Headteacher: Miss E S Trythall

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward  
18605

Dates of inspection: 10 - 13 June 2002

Inspection number: 245275

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bulwark Rd  
Helston  
Cornwall

Postcode: TR13 8JF

Telephone number: 01326 572966

Fax number: 01326 572966

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Thomas

Date of previous inspection: 23 February 1998

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Team members</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education	What sort of school is it?  How high are standards?  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?  How well does the school care for its pupils?
28132	Wendy Hiscock	Team inspector	Science Art Design technology Physical education Equal opportunities Foundation Stage	
32095	Julian Thompson	Team inspector	English Geography History Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Quality School Management Limited  
19 Meadow Close  
Downend  
South Gloucestershire  
BS16 6QS

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

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

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

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Nansloe is smaller than most primary school with a nursery unit, attended by 179 pupils. There are twice as many boys as girls in Year 2. Around two thirds of pupils come from naval families serving the nearby base of RNAS Culdrose and the rest from a wide range of backgrounds. Only around one third of pupils remain in the school for their entire primary education. Pupils enter the nursery at three-years-old with below average attainment in most areas of learning, with particular difficulties in speaking and listening. 41 attend part-time. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average (39%); seven have statements (well above average). The number eligible for free school meals is average (22%). Nearly all children are white British, with a few from Bangladeshi backgrounds. There are 14 gifted/talented pupils spread across the school.

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

Nansloe is an improving schools and rapidly becoming more effective. The headteacher, deputy head, governors and staff are in the process of identifying and tackling what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning further. Standards are generally rising for 11-year-olds, but more able pupils are not always working as hard as they could. Considering the low level of attainment on entry and the high turnover of pupils, most achieve well overall and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and French are above average for 11-year-olds.
- Pupils like school, generally behave well and relationships are very good.
- Overall, two thirds of the teaching is good or better.
- The curriculum in and beyond the classroom provides very well for pupils' personal, social, moral, cultural and health education.
- Links with the local community are very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for and their strengths and weaknesses known and used effectively to help them improve in their personal development.
- The school has very good arrangements for welcoming new pupils, particularly those joining other than at three-years-old.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, deputy head and governors are good.

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

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds
- Independent work for more able pupils and aspects of music and religious education.
- Use of assessment information.
- School development planning.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in February 1998 and has successfully tackled all the key issues:

- Effective assessment systems are being used in the nursery and reception class
- Standards in geography are as expected.
- Standards are rising in information and communication technology.

## 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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	D	D	C	well above A average above B average
mathematics	E	E	E	E	average C below average D
science	D	E	D	C	well below E average E* very low

There were only 18 Year 6 pupils in 2001 and, together with the high turnover of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at normal times, this makes comparisons of standards unreliable. Children in the nursery and reception class make good progress from a below average start and most will reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1, apart from in communication, language and literacy. In 2001, results of teachers' assessment of Year 2 pupils in science were around the national average but above average compared to similar schools; the inspection found standards unchanged. Standards for seven-year-olds in reading and writing are well below average and below average in mathematics. This is a decline since last year as there are a higher proportion of lower attaining boys in the current Year 2. Nearly all 11-years-olds swim 25 metres and are aware of water safety principles. On the limited evidence available during the inspection, standards of work seen in other subjects are generally as expected for seven and 11-year-olds and above average in French for the current Year 6. The school finds it difficult to set reliable targets to raise standards in English and mathematics with so many pupils leaving and joining and frequently has to revise estimates. Pupils are generally interested in their learning and are conscientious but sometimes have difficulties concentrating while working independently, particularly when they encounter problems.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school, try hard when the work is interesting and appropriate and like to share their achievements.



Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave well in and out of lessons and are courteous to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are generally responsible, helpful and show concern for others. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average and unauthorised absence is above. This is as a result of a few persistent offenders.

#### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	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.*

Literacy and numeracy are not always reinforced sufficiently in other subjects. The strength of teaching is in the close attention given to: pupils' personal development and creating positive attitudes to learning; the sensitive management of their behaviour; effective team-work with classroom assistants; and, the interesting range of learning activities. Consequently, pupils in these lessons feel good about themselves, engage enthusiastically in learning and generally achieve well. Areas for development for teachers are mainly concerned with: not providing hard enough work for the more able to tackle on their own; not always organising activities to engage pupils' attention; and in some instances, not giving sufficiently clear advice and instructions. As a result, brighter pupils are not challenged sufficiently, some do not always sustain their concentration, and others are not sure what to do and carry on making mistakes. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in language development when helped by classroom assistants, and overall make satisfactory progress.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy but aspects of music and religious education are not covered in sufficient depth. The school makes very effective use of the local community and provides a good range of additional activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Early identification results in appropriate help being given by teachers and assistants working effectively together.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall very good. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop socially, morally and culturally; provision for spiritual development is good. The personal, emotional and health education programme is a strength.
How well the school	The school takes very good care of pupils, providing

cares for its pupils	effective guidance and personal support, also to families, particularly those joining and leaving at other than normal times. Teachers and assistants know their pupils very well but do not always use assessment information effectively to adapt learning activities to match pupils' capabilities, particularly the more able.
----------------------	--

The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's education; social events are well attended and raise considerable funds; the few parents who help in school are very much appreciated.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very caring leader well supported by her deputy and staff with management responsibilities. They have been effective in creating a safe and happy school where pupils feel valued and grow in maturity. Co-ordinators are generally new to their role but are aware of what needs to be done to raise standards higher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have successfully managed difficult financial problems caused by fluctuating numbers of pupils on roll and are now beginning to involve themselves more in discussing ways of developing teaching and pupils' learning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	While the school has identified appropriate development priorities, current plans do not specifically focus on improving pupils' achievement or provide measures by which to check the effectiveness of proposed actions and spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body spends wisely, has firm control of finances and operates within the principles of best value.

Learning resources are good in most subjects and areas and being improved in English, information and communication technology and religious education. An information and communication technology suite has recently been added and is effectively used. The library is adequate but not suitable for quiet study when the hall is occupied.

#### 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>• Children like school</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• School is easy to approach</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of homework</li> <li>• Range of activities outside of lessons</li> <li>• Information on pupils' progress</li> <li>• Links with parents</li> </ul>
--	---

The inspection found that children like school and that it is easy to approach. Pupils' reports were not sufficiently informative but this year have improved; and, some more able children do not always make sufficient progress. However, the amount of homework is satisfactory and the range of additional activities is good, as are links with parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

**Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged 11 and below average in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds.**

1. The current below average standards for Year 2 pupils and above average standards for Year 6 pupils are a reversal on last year, when younger pupils achieved better results in national assessments. This indicates the effects of the high turnover of pupils leaving and joining other than at normal times. The present cohort of seven-year-olds has a high proportion of low attaining boys while the 11-year-olds are a more representative group with a number of high attaining pupils. Insufficient lessons were observed in other subjects to make a secure judgement about overall standards in these areas but, on the limited evidence available, most pupils' attainment is as expected for their age. Nearly all pupils can swim 25 metres and know the principles of water safety when they leave at 11-years-old.
2. Pupils' attainment on entry at three is below average, with a significant proportion having poor linguistic skills. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception class because of the generally good teaching they receive. By the time they start Year 1, most children are set to exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals, apart from in communication, language and literacy; an improvement on the previous inspection. This is as a result of staff being more thorough and rigorous in assessing pupils' progress in order to provide appropriate learning activities to individuals; a key issue at the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and receive sensitive and well-targeted support, which ensures they make good progress.
3. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not as good as expected. Learning activities are not always sufficiently interesting or purposeful and some pupils, particularly Year 2 boys, become inattentive. Generally, pupils are not productive enough and are over dependent on adults for help when they encounter problems.
4. Pupils in Years 3 - 6 achieve well overall because they are interested in lessons, are acquiring an appropriate range of skills, knowledge and understanding and are conscientious. However when working independently, low attaining pupils sometimes find activities too hard and the more able are not sufficiently challenged. In addition, most pupils are not very confident in trying to sort out difficulties and give up until helped by staff.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly affected by these shortcomings in their learning and, while they benefit from the individual and group support given by classroom assistants and teachers, overall they make satisfactory progress across Years 1 - 6.

6. National test results in 2001 show that standards for seven year olds in reading were around the national average and well below in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were above average in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science show standards were average when compared to all schools and above average in comparison to similar schools. Teachers' assessments were generally in line with test results in English and mathematics.
7. For pupils aged 11, 2001 test results show that standards in English and science were below the national average and well below in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools, standards in English and science were average and well below in mathematics.
8. Extreme caution needs to be taken in drawing conclusions from trends in results for pupils aged seven and 11. The movement of pupils can have a significant effect on the overall assessment results for any year group as joining pupils are likely to have different abilities than those leaving.
9. Bearing this in mind, results in reading since 1997 for pupils aged seven show standards rose rapidly at first and then steadied around the national average. Writing has been more volatile, with a steady improvement until last year, when the effects of an increase in the number of girls with special educational needs was felt and standards fell. Standards in science have overall risen.
10. Standards for 11-year-olds in English and science have tended to follow the national trend but in mathematics, there has been an overall decline when taking account of the sharp fall in 2001. This is mainly due to the late arrival in Year 6 last year of a significant number of pupils with special educational needs.
11. The general trend in English and science has been one of gradual improvement as the effects of the National Literacy Strategy and training in investigative science has taken effect. However, there are still shortcomings in mathematics, particularly in Years 1 and 2 that have a knock-on effect in Years 3 to 6. Inspection findings show that younger pupils are not acquiring a sound foundation in recalling and using addition and subtraction facts to 10. Generally, while more able pupils make satisfactory progress overall, they are not given sufficiently challenging opportunities when working independently and the proportion reaching higher levels in national assessments is often well below average. Boys have tended to do better than girls but this is more a reflection of the number of girls with special educational needs joining the school than shortcomings in teaching and pupils' learning.
12. The school finds setting realistic targets in English and mathematics difficult as it is not possible to predict the effect of leavers and joiners. There is a constant revision of overall targets and the school is moving to using more appropriate means of target setting based on individual pupil performance.
13. Currently, standards of speaking and listening are below average for pupils aged seven and above average for those aged 11. This improvement is as a result of the importance the school places on

tackling the linguistic shortcomings many of the pupils have on entry at three-years-old. Pupils in Years 2 are voluble speakers, have an appropriate vocabulary but do not always listen attentively to each other. They make good progress in Years 3 - 6, as there are many opportunities for speaking, with staff concentrating on helping pupils to acquire good listening skills. Consequently, pupils aged 11 are confident in contributing ideas and able to sustain and develop their thoughts. They have a wide vocabulary and listen well, with good reasoning skills.

14. Standards of reading are also below average for seven-year-olds but average for 11-year-olds. Most pupils in Year 2 read simple texts accurately but do not confidently use letter sounds to help them work out new words. While higher attaining pupils use other skills, such as working out new words by using their understanding of a sentence or passage to help them, they too have limited knowledge and understandings of phonics. The school is aware of this shortcoming and introducing more phonics approaches to the teaching of reading for younger pupils. In Years 3 -6, many pupils have developed their own effective strategies for breaking down unfamiliar words and make more use of context to help them understand the meaning of difficult text. Consequently, by the time they are aged 11, pupils generally read fluently with a good understanding and enjoy talking about what they have read, giving opinions and thoughtful insights.
15. Standards in writing are well below average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds. Year 2 pupils do not write easily. They need considerable encouragement and support to produce simple sentences with appropriate spelling and use of capital letters and full stops. As a result of limited phonic skills, they quickly become discouraged when trying to write unfamiliar words, particularly when working independently. Higher attaining seven-year-olds also do not have the skills to extend and improve their work to make their writing more interesting. Across Years 3- 6, pupils are encouraged to write for different audiences and in different styles. By the time they are 11-years-old, most older pupils organise their writing successfully so that spelling and punctuation are correct and their work has an appropriate form. They generally have good powers of description and use writing persuasively. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently productive and are capable of writing longer pieces of work on their own. The majority of pupils in the school write legibly and take care; a joined handwriting style is developed effectively from Year 3.
16. Standards in mathematics are below average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds. Most Year 2 pupils are not adept at mental arithmetic because they do not easily recall number facts. They can count from 1 to 100 and understand place value for hundreds, tens and units. They understand measure and money and recognise and name simple regular two-dimensional shapes. Most produce and interpret simple graphs but are not confident in explaining their thinking because of below average speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 6, on the other hand, have a range of strategies that they can describe when carrying out mental and written calculations. They have a broad knowledge and understanding of number, measure, shape and data handling. However, a significant

number do not check their work sufficiently and often carry on making the same mistake until helped by staff.

17. Standards in science are average for pupils aged seven and above average for 11-year-olds. Pupils in Year 2 have appropriate scientific skills and enjoy carrying out simple investigations. However, their knowledge is not always secure in aspects of physical processes. By the time they are 11, most pupils have a secure foundation in scientific knowledge and understanding. They carry out systematic lines of inquiry, suggesting and testing their ideas and coming to reasonable conclusions.
18. Standards in information and communication technology are average for pupils aged seven and 11 and rising. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Year 2 pupils are competent users of new technologies in carrying out simple operations. They use word processing and creative programmes to express their ideas and understand how new technologies affect their lives. Year 6 pupils are adept at using information and communication technology to support their learning. They competently control and access different functions to express creative ideas or present data in words, diagrams, tables and pictorially. They are beginning to experience simulations and modelling as staff gain confidence with these aspects and appropriate resources become available.
19. The school has identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils and is beginning to provide more opportunities for them to work at an appropriate level. However, this is a recent development and has not yet had time to affect the overall progress of these pupils but they are achieving satisfactorily.
20. The achievement of pupils who leave and join other than at normal times dips temporarily when they become affected by the stress of changing schools. However, staff give these pupils very good support. Those joining are quickly assimilated into classes and generally achieve as well as other pupils. Leavers are encouraged to talk about their new school and helped to prepare samples of work they can take with them. However despite this help and guidance, the school reports that pupils leaving become less conscientious and inattentive in lessons.
21. Generally, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are improving and the school has the capability to raise them higher in Year 2 and for the more able pupils across the school.

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

**Pupils have positive attitudes to school, generally behave well and have very good relationships.**

22. Nearly all pupils have a good response to school, are enthusiastic and involved in their learning. Overall, their attitudes and personal development are good and relationships are very good. A large majority of pupils show concern for each other, their school and the local community. They are developing an appropriate level of personal independence and responsibility. Generally, behaviour is good. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development reflect the findings of the previous inspection and relationships show an improvement. Attendance is below the national average; this is not as good as the previous inspection. However, there was a slight improvement at the time of the inspection.
23. Generally, pupils have positive attitudes towards school and learning. Nearly all come happily to school and are enthusiastic in lessons. Overall, they show a good level of interest and are involved in the wide range of activities provided. During the inspection, there were many examples of very good attitudes throughout the school. In a Year 1 art and craft lesson to create a three-dimensional picture about their science topic on animals, pupils very quickly became involved in the activity and sustained their interest to the end. Very good attitudes were also observed during a Year 6 French lesson when there was a lively and enthusiastic response from pupils as they were stimulated by the very well managed and well chosen activities. Where pupils' attitudes are consistently good or better, as they were in the nursery and reception class, it is because of well-planned lessons with interesting tasks, with work well matched to pupils' prior attainment, consistent high expectations and generally good or better teaching.
24. There were some instances of pupils' attitudes not being as high as they could be, as seen in a Year 2 music lesson using chime bars. Some lower attaining pupils were not able to see the teacher and therefore were not particularly attentive and some pupils interrupted others and found it difficult to listen to each other.
25. In the calm and very caring atmosphere, generally free from oppressive behaviour, nearly all pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and outside. There are pupils in Year 6, who on occasions can exhibit challenging behaviour, but during the lessons observed, this was not evident due to very effective control and management from the teacher and very good support from learning support assistants. Some Year 6 pupils take initiative in influencing the behaviour of others. A few girls, needing others for an activity, suggested to the teacher that only those who behaved well should be chosen.
26. Overall, the school functions as an orderly community. With few exceptions, pupils respond well to the school's clear routines when moving around. On the playgrounds, pupils generally mix happily and play well together and, throughout the school, show a caring concern to others. During lunch, a five-year-old boy sat waiting with his hand up and a Year 6 girl monitor very caringly asked what he needed and sought help on his behalf from a supervisor.
27. Where there are instances of unacceptable behaviour, these are usually quickly, sensitively and firmly dealt with and expectations of good behaviour are reinforced.. Overall, standards of behaviour



are good with few examples of deliberately unkind or inappropriate actions and many examples of very good behaviour. Generally, staff have very high expectations of behaviour and regularly take opportunities to reinforce these expectations and readily give praise when appropriate.

28. All pupils are very friendly and courteous to visitors, and nearly always to other adults and each other. While three Year 4 boys were taking games equipment outside unsupervised, one very politely asked of the other two, *"Could someone open the door please?"* Nearly all pupils are very confident and greet visitors politely. Around the school and in class pupils asked visitors courteously, *"Why are you here? What are you writing?"*
29. Throughout the school, many pupils talk confidently about themselves and their work; even the very young children in the nursery talk easily with adults. They are confident because the school actively encourages pupils to develop speaking and listening skills and provides many opportunities, including provision for the older and younger pupils to spend time together developing personal, social and literacy skills. This occurred during the inspection when the Year 6 class combined with the reception for a literacy lesson.
30. Many pupils of all ages lack confidence in tackling and solving problems and identifying mistakes when working independently, needing adult reassurance. The school is aware of this shortcoming and is encouraging pupils not to be afraid of making and learning from their mistakes. However, these initiatives have not had sufficient time to be effective.
31. Many pupils of all ages demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others. In the nursery, a boy helped another when he was changing for physical education and another picked up crayons dropped by a friend; a Year 6 boy, new in school, recognised that a visitor was going to his class and walked back up the corridor to open the door.
32. Pupils generally show respect for property and handle resources properly. In a Year 1 art and craft lesson, pupils handled a range of resources with care, sensibly using pencils, oil pastels, paint, glue and paper.
33. Their personal development is good. They are eager to volunteer for and accept responsibility. They enjoy opportunities to be involved in the daily routines of the school community and undertake their duties with pride. They particularly enjoy being attendance register monitors, librarians, operating the recorded music for assemblies and dinner monitors; carrying out their duties in a responsible and caring way. Teachers provide many informal opportunities and pupils are aware of their duties within class, such as conscientiously clearing away resources. Some pupils show initiative by helping others, as seen when a small group of Year 5 pupils, working on an information and communication technology project, offered help to those having difficulties with the task.
34. Pupils are encouraged and guided from the earliest age to be personally independent and take responsibility for their needs. In

the nursery, children change on their own and persevere when experiencing difficulties. They show independence and initiative, as when copying their names on a white board. When working on physical or practical activities pupils of varying ages often show a high level of independence but many pupils lack initiative to extend their own learning.

35. Through assemblies, planned discussions, religious education and the emphasis on personal, social and health education, pupils have many opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, express their feelings, learn to respect, understand and empathise with the feelings and beliefs of others. The provision for their personal development is woven into all areas of the curriculum and has had a significant and positive effect. In discussions they demonstrate a high level of awareness of the effect of their actions on others.
36. The inclusive ethos means that all pupils are warmly welcomed into the life of the school. This is particularly important in a school where there is such a high turnover of pupils. The school has very effective ways of helping pupils who join, other than at three years of age, to quickly feel part of the school community. The pupils who joined during the inspection reported that they found the school welcoming.
37. Staff make great efforts to make all pupils feel valued. In Year 3 during a religious education lesson, the teacher emphasised that everyone is special and has some gift or skill to contribute and to be proud of.
38. Staff sensitively guide and encourage pupils of all abilities to be fully involved in lessons, as in a Year 6 music lesson when a lower attaining girl helped with a demonstration. Pupils and staff relate very well to each other and adults generally provide very good role models. These very good relationships are a strength of the school.
39. Younger pupils are helped and guided by staff to understand the effect of their actions on others. Teachers take opportunities to reinforce values, expectations and social conventions. In the reception class during story time, a girl sitting on the floor said a boy had kicked her as he walked past. The teacher explained this was accidental and effectively used the incident to extend their personal development by asking, "What do you say when you accidentally hurt someone" The boy responded with, "I'm sorry". The effect of the very good relationships was evident in the very positive response of pupils to such guidance. Teachers and learning support assistants readily give praise and effective support to pupils.
40. Generally, pupils willingly help and support each other's learning, collaboratively in groups or in pairs and offer to share information and resources amicably. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils worked collaboratively, solving problems. The school reported that some Year 6 pupils had found difficulty in working harmoniously with others and that a great deal of support had been provided to improve teamwork. During the inspection, the positive effects of this initiative were evident as the class was orderly, calm and pupils co-operated well.

41. Compared with other schools for 2000/2001, the attendance rate is below the national average. This indicates a decline since the previous inspection, when attendance was satisfactory. However, these unauthorised absences are the result of a few persistent offenders. There was one fixed-term exclusion. Lessons begin promptly and no time is wasted.

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

**Overall, teaching is good, with most teachers managing pupils very well, being confident in their subject knowledge and understanding, concentrating on teaching basic skills effectively and making good use of resources and classroom assistants; there are shortcomings in some teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities and in the teaching methods used.**

42. During the inspection, 66% of the teaching was good or better and 7% very good. In the previous inspection, the amount of very good or better teaching was 26%. In 10 out of 11 lessons observed, the teaching in the nursery and reception class was good or better. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching was good in two lessons, sound in nine and unsatisfactory in two. In Years 3 - 6, the teaching was very good in two lessons, good in 14 and satisfactory in two. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics was good.
43. The generally good or better teaching in the nursery and reception class is as a result of the teachers and classroom assistants working so effectively together. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for young pupils and plan interesting and stimulating activities that develop pupils' basic skills.
44. In the nursery, pupils are happy, quickly establish routines and enjoy learning. They need encouragement to sustain their concentration and can easily lose heart when they encounter difficulties. However, there is a strong focus on personal, social and emotional development, which effectively helps pupils work co-operatively and become more independent.
45. In the reception class, there is an increasing emphasis on speaking and listening, reading and numeracy. Consequently, pupils' developing skills ensure they remain interested in learning. However, there are not always enough opportunities for them to try out writing through play and guided activities.
46. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are less secure in their implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. As a result, the teaching of phonics and addition and subtraction facts to 10 is not always effective. When pupils have problems in these areas, they find it difficult to read and write unfamiliar words and carry out mental calculations. In contrast, teachers in Years 3 - 6 have taken on board national guidance and have worked successfully to begin to redress earlier shortcomings. However, there has been insufficient time for their actions to be fully effective and some pupils in Years 3 and 4, still lack confidence in reading, writing and mental mathematics. Teachers throughout the school are making more use of new technologies to support their teaching and pupils' learning in all subjects.

47. The best teaching occurs when teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of subjects and, therefore, plan interesting and appropriate activities that consolidate and extend pupils' learning. There is also effective teamwork between teachers and assistants that is particularly evident in the very sensitive management of pupils with challenging behaviour. As a consequence, nearly all pupils in these lessons respond enthusiastically, are productive and achieve well.
48. Teaching that is less than satisfactory is characterised by a combination of inappropriate expectations of pupils' capabilities that results in planned work being too hard or easy and teaching methods not being adapted as teachers do not use ongoing assessment effectively to check pupils' progress. In these lessons, pupils become frustrated, waste time and rely heavily on adults for help.
49. Teachers and assistants work well in their identification and support of pupils with special educational needs when working with individuals and small groups. However, work that is set for pupils to undertake on their own during lessons is not always appropriately matched to the rate, stage and style of their learning. As a consequence, a number of pupils find work too hard, do not take enough care with their presentation and fail to persevere when they encounter problems.
50. A similar result occurs when more able pupils are given independent work that is too easy. As they do not need so much adult help in class, they complete work quickly and without sufficient care and do not check and correct errors. When they are challenged, as happens in weekly sessions for older pupils taught by the headteacher, they achieve well.
51. All teachers manage the induction of new pupils, who join the school other than at normal time, very well. These entrants are made to feel welcomed, helped to adjust to different ways of working and quickly assessed to check their prior attainment. Those leaving are also given reassurance and encouraged to take examples of work with them to their new schools.
52. Work is regularly marked and teachers generally provide appropriate guidance as to how pupils can learn from their mistakes. Homework is used to reinforce learning, particularly in reading, spelling and the learning of multiplication facts. Some parents felt there was too much and others too little homework; inspection findings confirm the amount is appropriate.
53. As a result of the good or better teaching, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at 11 years old.

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

**The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils both within and beyond the school day. There is good provision for out of school activities. The curriculum is well supported and enriched by the very effective use of the local community. The provision for social and moral and cultural development is very good.**

54. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory throughout the school and good in the nursery and reception classes. There is an appropriate focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Provision for personal social and health education is very good. There is good provision for physical education in Years 3 - 6. The music curriculum provides insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their composition skills in Year 3 to 6 and, in religious education, their understanding of world faiths.
55. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy skills, while satisfactory, do not provide sufficient guidance to teachers to enable them to match the steps of learning more closely to pupils' individual needs, particularly in Years 1 and 2 in developing reading and writing. The school has developed satisfactory strategies for the teaching of numeracy and teachers are taking on ideas from the national numeracy strategy to further improve their teaching and pupils' learning. However, there are insufficient opportunities for more able pupils to be challenged when working on their own.
56. Curriculum planning is appropriate and long-term plans ensure that pupils study a broad range of topics and develop skills progressively. National guidance has been taken into account in designing these plans but the school has made adjustments to reflect mixed age group classes. The four-year programme for subjects other than English and mathematics, is an appropriate way of ensuring pupils receive a balanced curriculum without repetition. Medium and short-term plans provide satisfactory guidance overall, apart from in composition in music and world religions in the Years 3 - 6 programme. The school is aware of these shortcomings and is currently exploring ways of improving guidance in these areas.
57. Provision for pupils with special educational need is good throughout the school. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together to plan activities that are interesting and well matched to the learning styles and needs of the pupils when working with individuals and in small groups. However, sometimes the work given to low attaining pupils to finish on their own is too difficult and they struggle. Resources for special educational needs are good and the well-organised group teaching area provides an attractive and stimulating environment for pupils.
58. Equality of access to the curriculum and opportunities are good. The school works hard to ensure that every pupil has access to learning and positive role models are evident among members of the school community. Overall, the ethos of fairness and equality is a strong feature of the school, apart from in not always matching independent work to the style, rate and stage of learning of all pupils.
59. The curriculum meets requirements in all subjects. The provision for sex, drug and health education is good. The school meets the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

60. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is very good and very effective in extending and supporting all aspects of the curriculum. There are long-standing links with the local naval base, for example, Year 3 / 4 have adopted a Ministry of Defence policeman and his dog; naval ratings have helped with the school grounds; the base provided a float to enable the school to take part in the Helston 800 anniversary pageant; and, Father Christmas arrives by helicopter. A local financial company sponsors the school football team and there are strong links with local tourist attractions.
61. There are well-established links with Anglican clergy, Methodists, Baptists, Jews and a Christian based organisation. Members of these different religions visit and contribute to assemblies. An Anglican vicar is a pastoral governor at the school. Members of the school and local community celebrate major Christian festivals together.
62. Pupils visit the local library. Links with the Guardians of Godolphin Woods, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, and the Helford ranger provide very effective support for science and geography topics. Classes make regular visits to the local museum and the museum displays the work of pupils and supplies resources. The school is a friend of the Tate Gallery in St Ives and pupils visit regularly for workshops.
63. Visits are made to the school to support pupils personal, social and health development by the community police, road safety unit, the fire service and cycling proficiency is organised by the naval base. Older pupils visit a local swimming pool to support their physical development.
64. The school is very actively involved in all the local cultural and traditional events, such as the Flora day celebrations, 'Beating the parish bounds', and the annual mayor making ceremony. Senior citizens are invited to the harvest service and gifts are distributed to the elderly in the community. An older member visited Year4/5 to talk about Queen Victoria's jubilee and brought memorabilia for pupils to look at.
65. Nursery pupils have benefited from visits by a local artist. Some pupils are receiving athletics coaching from an Olympic junior coach. A Year 6 boy is carrying a baton through Helston as part of Jubilee celebrations.
66. The school is developing the use of the internet for topic research. As yet, pupils have no e-mail links with other schools but are allowed to contact friends who have an e-mail address. Links with the wider community provide enriching experiences for pupils that help them see their place in society.
67. Pupils' personal development is promoted through assembly themes, formal and informal discussion, religious education and values that are consistently reinforced within the classroom and around the school. Throughout the school, pupils are being helped to recognise and understand the importance of caring for the environment. During discussions, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils expressed interest and concern for the local area and stated that people should put litter

into bins as it made the town look untidy. Older pupil recognised the value of recycling.

68. Younger pupil understood the reasons behind school rules, and nearly all pupils are involved in formation of class rules and understood why they are necessary. Younger pupils think that adults have to live by rules but find it difficult to think beyond the school community, some suggesting that the headteacher, the Queen or Jesus makes the rules. Older pupils have a much better understanding of laws for adults and some know that the government makes decisions affecting everyone. These pupils know that Tony Blair is the Prime Minister and their understanding of voting has been helped by involvement in the recently formed school council. Those elected to the school council are very keen to talk about their roles. During a council meeting observed during the inspection, representatives put forward their ideas about health and safety, giving serious and thoughtful comments. They have a growing understanding of pupils' rights and responsibilities within the family and the community and know the difference between fact and fiction.
69. The school has good links with its partner institutions. Links with other primaries are through football and netball competitions, the local association of primary head teachers and joint staff training days.
70. There are longstanding and well established links with the local secondary school. A secondary teacher is a governor at Nansloe and has responsibility for transfer arrangements. Year 5/6 pupils attend science workshops and, with two other local primaries, go to the 'drop in study centre' for activities such as art, sport, library use new technologies. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to go for science and mathematics enrichment sessions. The school benefits from the use of information and communication technology resources loaned to them from the secondary school.
71. Before transferring, Year 6 pupils spend at least one day at secondary school and there are opportunities for extra visits if appropriate. Secondary staff make visits to teach and to talk to pupils. Teachers from both schools work very closely together to ensure the smooth transition for all pupils, especially those requiring additional support. The nursery benefits from the regular placement of students from a local college.
72. The school has very good provision for the personal development of pupils. The provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The provision for spiritual development is good; the same as in the previous inspection.
73. The promotion of spiritual development is good. There is a caring and supportive ethos that pervades the school, reinforced by links with people having mainly Christian based beliefs. The policy statement on spirituality focuses staff awareness on pupils' spiritual development within programmes of study and in specific areas of the curriculum, such as planned discussion times. There are many opportunities within the curriculum, particularly in religious education and the daily act of worship to allow for quiet

moments of reflection and enhance spiritual enrichment. Teachers confidently allow time for reflection knowing that pupils will respond positively. In a Year 3 religious education lesson, all pupils closed their eyes when asked to think about special people who help them. In an assembly, taken by a visitor, pupils responded with amazement during a discussion on seed germination. During a choir rehearsal, the parent volunteer encouraged pupils to sing from "*deep within their souls*".

74. Pupils wonder at growing and life processes and physical phenomenon in science. In English, stories and poetry offer pupils a chance to read about, empathise, explore and express their own thoughts and feelings. In the Year 4/5 'Autumn Anthology', a pupil wrote "*The trees start to get lonely*" describing the feeling felt by a tree after its leaves had fallen to the ground.
75. The general use of discussion in lesson, the many well presented displays, the framed weekly award certificates and the many photographs displayed in corridors and classrooms show pupils that teachers value them as individuals and want to celebrate their achievements. A very positive aspect of the Year 5/6 classroom is the use of water features and, at appropriate times, of quiet music played to create a calming and reflective atmosphere.
76. Through the attractive display of resources linked to world faiths and posters in the hall, with messages such as "*No act of kindness however small is ever wasted*", pupils are encouraged to respond sensitively and reflect on what they have heard or experienced. These are appropriate to pupils' age and maturity and staff sensitively guide and encourage pupils to reflect on these displays.
77. Religious education and assembly themes are helping the pupils to have an understanding about the values and beliefs of their own and other cultures. The promotion of all pupils' self-esteem is given a very high priority and the constant and generally consistent use of praise and other rewards by staff is considered a vital part of boosting pupils' self esteem.
78. Pupils' moral development is very well promoted and is fundamental to the school's aims and practices. Guiding pupils in the recognition of right and wrong is given a very high priority by all staff. The curriculum aims and objectives, published in the prospectus, reinforce the importance of respect for oneself and others, an appreciation of other races, religions and cultures and a responsible attitude towards the environment.
79. Staff, regularly and sensitively take opportunities in lessons and around the school, to foster such values as caring and respect for each other, courtesy and fairness. All staff, regularly, guide and encourage pupils to understand the impact of their attitudes and behaviour on others. The school actively involves pupils in the formation of class rules, helping them understand their importance and the reasons for complying with rules. Visits from the community policeman also underpin the message of learning right from wrong.. There are limited opportunities for the young children to be involved in team games but older pupils fully participate in



sporting activities, which give them an understanding of fair play, the spirit of competitiveness and the need of compliance with rules.

80. Personal, social and health education is woven into many areas of the curriculum and assemblies. Science, history and geography help pupils look at ways of caring for the environment and provide very appropriate opportunities for the pupils to develop and express moral values. In addition, the school takes part in a recycling scheme. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, each other and helped to become aware of issues, such as pollution. The expression of moral values can be seen in the regular support of charities.
81. There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils' social development. There are very many opportunities provided for all pupils to develop an understanding of living in a community; and there are formal and informal tasks and duties that help promote a growing sense of the importance of responsibility. The headteacher and all other adults provide very good role models by treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect.
82. All staff are very aware of the need to promote social development and throughout the curriculum all pupils have many opportunities to learn how to relate to each other by working in pairs and in small and large groups. In the nursery, all pupils have the opportunity and are encouraged how to learn co-operate, share and take turns. In other classes, staff regularly and consistently ensure that pupils benefit from opportunities to work together. Where appropriate, additional support is provided for pupils who need to extend their social skills.
83. The school provides a wide-variety of other activities that very effectively promote social development. A range of visits supporting the curriculum and the very high level of involvement in local events offer very good opportunities for social interaction in the wider community.
84. A varied and rich programme of extra curricular activities such as cricket, football, high five, recorders, computer club, chess, choir, and swimming, encourage teamwork, competition and fair play. Lunch times, play times, shared literacy time between older and very young pupils help foster mixed age relationships. School assemblies, the celebration of Christian festivals, school productions, and very good links with the local community and visits help pupils develop their social skills when working with large numbers of people. Pupils have the opportunity to voice opinions through discussions in lessons and formally through the recently formed school council.
85. The promotion of pupils' cultural development is very good. The school actively supports and teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through curricular provision and the high level of involvement in a wide range of local events. Positive contributions to pupils' cultural development come from aspects of English, art, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education, religious education, assemblies and through the provision of some traditional playground

games. There are also appropriate opportunities to compare aspects of other religions and cultures.

86. Pupils have the chance to study the works of a range of artists and other cultures and they are developing an understanding of the contributions of individuals and different peoples to current society. For example, Year 1 have produced three-dimensional pieces of work based on a famous painting by Henri Rousseau. Years 3 / 4 and 5 / 6 have produced paintings based on Van Gogh 's Sunflowers and looked at the work of the impressionists, Marcel Duchamp; older pupils have also produced pieces of pottery inspired by the shapes of the local tin mines. Year 6 pupils learn conversational French and other pupils are encouraged to respond to their names in a range of languages when the register is called; pupils also sing in French during assembly. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, higher attaining pupils were doing tasks based on the work of an Indian mathematician.
87. Assemblies and religious education provide opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate the values and beliefs of other faiths. Well-presented displays in the hall and classrooms show the richness of other faiths and cultures.
88. Pupils' learning is enriched by many appropriate visits in support of topics. Pupils make regular use of the library, Year 4/5 visited for a poetry morning and Year 3 / 4 are visiting to watch a theatre group. The local museum is used by all classes and is currently displaying the work of some of the pupils. The school is a friend of the Tate Gallery, at St. Ives, and several classes visit for workshop experiences. Visitors have added to programme provided by the school, these have included peripatetic music teachers.
89. In support of all the above aspects the school is fortunate in having very good role models with staff from different ethnic backgrounds, women in senior management positions and physically challenged adults all playing a full part in school life. As a result, pupils show tolerance, acceptance and value the contribution of different people in their school and society.

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

**Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils and staff know pupils very well. The school has established good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics**

90. Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when the quality of care was good. The school strives to ensure the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils, doing what it reasonably can to protect them from harm.
91. Very good relationships have been developed between staff and pupils and the needs of pupils are put first. This has created a very supportive and caring community. The headteacher's and class teachers' knowledge of pupils is very good. They are aware of their pupils' various needs and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Prompt informal support is consistently given to any pupil showing distress during daily routines and lessons.

Consequently, pupils feel they are well cared for and have confidence in adults in the school community for advice and support.

92. The school takes very good care of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies, when appropriate, to support these pupils, ensuring they are fully included in the life of the school.
93. Very good child protection measures are in place, staff discussions take place regularly and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. The teacher with responsibility for child protection reports that information and discussion about these procedures form part of the induction programme for new staff.
94. The school places great importance on personal and social and health education, which as well as being covered through subject teaching, is regularly supported informally by all staff.
95. The school has established very good working relationship with the education welfare officer and, if appropriate, home visits are arranged. The school nurse is a regular visitor and helps support personal and health aspects of the curriculum. The school also has effective links with other support agencies.
96. Generally, the day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision and awareness of hazards within and beyond school, shows a very good level of responsibility for the health and safety of pupils. Very thorough risk assessments are carried out for off-site visits.
97. Regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out. Staff stress safe working practices to children in order to avoid hazards and they emphasise the need to be careful when handling resources. In a Year 3 physical education lesson, appropriate health and safety warnings were given to pupils to be aware of others when performing their gymnastic sequences. Visitors to the school receive appropriate health and safety information and many fire notices are prominently displayed around the school.
98. There are very good, consistently applied formal and informal procedures to monitor and support attendance. The registers are accurately kept and rigorously checked weekly by the headteacher. If the school has a concern over a pupil's attendance rate, the education welfare officer is contacted and a home visit arranged when necessary. The administrator reports that nearly all parents are very good about contacting the school to advise them of a child's absence; if a pupil, for whom the school has concerns, fails to arrive at school and no message is received, the administrator always telephones the parents to establish the safe whereabouts of the pupil. The school takes a firm line on authorising absence. There was one fixed-term exclusion during the previous school year and one fixed term exclusion during the inspection for appropriate reasons, correct procedures were followed.
99. Mealtime and classroom assistants have regular formal meetings with the headteacher and talk informally on a daily basis to all staff

so they are well informed about the specific needs of pupils. They are invited to appropriate training sessions and meetings and many attend.

100. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. All teachers have very high expectations, which are nearly always consistently, sensitively and effectively enforced so pupils clearly know what is expected of them. There is a climate of good behaviour in this orderly community with clear routines and class rules agreed between pupils and teachers. There is regular informal discussion among staff so that all are aware of particular problems and the help and support that may need to be given to individuals.
101. Class teachers readily and consistently give praise and thanks to pupils for their good, and often very good, attitudes and behaviour. There is a whole school strategy of rewards and sanctions; these are adapted by teachers, according to the needs of each class. There is a full time behaviour support assistant working with the Year 6 children and, during discussions, she helps pupils agree and set their own targets. Regular use is made of a local behaviour support centre, which some Year 6 pupils have attended. All staff have the opportunity to receive a days training on 'challenging behaviour and self esteem'.
102. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. When incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour are seen they are dealt with immediately, using a quiet, sensitive but firm approach. There are good formal and informal procedures to follow up any incident. Pupils and parents are encouraged to share concerns with staff, which they report they can with ease.
103. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school believes that personal development is as important as academic progress and, therefore, both are celebrated. Pupils' achievements for effort, attitude and behaviour are acknowledged. Those, who experience difficulty with a specific area of personal development, are encouraged to improve and rewarded when they are successful. Teachers and assistants support these pupils very well and help them set their own targets when appropriate.
104. Teachers and other staff know pupils very well and use this knowledge when organising seating arrangements for group or paired work. For example, a shy pupils is partnered with a more outgoing one. The use of praise is well used to improve pupils' attitudes to learning. The inclusive ethos in the school ensures that all pupils are valued as individuals and for the part they play in the life of the school.
105. Pupils, who join the school other than at normal times, are very well cared for. Parents or careers are encouraged to visit with their child in advance so that school routines can be explained and the child introduced to their teacher and classmates. Once started, the class teacher and other staff informally check that the new pupil has friends, knows what to do and is happy with school. In addition, one of the class is chosen as a 'buddy' to be a special friend.

106. The school has established good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. In other subjects, arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge of pupils' progress through day-to-day assessment and the use of formal tests. Appropriate records are kept by teachers and also held centrally on a computer database. From Year 2 onwards, a range of standardised tests and assessments are used throughout the year to measure pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Teachers have also begun to meet to discuss pupils' recorded work and ensure that judgements are consistent.
107. Assessment is used effectively to support curriculum planning in the foundation stage and information and communication technology. However in other subjects, it is not yet used consistently to enable the next stage of pupils' learning to be closely matched to their needs. This means that pupils are sometimes tackling work that is too hard for them whilst at other times may be given work which is not challenging enough.
108. While Year 6 pupils are being set individual achievement targets in English and numeracy, this is not yet common practice throughout the school. The headteacher and newly appointed deputy have drawn up plans to help staff be more diagnostic in their assessment in order to identify and discuss with individual pupils what they need to do to improve.
109. Class teachers and classroom assistants work well together to plan the work and assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are kept up to date and used effectively to set targets for learning, record progress and the involvement of outside specialists. As well as annual reviews, more frequent meetings are held to share information with parents and discuss progress, further action and support.

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

**Parents are appreciative of the school and feel well informed and involved.**

110. The school has good links with parents. The school endeavours to work closely with all parents, informal contact is encouraged and views sought and valued. Parents have positive views of the school. There is good formal and very good informal contact with parents, particularly those with younger children. The school reports that this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
111. Overall, the quality of information provided by the school, particularly about pupil progress, is satisfactory. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is also satisfactory. This broadly reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Nearly all parents are supportive of the school and satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. With few exceptions, parents find the school approachable and welcoming and willing to listen to their concerns.
112. Parents appreciate the regular monthly newsletters and other letters, when appropriate. The school prospectus provides useful information for parents and meets statutory requirements. The

governors' annual report to parents is informative and also meets requirements. There is a pastoral governor who can talk to parents when needed. Appropriate curriculum meetings have been held and the school reports these are well attended.

113. The school and home work well in partnership, sharing information about pupils, their learning and how they feel. This partnership starts with good induction procedures for parents of three-year-olds and extends to parents of the many pupils who join other than at normal times.
114. Parents value the 'open door' policy operated by the school; nearly all parents find the school very approachable and know that concerns will be dealt with promptly. Formal opportunities to meet with teachers are satisfactory. Parents meet with their child's new teacher in the autumn term and in July to discuss the end of year reports. Some parents were concerned about the quality of the information received. Based on last year's reports, the inspection upholds this concern as areas of academic improvement were not identified and only personal development targets were set. However, the newly designed reports are much more specific, identifying strengths and areas for improvement with appropriate academic targets as well.
115. The school has a satisfactory range of productive and consistent links with parents that help pupils learn. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is encouraged and appreciated but the school reports the support given is mainly for school outings. However, the few that do help are very much appreciated.
116. Approximately 80% of parents have signed the home/school agreement. The school reports that there is variable help from home for pupils with homework; more support being given to younger pupils with their reading. Home/school link books reflect this support and form a useful communication between school and home. Some parents were concerned that there was too much homework and others that there was not enough, especially for the Year 6. Homework is set according to the schools' policy and overall is appropriate. The school offers parents the opportunity to attend 'link into learning', a course leading to further education opportunities.
117. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved from the earliest stage and report they value the advice and support given. They appreciate the quick response of the school when a specific concern arises and appreciate the additional support given.
118. The 'friends association' makes a very good contribution to the life of the school and to pupils learning. Members of the committee are committed to improving the quality of the learning environment and to provide funds to improve the range of learning resources. Last year, they raised £6,500, which was spent according to school development plan priorities. They see their role as mainly fund raising and to provide a range of social activities for pupils, parents and others in the community.
119. The school has no formal procedures for seeking parents' views and finds the daily informal exchange of information effective.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

**The school is well led by the dedicated and caring headteacher, supported by committed governors and senior managers.**

120. Leadership and management have successfully created a climate in which pupils, parents and staff feel valued, appreciated and welcomed. In addition, they are providing pupils, many of whom have already changed schools more than once, with an all round education that prepares them for life, especially in their personal development. Generally, pupils achieve well from a low start, particularly with their language development, and do as well as expected in most other subjects. However, the school has not yet been effective in tackling shortcomings in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2; there are still gaps in the provision for aspects of music and religious education and for more able pupils; assessment is not always used appropriately; and, school improvement plans do not focus sufficiently on raising pupils' achievement.
121. Progress in dealing with these issues has been delayed because of staff changes caused by retirement, redundancy and illness. This resulted in management responsibilities being reviewed, new appointments and development priorities being postponed. Since the beginning of the school year, staffing has been stable but key managers have had to become familiar with their new roles. The new deputy head has taken on the co-ordination of mathematics and design and technology as well as other senior management duties. In addition, she has had to take charge of a challenging Year 6 class whose learning was disrupted in previous years when they were taught by a number of temporary teachers. Science, geography, music, physical education and religious education also have new co-ordinators. However, now staff with management responsibilities are clear what needs to be done and are already beginning to take effective action. The school's personal, social and health education programme, a strength, is very well managed by the Year 2 teacher.
122. The governing body has an efficient meeting structure and fulfils nearly all requirements. They have had a difficult task over the past few years in balancing their finances as the number of pupils on roll fluctuated and fell. As a consequence, governors take considerable interest in shaping the direction of the school and committee chairs are in frequent contact with the headteacher to ensure all decisions are fully discussed.
123. Overall, governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, with committee chairs particularly well informed. In addition, individual governors are linked to a particular year group and follow this class through the school. This gives them a very personal interest and understanding of how pupils develop and progress.
124. The school is becoming more effective at monitoring and evaluating its performance but is aware that processes need to be more rigorous and systematic. Currently, only limited classroom observation of teaching and pupils' learning has taken place but time and resources have been allocated to allow more managers to take part.

125. Performance management is coming to the end of the first cycle and has been most effective in helping staff develop their management roles and also focus more on measuring the effects of changes to their teaching on pupils' achievement. Other staff also have benefited from discussions with senior managers and training. The successful award of the 'Investors in People' standard confirms the school's commitment to staff development and shared values.
126. The current school development plan was prepared during the headteacher's absence through illness last year and does not indicate what needs to be done to raise standards as it was a useful list of tasks to be completed in order to improve provision. Discussions are currently taken place with all partners in the school community that clearly focus on identifying weaknesses in pupils' learning and what needs to be done to tackle these shortcomings.
127. The considered approach taken by the headteacher and senior managers to ensure that development actions are only undertaken when staff are fully prepared and ready for change has been most effective. For there is a climate in which teachers are keen to discuss openly what needs to be done to improve and they are acquiring the capability to do so.
128. Financial planning has been constrained by the need to reduce spending in order to balance the budget, which is now in a healthy state. There is a considerable surplus that is being allocated to meeting development priorities, mainly to create an additional Year 3 / 4 class, increase the support from classroom assistants in Years 3 to 6 and refurbish buildings. The school is aware of the need to agree specific measures linked directly to improvements in standards by which to measure the effectiveness of these spending decisions. There is sound financial control and administration, but there has not been an external audit by the local education authority for six years. This is unsatisfactory.
129. Classroom assistants are deployed effectively and are fully involved in the life of the school. They have regular meetings with the headteacher and are invited to attend training with teachers and supported to attend external courses. Those involved with special educational needs effectively liaise with class teachers to discuss important aspects of their role.
130. Induction of new staff is very well organised with the use of non-contact time and mentoring by an experienced member of staff. The school does not currently have a newly qualified teacher but follows local authority guidelines when needed.
131. The school is introducing and using new technologies as appropriate equipment and resources become available. All teachers have undergone intensive training and some assistants are currently following courses. A specialist assistant has been employed to provide pupils with weekly sessions in the new computer suite. Staff make good use of new technologies to support their lesson preparation and in the production of learning resources.



132. While senior management endeavours to reduce the amount of administration required in the school, there is considerable work necessary to deal with the large number of pupils leaving and joining throughout the year. This puts a considerable strain on school resources and diverts the headteacher from her role of supporting development of teaching and pupils' learning.
133. The governing body is careful to ensure funds for special educational needs are targeted appropriately by providing additional classroom assistants; this has a significant positive effect on pupils with special needs, who as a result, receive good individual support.
134. The school environment is welcoming and is well maintained by the site manager and cleaning staff. The new computer suite is well laid out and effectively used. The library is satisfactory but, being sited in an annex off the hall, is not suitable for private study. The grounds are well laid out and include a flat, grassed area as well as two paved playground.
135. Resources are generally of good quality and sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and pupils in the nursery and reception class. The library has deficiencies in areas of non-fiction, particularly in music and world religions. There are insufficient large print books to promote early reading.
136. The headteacher and governors are aware of and apply the principles of best value when making major spending decisions, such as improving security and the provision of the new computer suite. In making decisions, governors have difficulty in comparing their school with others because of the fluctuating numbers. However, they seek to gain value for money through competitive tendering, using the guidance of the local education authority. They are able to account for their financial decisions and have effective support from a bought-in bursar.
137. Taking into account the low attainment of pupils on entry, the considerable success with their personal, emotional and social development and the generally above average standards for 11-year-olds, the school provide satisfactory value for money, despite the shortcomings in pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2 and with the more able.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and deputy should:

1. Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds by
  - providing appropriate activities that match the rate, stage and style of learning of pupils of different abilities;
  - supporting Year 1 and 2 teachers develop teaching methods that inspire pupils to learn effectively.
  
2. Provide more challenging work for more able pupils throughout the school and more opportunities for composition and appraisal in music and the study of world faiths in religious education in Years 3 to 6.
  
3. Use assessment information more effectively to
  - identify when work is not at an appropriate level in lessons;
  - diagnose and tackle individual and common weaknesses in pupils' learning;
  - set individual, class and school targets for improvement.
  
4. Draw up a school improvement plan that
  - is based on raising pupils' achievements over two to three years;
  - contains realistic and specific actions;
  - is fully costed; and,
  - has specific measures to check and evaluate the effectiveness of actions and spending decisions.

The governing body may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan:

**PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	25	12	2	0	0
%	0	7	59	29	5	0	0

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

**Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	148
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR] - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	17
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		69

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time	32

of first admission	
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	42

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

**Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	11	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	Under 10	10
	Girls	10	Under 10	10
	Total	20	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (82)	70(82)	87 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	Under 10	Under 10	10
	Girls	Under 10	Under 10	11
	Total	16	16	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (68)	70 (68)	91 (61)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	6	12	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
	Girls	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
	Total	12	Under 10	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (75)	39 (61)	89 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
	Girls	Under 10	Under 10	Under 10
	Total	11	Under 10	Under 10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (67)	53 (56)	60 (68)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black - Caribbean heritage	0
Black - African heritage	0
Black - other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	146

**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	1	0

Any other minority ethnic group	0
---------------------------------	---

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	193.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Other minority ethnic groups	0	0
------------------------------	---	---

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	428,886
Total expenditure	426,350
Expenditure per pupil	2,409
Balance brought forward from previous year	57,590
Balance carried forward to next year	60,126

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

150

Number of questionnaires returned

54

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	31	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	6	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	61	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	31	28	13	6
The teaching is good.	48	44	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	39	19	4	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	35	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	35	9	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	41	11	6	9
The school is well led and managed.	41	46	6	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	48	4	6	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	39	19	7	9

[



**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**

138. The 41 part-time and 2 full-time children three, four and five-year-olds are accommodated in a purpose built nursery and a reception class. They make a good start to school through an effective induction programme. Most children enter nursery at three years old with below average levels of attainment, particularly in speaking and listening. They achieve well in both the nursery and reception classes and make considerable improvement in all aspects of learning. This is because of the consistently good teaching and the very good support they receive from the nursery nurse, classroom assistants and voluntary parent helpers. The majority of children are on course to achieve the nationally recommended early learning by the end of the reception class. Due to their low attainment on entry few will achieve as expected in communication, language and literacy. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection, which found many children to still be below average when starting Year 1 in all areas of learning apart from physical development.

**PERSONAL SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

139. Children develop their personal social and emotional skills effectively through a broad range of opportunities provided by the teacher and nursery nurse. Staff know their children very well and successfully help them acquire a high level of confidence and self-esteem. Children's efforts are praised and rewarded through positive comments and stickers as appropriate. A nursery child explained, *"You get a sticker if you do good sitting, good work, tidying up and being helpful"*. They have a good understanding of right and wrong because any issues are dealt with sensitively and consistently. As a consequence, expectations are clear. For example, when a child was whistling during registration the effect of her behaviour was explained and readily accepted. Children have good relationships with each other and the adults in their classes. When they come into the classroom in the morning, they show initiative and independence as the teachers have established clear routines. Children in the nursery select from a range of well prepared activities and reception children independently hang up their coats and put things away ready to start the day. Good opportunities are provided for children to share and co-operate with each other through play and in physical education. For example, children in the reception class showed a high level of co-operation when playing a class parachute game, which required everyone to take turns appropriately. Generally, pupils are appreciative of each other's feelings and are kind; a boy in the nursery spontaneously helped a friend when he was changing for physical education and another picked up crayons from the floor without being asked. All children, including those with special educational needs, are eager and enthusiastic learners but do have difficulty persevering when things are more difficult despite the high level of adult encouragement and support. However, they are generally motivated to learn new things and want to succeed. As a result, all children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage of their personal, social and emotional development and nearly all

those in the reception class are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

#### **COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

140. Children respond well to the emphasis which adults place on speaking clearly and listening carefully. They readily interact with adults and are keen to talk about their experiences. However, the speech of many children in the nursery is sometimes unclear and they have difficulty in finding the right words to express themselves. As a consequence, adults take care to demonstrate a range of vocabulary and to engage children in discussion through enriching play activities, such as role play, sand and water. They encourage children to talk about what they are doing questioning them well to draw out appropriate vocabulary. For example a girl playing with the sand explained, "*It feels like sugar*". Children enjoy books, handle them carefully and know that print, as well as pictures, carry meaning. Nursery children are beginning to retell stories using phrases they have heard such as "once upon a time. Children in the reception class can select their favourite books and are developing an understanding of the difference between fiction and non-fiction. A boy noted "*these tell you stories, but some books tell you things*". Whilst they are keen to read, average ability reception children lack independent strategies to work out words and are over dependent on adult support. Since the introduction of a new phonics programme, children are learning to hear, say and recognise sounds very quickly. However as yet, they are not secure in applying this skill to their reading or writing. Some reception children read regularly at home supported by a parent and this helps them to make better progress. Children throughout the nursery and reception class are developing a sound understanding of the purpose of writing. This is because teachers provide a range of situations where writing is useful and relevant, for example meaningful captions and labels are well displayed in both classrooms. A boy in the nursery used pencil marks and random letters to represent words, he explained, "*We're making shopping lists so it's to remember what to buy*". These early attempts were valued by the teacher, who encouraged him to read his list aloud. Children in the reception class can dictate a sentence for the teacher to write and more able children are beginning to write a few simple words and sounds independently. However, there are insufficient opportunities for them to experiment with writing informally in their play. Although children gain confidence and generally make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, due to their low starting point, few are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

#### **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

141. Mathematics is a focus for all children and routines are regularly used to reinforce their understanding. The majority of children in the reception class can add objects to 10 whilst more able pupils can count to 20 and beyond. The teacher effectively plans a wide range of learning opportunities to stimulate children's enjoyment and interest in mathematics. Throughout the nursery and reception class, there is a strong emphasis on making mathematics meaningful and fun through linking teaching to activities that motivate and

engage children's interest. For example as part of their work on growing things, children painted flowers the same height as themselves. These were displayed to enable the children to make comparisons. A boy confidently explained, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary, "*Look, I'm the tallest in the class and he is the shortest*". Younger children in the nursery play number games, sing counting rhymes count and match shapes. They enjoyed learning to recognise and count numbers whilst playing a game of hopscotch. Similarly, reception pupils successfully learned how to use positional language accurately as they were challenged to draw a cat in various positions such as 'in front of, under, inside and on top of a box'. As a result of teachers' good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn effectively, the majority achieve well and are on course to reach the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they start Year 1.

#### **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

142. Children are given a wide range of rich first hand experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are developing a good understanding of the scientific aspects of this area of learning because teachers create a stimulating environment that encourages observation, experimentation and questioning. Children in the nursery, having planted tubs and containers of flowers, explained, "*We have to dig and put them in, they need water*". Their understanding is further supported through their role-play in the class 'Garden Centre'. Teachers in nursery and reception liaise closely to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and build on their previous learning. Consequently, reception children have greater demands made on them and investigate different seeds, watching a range of plants grow. They know how to use a magnifying glass. A girl explained, "*It makes the seeds bigger*"; she was corrected sensitively by a boy, who added, "*No, it makes them look bigger*". Throughout the nursery and reception class, children are beginning to understand features of their environment. A three-year-old girl knew the difference between road and grass and described how to drive a car along a road and turn the corner. Reception pupils learn to use specific vocabulary to describe their immediate environment: "*I live by the beach, it's near but too far to walk. I go in the car. There's no grass but sand, sea and shells*". Pupils are given good opportunities to use information and communication technology and consequently make good progress. A three-year-old was able, with help, to control the button on the mouse to change the screen to the next picture. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when children had no access to computers. As a result of these experiences, children in the nursery are at an appropriate stage in their understanding and knowledge of the world and most of the pupils in the reception class will have reached the early learning goals in this area by the time they start Year 1.

#### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

143. Teachers make optimum use of space available to enhance children's physical development within the classroom areas, during hall times and in the playground. The reception children have regular time in the designated nursery outdoor play area. Children move

confidently, are aware of their own and other's spaces, follow simple commands and respond to range of signals. As a result of very good teaching in the nursery, four-year-olds demonstrate a high level of control and co-ordination, as when took part in playing a running game of 'Duck and Goose'. Similarly, reception children made good progress in developing team skills in a well structured physical education lesson which made increasing demands on them to make both physical and mental effort to listen carefully, respond correctly and think before they act. Children's handling and control skills are also developed well through activities such as cutting, sticking, drawing, using pencils and brushes. Overall, children achieve well and their physical development is good. Most reception children have already reached the early learning goal for this area and are on course to exceed it by the time they start Year 1.

#### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

144. Children are provided with many interesting and appropriate creative activities that help them think imaginatively. These are often linked to cross curricular themes; for example reception children cut shapes and then stick on numerals and also print patterns using a range of paint and various objects. Activities are well planned to match the age and maturity of the children. They carry out creative tasks sensibly and carefully select materials they like to use. As a result, reception children were very proud of the seaside collages they had made using sand and a variety of shells and tissue paper. The children enjoy singing. A boy in the nursery used a felt board to arrange objects in order and confidently sang 10 green bottles with an adult as he worked. The youngest three-year-olds are able to use scissors correctly. With supervision from an adult, they successfully cut out pictures of their choice to make badges. The classes are rich with colourful displays indicating that children's creative work is valued and appreciated. Nearly all are at an appropriate stage in their creative development and are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

#### **TEACHING**

145. The teaching in the nursery and reception class is consistently good. Teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants work very well together, forming a strong team. They effectively provide rich varied and interesting learning opportunities for the children. Planning is good showing that teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of child development and value the importance of play as a key way to promote children's learning. Sessions are well organised around a full range of early learning goals. Children's attainment on entry is checked and the information gathered is fully analysed by staff to identify the next steps in learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, which found there to be no comprehensive and informative assessment of the under-five's. Progress is monitored and regularly reported to parents throughout the year. This stage of education is well led by an experienced team leader and, together with staff, clear development priorities have been identified. These include the development of children's language skills. Overall, teachers have created a positive learning

environment and they provide children with a good start to school life.

#### **ENGLISH**

146. Standards for pupils aged seven are below the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. By the time they reach the age of 11, standards in English are above average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
147. Pupils generally work hard and behave well in English lessons. They achieve well between the ages of 7 and 11, where the teaching is more closely matched to their ability and provides them with challenging and interesting activities.
148. When pupils enter Year 1, many have unsatisfactory language and communication skills. Their attainment in speaking and listening is well below the national expectation. By the time they are seven years-old, higher ability pupils can listen well, discuss facts and their responses with a developing awareness of vocabulary, description and reporting. Many average and lower ability pupils need time to think about what they are going to say and more practice in describing objects and situations using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills effectively when working in small groups with an adult. However, there are generally insufficient planned opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to take part in activities that develop specific aspects of speaking and listening. Too many find it difficult to listen attentively and say succinctly what they mean. As a result, standards of speaking and listening for seven-year-olds are below average.
149. By the age of 11, pupils have made good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and standards are above average. Pupils are able to listen for extended periods when the teaching is lively and interesting. They are developing the confidence to speak in larger groups, expressing and justifying their opinions well. Teachers provide interesting opportunities to develop speaking and listening in English and at other times. For example, in the regular meetings of the School Council and in the Year 3 history lesson in which pupils were asked to discuss with a partner a timeline covering the last 50 years, writing statements and framing questions about different events.
150. Attainment in reading is below the national average by the time children reach the age of seven. Higher ability pupils read accurately using a wide range of word attack skills. Whilst average ability pupils read most words accurately, their reading books are often not challenging enough to further develop their reading skills. Lower ability pupils find their books hard to read without constant support. Consequently, many children are making slower progress than expected. One reason for this is because their knowledge of sounds is limited and as a result they are not able to try out words that are new to them.
151. By the age of 11 pupils have made satisfactory progress in their reading and standards are average. Higher ability pupils can discuss a range of texts, offer opinions and give reasons for their

preference. For example, one Year 6 boy said, "*this book is interesting because it works on different levels*". Average ability pupils read fluently with generally good understanding and lower ability pupils, although not fully independent, are keen to read and will confidently try new words by splitting them up and using their knowledge of sounds.

152. Throughout the school pupils enjoy reading and choose their own book from the school reading bank. Every child has a reading record book which is used as a way of communicating progress when their books are taken home and shared with families. Some reading records show that pupils read different types of books but there is no planned approach to guiding pupils' choice or to ensure they read an appropriate range. Pupils enjoy borrowing books from the school library and all classes have timetabled sessions.
153. Analysis of early results from 2002 national tests for seven years olds indicate that standards in writing are well below the national average. This is reflected in the work seen during the inspection. Higher ability pupils are developing their story writing and are producing work for a range of other purposes. Their spelling shows an awareness of sounds and their handwriting has clearly formed letters and generally accurate punctuation. However, pupils of this ability are capable of extending their writing further. Average ability pupils are beginning to develop the idea of narrative writing and spelling and punctuation are increasingly logical and consistent. Although they are making some progress they are underachieving. For both average and higher ability pupils, there was little evidence of lessons providing different Ideas to support their independent writing skills or to identify the particular steps which would enable them to extend and improve their work. This means that very few children are able to achieve the higher level 3 in writing. Lower ability pupils writing shows that they are developing an ability to sequence and recount stories as well as beginning to record their original work. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas with each other, their teachers and often learning support assistants. Through providing a high level of adult support and encouragement, pupils in small groups develop a good understanding of how their own spoken language can be turned into writing.
154. Following the start in Year3, pupils make increasing progress with their writing and by the age of 11 are achieving above the national average. This is because teachers plan interesting lessons with a good range of opportunities to write in a variety of styles and for different reasons. Work is generally well matched to the pupils' ability. However, although expectations are higher than for younger pupils, in some lessons, the higher ability pupils could work more independently and at a faster rate. Average ability pupils are beginning to develop sentence structures and powers of description. Although lower ability pupils generally receive the same writing tasks as the other pupils, they are well supported by classroom assistants who use questioning and conversation effectively to develop their vocabulary. Pupils' work on display and in books shows that care is taken with presentation and a joined handwriting style is being developed effectively from Year 3.



155. The quality of teaching in English is good overall and sometimes very good with one instance of unsatisfactory teaching. In the best English lessons, teachers use imaginative ideas to encourage pupils and then link speaking and listening to writing. In a Year 6 lesson focussing on developing contrasts in writing, the teacher began by convincingly acting the part of an anxious mother worried by her children's late arrival home. This was then followed by a class discussion of the mother's feelings. By the time pupils were asked to write, they approached the task enthusiastically and full of ideas.
156. When teaching is good, teachers make effective connections between grammar, spelling and style as part of improving their pupils' speaking and listening, reading and writing. In a Year 2 special educational needs support group looking at instructions and recipes for making biscuits, the teacher was careful to go over each activity in detail, checking pupils' understanding with well-focused questions. Learning steps were appropriate with very good use of resources to help pupils have a better understanding. As a result, they worked hard, concentrated and were able to talk about what they wanted to do in sequence and then construct a list.
157. Where teaching needs development, teachers do not provide enough explanation and demonstration of the writing or reading process to enable the pupils to make progress and their expectations are too low. In a Year 1 lesson focussing on full stops and capital letters, the teacher did not check to see if all pupils understood what to do and she did not give sufficient examples. As a result, many waited for adult help and those that persevered did not have the phonic skills to attempt to write unfamiliar words.
158. Working co-operatively with learning support assistants, teachers manage pupils well and organise time and resources effectively. Classroom displays show good examples of writing from pupils and teachers.
159. Marking of English work is generally satisfactory but in some classes teachers comments do not give a clear idea of what pupils need to do next to improve their work. In addition, they do not always use the information gathered in lessons or from examining pupils' work effectively to plan further learning. As a result, planned independent work is not always well matched to the pupils' stage and rate of learning, some are not working hard enough whilst others are not able to make progress without a high level of adult support.
160. Opportunities are created for pupils to use English in different areas of the curriculum including: the diary record of a Year 6 girl, who visited the local Dreadnought Centre with her class to follow drama, science and art activities. She wrote, "*We grabbed our bags, left and went back to school and I thought 'what a brilliant day'.*". Letters of complaint and suggestion were written to influential people by Year 3 pupils as part of a geography project and Year 4/5 pupils wrote about the spiritual leader Guru Nanak in religious education. Good links are also made to aspects of local culture and tradition; for example a Year 4 pupil wrote an acrostic poem about the recent Helston Flora day festival:

*Flowers in the girls' hair  
Lily of the valley in our clothes.  
Over the grass  
Round the lake  
All the people of Helston are watching.*

161. Teachers and pupils are beginning to use new technologies more. The new information and communication technology suite is regularly used by groups to edit and refine written work begun in the classroom. In using the internet, pupils are developing their reading as they are encouraged to skim and scan information for specific points. Digital cameras are being used to record events and then used to illustrate personal accounts, such as the Helston Flora festival.
162. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Opportunities for them are good because of the encouraging and supportive teaching, interesting resources and well planned lessons that address their needs and learning styles when working individually or in small groups with adult support. The commitment and skill of the team of learning support assistants and the quality of relationships, and high level of care and encouragement by adults is a strong feature of the support for pupils with special educational needs. However when working on their own, work is not always at a suitable level and they struggle.
163. Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in English are satisfactory. Pupils are given a phonic and sight vocabulary screening test in Years 1 and 2 and annual reading tests as well as non statutory test are used in Year 3 - 6. Appropriate records of pupils' progress are kept and teachers have begun to compare their assessments of children to ensure there is continuity between classes. However, assessment information is not yet used throughout the school to plan the next steps of learning and match work to pupils' needs, particularly when working independently. Targets are used effectively in Year 6 to help the pupils focus on their learning and there are plans to extend this to other classes.
164. Leadership and management of English are good. The co-ordinator and headteacher have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and have identified key issues and begun to develop an action plan to improve standards. The coordinator monitors teachers' planning, scrutinises pupils' work and discusses progress with staff and pupils She is in the early stages of monitoring the quality of teaching. She looks for opportunities to enrich and broaden pupils experience in literacy.
165. In 1998, the school decided not to introduce the National Literacy Strategy in full, but to develop its own English scheme of work and implement an amended version. The school scheme is appropriate and well balanced. In recent years however, this has been more supported by some aspects of the National Literacy Training, for example, the development of phonic programmes for pupils in Reception and Year 1. Also, individual staff have undertaken training and implemented some aspects of the strategy such as grammar for writing and early writing. However, not all have taken

on these initiatives and, as a result, the English scheme of work is not being fully implemented and progression in learning and teaching skills is not as even as it could be. The school did not introduce those National Literacy programmes aimed at raising achievement in specific groups of pupils because of the availability of learning support staff. The co-ordinator is reviewing the situation and this decision may be reconsidered in recognition of the need to raise the achievement, particularly of some groups of higher ability and Years 1 and 2 pupils as indicated in this report. The co-ordinator is aware that a school approach should be maintained and there is a strong, shared commitment to raise standards in English.

166. Resources for English are satisfactory. Although there are a good number of books within class reading banks and material has been purchased recently to add to them, some of the reading books in Years 1 and 2 are dated and worn. There is also a shortage of non-fiction material for lower graded reading books. The library, which has been recently audited and improved, is attractive and well organised. However being situated in an annex in the hall, quiet reading is difficult when classes are being taken in physical education and music. A good feature is the range of fiction books. The school has plans to develop this resource further with improvements to the book stock, an electronic book-loan system and internet access.
167. With the planned developments, co-ordinator's enthusiasm and commitment from staff, the school has the potential and capability to raise standards higher for seven-year-olds and improve the achievement of the more able.

#### **MATHEMATICS**

168. Standards in mathematics are below average for seven-year-olds and above for pupils aged 11. At the previous inspection, standards were around the national average for both age groups. Comparisons are not valid because of the large numbers of pupils joining and leaving throughout the school. Generally, pupils achieve well but are not confident in overcoming difficulties on their own. Pupils with special educational needs gain much from individual support they receive, particularly from classroom assistants, but often find work too hard when working independently. As a result, their progress is satisfactory overall.
169. Teaching is good or better in Years 3 - 6. Overall across the school in the seven lessons seen, the teaching in three was good, in a further three sound and in one instance, unsatisfactory.
170. The strengths of teaching are where teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics; lessons are well planned to focus on the acquisition of basic numeracy skills; and, effective teamwork takes place to ensure pupils are well managed and know what to do. As a result, pupils work hard throughout lessons and have the basic skills to enjoy thinking mathematical and complete activities.
171. When teachers are less secure, they do not always plan appropriate work for all pupils in their class. In addition, they do not have a

sufficient range of strategies and methods and pupils sometimes find work too difficult or too hard. As a result they become inattentive and, in some instances, behave inappropriately.

172. Most pupils in Year 2 can count from 1 to 100 but many have difficulty recalling addition and subtraction facts to 10. This hinders their progress when trying to calculate mentally or use different strategies. Most understand how two digit numbers are composed, can count in two's forwards, order numbers by their value as well as tell whether they are odd or even. Many can measure reasonably accurately using non-standard units and tell the time using o'clock and half past. Most pupils recognise and use pence and some are starting to understand larger coin values. Some regular two-dimensional shapes are recognised but not always named correctly. Many can collect and interpret data using block graphs and Venn diagrams. Most have difficulty explaining their mathematical thinking using appropriate mathematical vocabulary because of below average linguistic skills.
173. Pupils in Year 6 use a range of strategies when carrying out mental calculations. They use written methods competently to solve problems requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They convert fractions to decimals and understand percentage. Most recognise reflective and rotational symmetry and can plot geometric shapes using all quadrants. They name regular and irregular two and three-dimensional shapes and can describe some of their properties. Nearly all have a sound understanding of perimeter and area gained from solving practical problems. Most pupils competently collect, organise and interpret data using appropriate graphical representation. However, a significant minority do not regularly check the reasonableness of their answers when working independently.
174. The effectiveness of the introductory mental and oral session in lessons varies. The most useful are where teachers direct questions at named individuals by carefully matching the level of difficulty appropriately in order to reinforce work already covered. In a Year 3 / 4 lesson consolidating the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, pupils were attentive and keen to answer the teacher's quick fire questions. She had a warm and encouraging way that gave pupils the confidence to put forward their ideas, knowing if they made mistakes they would be helped to understand where they went wrong.
175. Sometimes, teachers are not sufficiently assertive and allow pupils to carry on calling out in these initial question and answer sessions. In a Year 2 lesson counting on and back in twos, the teacher had given pupils numbered cards to show the answer to questions she asked the class and a few high attaining boys persisted in calling out the correct solution.
176. The main teaching focus for lessons is best introduced when the learning objectives are made clear to pupils from the start and activities are interesting and realistic. In a Year 3 / 4 lesson on weighing in standard units, the teacher made sure the class were fully aware that the purpose was to make reasonable estimates and then to measure accurately. He also had brought a selection of tinned and packaged food from home and different types of scales. These resources and the teacher's clear introduction ensured that

pupils were fully involved and concentrated when carrying out the practical work.

177.

Independent and small group work is the area of mathematics' lessons where learning is generally not sufficiently effective. Most teachers plan a common experience for all pupils that, because of the wide range of prior-attainment and different rates of learning, is often too hard for low attaining pupils and too easy for the more able. While pupils who learn at a slower rate are given effective support from classroom assistants, brighter pupils are often left to work independently and do not find the work challenging enough. In a Year 4 / 5 lesson on perimeter, a more able boy quickly worked out how to measure and add the length of sides and did not need to carry out the practical activity he was set. He was quite capable of calculating the perimeter of irregular shapes and calculating the dimensions of sides given only key measurements.

178.

The closing session of lessons is frequently too short to check adequately how things have gone and explore pupils' difficulties. On the occasions when pupils are encouraged to say what went well and what they would like to do better, teachers have a clear idea of the areas they need to tackle in future lessons. In a Year 6 lesson on number patterns, during the review it became obvious that some pupils were not checking their mental calculations regularly when carrying out successive multiplications and additions. As a result, an early mistake was repeated throughout the sequence. The teacher reminded the class that this would be a focus for their next lesson.

179.

Teachers regularly check pupils' progress using standardised tests. While they analyse this information effectively to identify general strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning, this information is not used throughout the school to set appropriate targets for individuals and year groups. Pupils' work is marked for accuracy and, in most cases, guidance is given to help pupils know what they need to do to improve.

180.

Homework is set at an appropriate level and quantity but a number of pupils do not regularly complete work on time. However for those who receive encouragement and support at home, learning is more effective.

181.

Pupils are having more opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning in mathematics now that the computer suite is in use. For instance, a group of Year 2 pupils worked with the specialist assistant to reinforce their understanding of fractions by programming a toy to make half and quarter turns. Other new technologies are also appropriately used, such as calculators and overhead projectors, to make learning easier and more accessible. A Year 6 low attaining boy competently used a calculator to check his multiplication of three figure numbers and quickly spotted his mistake.

182.

Mathematical skills are frequently called upon to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For instance in Year 1 art, pupils made circle patterns in printing; in Year 2 science, pupils sorted materials by their properties and recorded their findings using

overlapping sets; and in Year 6 design and technology, pupils costed the number of different coloured beads used when making their decorative models.

183. Mathematics is jointly co-ordinated by the deputy head and Year 1 teacher, who have worked co-operatively together to implement the National Numeracy strategy. They have also been successful in improving the scheme of work and developing more effective teaching and learning of mental and oral mathematics. They have a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise standards further and are focusing on making assessment procedures more rigorous and helpful. They recognise that the information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses will help teachers plan more appropriate independent work for pupils, particularly the more able.
184. There is a good range of resources, generally used effectively by staff in mathematics lessons. However, there are few displays of pupils' work to celebrate their achievements and raise the profile of mathematics in the school. The number of books on mathematics in the library is limited and pupils do not generally use these to support their learning through individual study.
185. Overall the school is making good progress in mathematics and there is a very strong commitment from staff to improve and further develop teaching and pupils' learning and raise standards further.

#### **SCIENCE**

186. Since the previous inspection there has been satisfactory progress overall in raising standards in science. Whilst for seven-year-olds, these have remained average there has been a steady rise to above average for 11-year-olds. Overall the quality of teaching is good in science and pupils achieve well.
187. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils are making appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, materials and properties and in scientific enquiry. However there are gaps in pupils' knowledge of physical processes. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils are not sure about the changes in movement caused by pulling or pushing objects, as below average linguistic skills limit their ability to describe situations. Whilst they talk confidently about the day-to-day use of electrical appliances, they have little understanding of simple electrical circuits.
188. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' plans ensure lessons have a good range of practical activities that are well suited to the learning style of younger pupils and they achieve well in scientific investigation. However, not enough attention is paid to the stage and rate of learning of all pupils. As a result the work for many more able pupils is often too easy and they do not work hard enough.
189. In a Year 1 lesson focussing on the human life processes, pupils successfully explored and compared objects and food using all their senses. They began to draw conclusions and to describe their findings, choosing appropriately descriptive words as a result of the teacher's and assistant's well thought out questions. An

average attaining girl said, "*The lemon is sour, the grapes are sweeter*". However during independent work, more able pupils were not given sufficiently challenging activities. A higher attaining girl already had an extensive knowledge of the topic and completed the same work as other pupils easily without extending her knowledge and understanding. The picture in Year 2 is similar. In a lesson on materials and their properties, pupils enthusiastically engaged in applying their classification skills in a well-resourced sorting activity. The main activity was well planned to provide opportunities for pupils of all abilities to achieve appropriately. However, when recording their findings, all the class was given identical worksheets and consequently more able pupils found the activity easy, requiring little scientific thinking.

190. In a Year 1 and Year 3/4 class ensured that pupils achieved well. In both classes, teachers' well-prepared resources and clear explanations enabled all pupils to engage fully in their tasks. Year 1 pupils In Years 3 - 6, most pupils achieve well in acquiring knowledge and understanding of science and in the process of scientific enquiry. Good gains in their learning are made through well-structured lessons in which teachers use a wide variety of effective methods and interesting practical investigations. Pupils generally work hard and concentrate well. They approach their work with a high level of interest, enthusiasm and confidence. However, there are not always sufficient opportunities for pupils to put forward their own ideas to test or explain what they have learned.
191. In a Year 3/4 lesson introducing an investigation into the flexibility of materials, the teacher clearly demonstrated various ways of testing their properties. Through very good focused questioning, pupils were attentive and successfully developed their understanding. An average attaining boy explained, "*Bendy means to change shape, putting a force on a bamboo cane makes it bend*". As the lesson progressed pupils discovered the importance of testing and understood what makes a test fair. Whilst pupils were challenged to observe carefully, there were not enough opportunities for them to make their own suggestions for testing materials.
192. In a Year 4/5 lesson introducing pupils to thermal conductors and insulators, that was equally well-resourced and stimulating, pupils learned from each other and shared ideas. Whilst throughout the lesson the teacher summarised pupils' new learning, there were too few opportunities for pupils to explain what they had learned for themselves.
193. As a result by Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of science and know that scientific ideas are developed from systematic enquiry. Pupils are keen to discuss their investigations, as a lower achieving boy explained, "*Fair tests are important. Experiments give you information, they give you evidence*".
194. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in science lessons and are well supported by teachers and assistants, who work effectively together. They sensitively encourage pupils, helping them gain confidence and become enthusiastic about learning.

However, on occasions when working independently, they find activities too hard. When adult help is not readily available, pupils with special educational needs do not have the language skills to work out what they have to do and they give up. Despite this shortcoming, on balance with the effective adult support, their progress remains satisfactory.

195. Strengths of the teaching in science are the way in which teachers manage pupils and ensure that they understand what is expected of them; the good explanations and use of scientific vocabulary; the effective teamwork between learning support assistants and teachers and the range and variety of well-resourced learning activities. Pupils consequently work hard in these lessons and sustain their interest and concentration. The secure subject knowledge of some teachers, particularly in Years 3 -6, has a positive effect on their confidence to challenge pupils appropriately.
196. Shortcomings in teaching are mainly concerned with activities not being planned to meet the needs and interests of all pupils. At times, pupils complete identical worksheets and answer the same written questions, copying information from the board or books. This is time consuming and does not involve note taking or summarising, which encourages pupils to be selective in their use of information and identify key scientific points.
197. Pupils' learning is further supported through informative classroom displays, such as 'Amazing Science Facts', and using new technologies to research the Internet. Effective links are also made with other curriculum areas. Whilst recording Year 3 / 4 pupils' ideas on the board about flexibility of materials, the teacher asked them to remind him of the features of writing a list recently covered in a literacy lesson.
198. Science is well managed by the newly appointed co-ordinator, who receives good support from the previous post holder and more experienced staff. Her monitoring role is developing and includes collecting samples of pupils' work to check standards and teachers' judgements. However due to the short time in post, there have not yet been opportunities to observe teaching and pupils' learning in classrooms. Whilst pupils' progress is generally satisfactorily checked during lessons, the need to assess pupils more systematically to identify and tackle shortcomings has been identified as a development priority.
199. Overall, science resources are good and allow pupils to carry out an appropriate range of investigations in and beyond the classroom. The school grounds and locality are used effectively to give pupils as much first hand experience as possible, such as in exploring different habitats of mini beasts. The school library has a satisfactory range of science books to support pupils' research.

#### **ART AND DESIGN**

200. During the inspection only two lesson of art could be observed. Judgements are based on talking with pupils, examining their work, discussions with teachers and looking at their plans.
201. This evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils in the school is generally as expected for their age. By the time pupils leave



the school at eleven; they have experienced an appropriate range of work including two and some three-dimensional art and design using a range of appropriate media.

202. Teachers have successfully encouraged pupils to express themselves through art in many creative ways. Year 6 pupils made clay models and could clearly explain the process from initial design to firing and glazing. Art is frequently used in a cross curricular way as shown in Years 3 and 4 where pupils, inspired by their preparations for the Helston Flora Dance, closely observed flowers, such as Lily of the Valley and Bluebells. As a result, they produced their own detailed drawings. Similarly, Year 2 pupils designed and made bunting and crowns as part of their Queen's Jubilee celebrations. They carefully decorated these using a range of techniques, including pattern making and collage. Overall pupils enjoy their work and talk with enthusiasm about an interesting range of art and design projects.
203. Good teaching observed successfully used reference books to find information about animals in their environments before producing their own sketches whilst Y3/4 pupils worked hard and developed their technique of weaving on a card loom. They effectively learned from their mistakes because they received very encouraging help from the teacher and classroom assistant.
204. Pupils are given opportunities to study the work of a range of artists and crafts people. Year 2 pupils looked at Kandinsky's work and then produced their own in the artist's style. They could discuss improvements and evaluate their finished work. A boy explained, "*I like my picture but I would be more careful with my colouring*". Similarly by Year 6, pupils know the names of artists but are less confident in discussing features of their style. However, they have a sound understanding of how studying the work of others can help them improve their own art. A boy explained, "*Look at the work of an expert, look carefully, try again*". Throughout the school, pupils use an appropriate range of computer software to create their own pictures and designs.
205. The subject is well managed by an experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who places a strong emphasis on celebrating pupils' work in the community. Currently, this is displayed in the local museum and art gallery. Teachers are supported by an appropriately detailed scheme of work, which helps them to plan a balanced programme of activities for the pupils. The co-ordinator has provided some specialist teaching in other classes and currently checks standards through observing pupils' finished work.
206. Resources are good. Pupils' art and design experiences are enhanced by a rich variety of visits to galleries and other places of interest.

#### **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

207. During the inspection only two lessons of design and technology could be observed. Judgements have been made based on these observations, discussions with pupils and teachers and examination of displayed work and curriculum plans. This evidence indicates that standards of work are as expected for seven and 11-year-olds.

In the previous inspection, standards were around average for pupils aged seven and above for 11-year-olds. However, considering the limited first hand evidence available and the high turnover of pupils, comparisons between these results are not reliable.

208. Pupils are provided with enriching practical activities, which build appropriately on their developing knowledge skills and understanding. Good links are made with other subjects, for example in Year 3 / 4 where, following their science work, pupils made clown faces applying their knowledge of electrical circuits to make the eyes light up.
209. Pupils in Year 1 were proud of the model fairground attractions they made. They selected materials and used simple joining techniques appropriately, such as glue, tape and staples. Whilst being able to explain the making process, they were less sure why it was necessary to plan first. However with adult support, pupils evaluated the finished product and made suggestions for improvement. An average attaining boy discussing his dodgem model said, *"I'd take the sticky stuff off the cars so as I could move them around with sticks."* In a Year 2 lesson, pupils produced two alternative plans for Fathers' Day cards and then selected one to make, justifying their choices. A low attaining girl said, *"I'll make a fish card because my dad likes fishing. I'll use felt-tips"*.
210. As a result, most seven-year-olds can plan and select materials, mainly using drawings, before making simple products. Many are reliant on adult help but are able to refine suggestions and explain their reasons. They have an appropriate range of craft skills and cut, bend and fix pliable and rigid materials carefully.
211. Good teaching observed in a Year 5/6 class effectively supported pupils in using materials, tools and craft skills to implement their design proposals. Following a visit to Godolphin Woods, pupils chose to make an imaginary woodland character and a shelter, with woven or knitted accessories for their character. Through the teacher's high quality questioning, pupils evaluated their work as they went along and discussed the appropriateness of their ideas. A high attaining Year 6 boy explained, *"We can modify our plans, but we need to note that in the evaluation"*. Pupils making shelters measured and marked accurately and discussed which tools would be appropriate for cutting cardboard. Very good support for individuals provided by the teacher, classroom assistants and a governor ensured that all pupils were successful and achieved well in the lesson.
212. Consequently by the time they are 11, most pupils know that the design process needs careful planning to ensure that products meet the requirements of users. They use an increasing range of ways to communicate their ideas, including word processing and computer assisted design programs. They are developing an appropriate range of designing and making skills and talk with enthusiasm about their work. They know the importance of testing and refining ideas, taking into account how the product is received and what they might do to improve their designs. They are also aware of health and safety requirements when using tools, equipment and materials.

213. The deputy head is co-ordinator and has only been in post since the beginning of the school year. She has been effective in ensuring that the scheme of work meets requirements and topics are well resourced. Design and technology has not been a development priority and monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning through direct observation of lessons has not yet taken place. However, the co-ordinator plans to help teachers develop a more systematic procedure for assessing pupils' work and identifying and tackling shortcomings, as current systems are not sufficiently rigorous.

#### **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

214. During the inspection one history lesson and no geography lessons could be seen. Judgements have been made on the lesson observation, by examining pupils' work, through discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils and by looking at teachers planning and displays around the school. The evidence indicates that pupils' attainment is broadly as expected for their age in both geography and history.
215. In geography, pupils in Year 1 and 2 are building their knowledge about their immediate locality appropriately and beginning to learn about the position of places in relation to each other. Pupils in Year 3 are learning about their local environment and have visited the Helford River estuary to study wildlife and the natural environment as part of their work on rivers. Pupils in Year 4 are becoming more aware of the need to safeguard the environment after learning about pollution, conducting a litter survey and visiting a local conservation area. One Year 4 girl wrote, *"I think we should recycle because we need to look after our environment. Our landfill sites are filling up, which is becoming a big problem in Cornwall. Half the rubbish we throw away can be re-used so start recycling now!"* Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied different climates and many can explain how rain is formed and air pressure can change. Pupils study maps contrasting the climates of different regions of the world and are able to identify key characteristics and talk about the wildlife and simple ecology of Polar Regions. Year 6 pupils also visit Godolphin Forest to learn about a woodland environment.
216. Interactive and stimulating displays of resources and books by teachers draw pupils' attention and interest in geography. As a result, pupils enjoy the subject, try hard and generally produce neat and careful work, which is also attractively displayed throughout the school. New technologies are linked with learning in geography; for example, staff and pupils make good of the school's digital camera to record visits and activities and CD ROM's are used for map work and to study different locations.
217. Leadership in geography is good. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Resources have been improved recently following the inclusion of geography on the school development plan. The school has a good range of atlases and globes and has purchased videos to support work on settlements. Planning is monitored and pupils' work reviewed by the co-ordinator. Geography topics are taken from the schools four-year

rolling programme that enables mixed year group classes to cover key aspects of the geography National Curriculum progressively.

218. In history, pupils are developing a sense of chronology. In Years 1 and 2 this is gained through an understanding of their own life experiences. Teachers use displays and artefacts well to encourage pupils to make comparisons between then and now. In Year 1, a very interesting and attractive display of toys, books and games from the past has encouraged pupils to write and draw and think about their own family's history. The Golden Jubilee work indicates that the pupils are developing an awareness of recent national events and some of the traditions and ceremonial associated with the monarchy.
219. Year 5 and 6 children learn about life in Victorian Britain. They are able to make comparisons, particularly between education and schooling then and now. In their work on wartime Britain, they are able to recount some of the social and economic consequences of the war and can recall key figures and leaders of the period.
220. The school makes good use of local historical sites and resources. Loans of project books from the local authority library are linked to history topics on the four-year programme. Close links have been established with the Helston folk museum and pupils have contributed work to the recently opened costume gallery. Local historians, drama and role-play specialists are regularly invited into school to bring historical events to life. The local museum service also loan artefacts linked to the school.
221. History lessons are well planned and include appropriate investigations. In the Year 3 lesson observed, pupils discussed a timeline for the past 50 years and then talked together in pairs, posing questions about events, which were new to them and could then form the basis for further research with relatives at home.
222. The school is fortunate to have a number of staff who are interested and active local historians. As a result, it is particularly alive to its Cornish location and heritage and works effectively to share this with children through events such as Helston's annual Flora Day. The school takes part and the children learn about the legends and traditions, which give rise to the day.
223. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has allocated time to monitor planning and analyse pupils' work. She has a clear idea of the priorities for the subject and is enthusiastic about its development, arranging visits and visitors for her own and other classes. Recent professional development focussing on using artefacts in history has been passed on to staff. Pupils share and celebrate their achievements in history through attractive displays, assemblies and presentations.
224. The school's own library stock of history books is limited; this however is regularly supplemented by a local authority library loan service. The school has plans to purchase more information and communication technology related resource material for history.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

225. Only two taught group sessions of information and communication technology were seen during the inspection and a number of individuals and pairs working in classes on computers. Judgements have been made upon these observations, discussions with pupils and teachers and an examination of curriculum plans and pupils' work
226. The school has made a good improvement in raising standards in information and communication technology, a key issue at the previous inspection. A detailed scheme of work has been established and equipment and software considerably updated. The setting up of a well-equipped computer suite in a large and well-ventilated classroom has improved opportunities for pupils to work in small groups for regular weekly sessions. The school has also appointed a skilled and knowledgeable support teacher and technician, this has enabled staff and pupils to become more secure and confident in their own knowledge and use of new technologies.
227. By the age of seven, pupils achieve a standard that is in line with national expectations. Year 2 pupils are able to discuss some of the information and communications technology that affects their everyday life. Most are able to talk about and are aware that CD ROM's are for holding information and that DVD discs store pictures and films. Most pupils can access programs from computers and retrieve, save and print their work. They use a range of appropriate software competently to help their learning. Most are able to control the movements of a floor robot by inputting instructions They use a painting programme creatively to produce patterns with lines and colour and develop their control of the mouse. They are also able to use a word processor program to write a short description of their pictures and paste these alongside.
228. Pupils in Year 6 are also reaching standards that are in line with national expectations. Throughout Years 3 - 6, pupils are developing their skills and knowledge of new technologies in interesting and relevant activities. Most pupils aged 11 are able to design and present information about themselves using an interactive whiteboard, made available by the good links set up with the local technology college. They also have acquired appropriate control skills by using a design kit to build models that carry out movements according to the instructions entered through a computer program. Word processing and design skills are developed well throughout the school. By Year 6, pupils are able to create and print their own material using a desktop publishing program. Pupils also have knowledge of loading and accessing information from CD ROM's and using the internet to search for information. Some pupils have developed their knowledge of e-mail by responding collectively to a link with a primary school abroad.
229. Pupils enjoy using the computer suite and other information and communication technology equipment and have a good attitude to the subject. They are able to make effective progress because lessons are well planned and build skills progressively, resources are well organised and maintained and the specialist support teacher has very good subject knowledge and understanding of the scheme of work. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

230. Teachers plan work in other subjects that enables pupils to consolidate and apply the skills they have been introduced to in the computer suite. For example, Year 1 pupils showed good mouse control when enjoying a CD based phonics game designed to improve their reading skills. Year 3 pupils used an appropriate program effectively in geography to find out how map-making skills can be linked with aerial photography. Two Year 6 boys worked independently to record accurately the minutes of the previous day's School Council. Pupils working as librarians are able to use a database methodically to record library loans, book reviews and other information on the library computer.
231. The leadership and management of information and communications technology are good and the co-ordinator has a clear idea of development priorities for the subject. She is working effectively with the headteacher, governors and staff to improve provision. Parents have also been very supportive, raising over £3,500 towards resources in one year. Another strength is the close teamwork between the co-ordinator and technician who meet regularly to evaluate learning and plan further developments. All staff have recently completed nationally funded training and a number of assistants have also undertaken courses led by the school's technician.

#### **MODERN LANGUAGES - FRENCH**

232. Conversational French is taught to pupils in their last year at primary school for one lesson a week. The standards achieved in the Year 6 lesson observed were above average.
233. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to speak, listen to, read and write French as the teacher makes lessons interesting and ensures that new learning builds easily on previous experiences and there are plenty of opportunities to consolidate and practice familiar words and phrases. She is particularly effective in modelling the correct pronunciation while directing pupils to the written words on the board. She is lively and encouraging and pupils are not afraid of making mistakes.
234. In the lesson observed, pupils eagerly and quickly responded to the teacher's quick fire questions to check and practise their recall of basic information about themselves in French - their name, age and where they lived. She then helped them construct simple sentences about some of their preferences, effectively using three columns of verbs, adjectives and nouns that could be put together in different combinations. An average attaining girl was able to construct and say the simple statement, "*Je n'aime pas le gateau chocolat*" with a good accent. Pupils were keen to contribute and the teacher kept their interest by encouraging them to make up comical statements, such as, "*Je ne mange pas l'agent.*"
235. Pupils also enjoy trying to write simple commentaries in French, using dictionaries and word lists appropriately. In this they are helped by the attractive displays with labelling in English and French around the room. As one high attaining girl remarked, "*We need to write the English translation so that we can check the French meaning.*"

236. Pupils were keen to share their written work with the class and, those chosen, confidently stood at the front to make their presentations. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were able to participate successfully because of the teacher's very helpful guidance and encouraging remarks.

#### MUSIC

237. During the inspection, the range of music observed was limited to two music lessons, two assemblies and a choir practice. Judgements have been made on this evidence and discussion with the music co-ordinator and looking at curriculum plans. This indicates standards of singing are as expected for seven and 11-year-olds; the same as at the previous inspection. There is insufficient evidence for judgements to be made on other aspects of the music curriculum.
238. Seven-year-old pupils sing enthusiastically and with enjoyment. Most sing in tune with an appropriate sense of rhythm. 11-year-olds sing with more control and are able to perform familiar songs in two parts. Their diction enables words to be heard clearly and they pay appropriate attention to dynamics and tempo.
239. In the Year 2 lesson making rhythm patterns with pitched instruments, pupils had difficulty working in small groups. Initially, they were not sure what they had to do but, with adult help, they were able to repeat rhythms based on their first names and perform these patterns in a round. The recorded music used to accompany their singing of familiar songs was particularly helpful to the non-specialist teacher. This enabled her to concentrate on encouraging the class to keep to the strong beat of "Mama Paquita" and "Band in the square" and most pupils joined in enthusiastically.
240. In the Year 5 / 6 lesson taken by the visiting music specialist, all pupils were very attentive and keen to participate in playing a range of non-pitched percussion instruments correctly. They were given clear instructions and well demonstrated techniques to show how different sounds could be made. The teacher maintained their interest and anticipation effectively by his own evident enthusiasm and love of music. He shared stories about his own experiences and used these to explain why it was important to handle instruments carefully and follow the guidance of the "conductor" when part of a group performance. As a result when, the class collected the percussion instruments and waited for his instruction, they did so quietly and with no fuss. Nearly all were able to play a range of rhythms to make "open" and "closed" sounds and improve their phrasing following non-standard notation. The main shortcoming was that the lesson was only half an hour and the concluding session had to be cut short not allowing sufficient time to appraise and evaluate their performance in any detail.
241. Generally, teachers lack confidence in teaching music but the school has made good arrangements to compensate for this. The specialist music teacher is bought in from the local education authority to teach Years 4 / 5 and 5 / 6 for a half hour lesson each on one morning a week. One of the Year 3 / 4 teachers who has

recently joined the school, has specialist skills and a parent effectively trains the junior choir during weekly sessions. As well, the school provides additional music activities with well-established recorder groups and opportunities for instrumental tuition in brass and guitar. Some parents felt that the cost of individual tuition was too high but the inspection found that fees were comparable to other local authorities. As a result, music has a high profile in the school, the choir, recorder group and individuals performing regularly in assemblies and at special events throughout the year. Pupils taking part in these additional activities show considerable improvement in their musical performance and appraisal skills and techniques. However, these activities are not followed by all pupils and the school is aware that overall, similar opportunities for pupils to express their own musical ideas are limited in lessons, particularly in Years 3 - 6.

242. In order to redress the balance, there are plans to review the curriculum and seek to provide a more appropriate programme of study for older pupils and train staff in its use. The tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school is neither systematic nor matched to National Curriculum attainment levels. Consequently, teachers are not always sure of how good pupils are and where they are having difficulties.
243. The headteacher has recently taken on the role of co-ordinator but music has not been a recent development priority. However, she is keen to tackle the shortcomings in the curriculum and build teachers' confidence. She is aware of what needs to be done and has already purchased a range of high quality instruments and intends to make more use of the Y 3 / 4 teacher's and visiting specialist's musical expertise. Facilities for music teaching are now good, with the additional instruments.

#### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

244. Only four lessons of physical education were seen during the inspection, covering dance, games and gymnastics. Judgements have been made based on these observations, talking to pupils, discussions with teachers and looking at their plans. This evidence indicates that standards of work seen are as expected for the pupils' age. Almost all 11-year-olds can swim 25 metres and are aware of the principles of water safety.
245. Teaching of physical education in the Year 1 and 2 lessons observed was satisfactory. In the Year 1 dance lesson, pupils were interested and fully involved by the well-chosen music and story of "The frog and toad together". They showed good control of their bodies and responded appropriately to changes in the music. However, there was insufficient intervention or modelling by the teacher and pupils were not able to discuss and refine their actions to any degree. As a result, while they enjoyed expressing themselves through movement and behaved well, they did not extend their range of skills.
246. In a Year 2 indoor games lesson developing racquet skills, pupils followed a well-planned sequence of activities, beginning appropriately with a warm-up session. The teacher gave good demonstrations of the correct way to hold and use a racquet and



most pupils were able to develop these skills further in the lesson, with the effective additional help of the assistant. However, some boys did not always listen attentively and were slow to respond. As a result, there was insufficient time at the end of the lesson for pupils to evaluate their performance and know what to do to improve.

247. In the Years 3 / 4 lesson observed, teaching was good. The gymnastics lesson allowed pupils to combine basic moves into sequences using apparatus in the hall. They were fully involved at all stages as the teacher continually consulted the class to ensure they were aware of the learning activities and safety considerations. Time was used effectively as the teacher broke the lesson down into short activities, setting pupils clear and realistic targets. He managed the lesson very well and pupils responded immediately, following well-established routines. While pupils worked hard and were fully involved in trying to improve their performance, there were insufficient opportunities to discuss and evaluate what worked well and where they had problems. As a result, some pupils did not refine their sequences to change speed, level and direction and make their movements more fluid.
248. In the Year 4 / 5 indoor games lesson controlling different balls, most pupils achieved well as they knew exactly what to do and had the appropriate skills to build on. The teacher managed the class very well in the relatively confined space in the hall. His instructions were clear and reinforced by very good demonstrations. At each stage, pupils were encouraged to express their views on what constituted effective practice. As one average attaining boy suggested about the importance of warming-up before physical education lessons, "*It keeps you fit and makes your body ready for exercise.*" Consequently, pupils refined their control of balls when dribbling with their feet and then a hockey stick, responding well to the good coaching advice from the teacher.
249. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good support of classroom assistants and teachers working effectively together. This ensures that pupils are fully involved in all activities and are enabled to make appropriate progress.
250. The school provides a broad, balanced and very appropriate programme of activities that meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. These cover athletics, dance, games, swimming, gymnastics and outdoor activities. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Whilst providing informal support for colleagues, there have not yet been opportunities to observe them in order to monitor and develop teaching and pupils' learning in physical education further.
251. A wide range of extra curricular activities extends and enriches the opportunities of older pupils. These include football, cricket, rounders and athletics. Links with the community are good and athletics' coaching is provided by a former navy instructor. Pupils also participate in inter-school competitions and recent initiatives to develop a football team have proved very popular with pupils and parents. Dance plays an important role in the life of the school and pupils enthusiastically join in the annual Helston Flora Dance, developing their appreciation of their local

traditions and culture. A low attaining Year 6 boy said, "I enjoy it. I like performing and people watching me".

252. The school provides good facilities and a wide variety of resources for indoor and outdoor physical activities. The outdoor play grounds are of ample size and there is a large grassed area adjacent; these are used effectively for games and athletics.

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

253. During the inspection only one lesson of religious education could be seen. Judgements have been made based upon this observation, discussions with pupils and teachers and examination of curriculum plans and pupils' work.

254. Standards in religious education for seven and 11-year-olds are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same as at the previous inspection.

255. Pupils in Year 2 can recall parts of Bible stories from the Old and New Testament. For instance, they know that David killed Goliath and that Daniel was not eaten by the lions. They describe what happens at some of the principle Christian festivals and understand that Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus and Easter his death on a cross. They know that people go to church to worship God and for important family events, such as Christenings, weddings and funerals. They know that these events are special and make people happy and sad. Some Year 2 pupils were keen to describe the events surrounding the Queen's Jubilee and recognised the importance of thanking God for her reign over 50 years. They are aware of other religions but only have a sketchy idea of their practices and ceremonies. They can recall some stories from Hinduism.

256. Pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the need for rules and laws in society and express strong feelings about the evils of religious intolerance and racism. They know that Britain is a multi-cultural society and that people have similar and different beliefs. They recognise they have rights and responsibilities but that in many parts of the world people are not so fortunate as they are. They have studied the lives of important personalities, such as Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and understand why they are admired for their work. They have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and the importance of Jesus' crucifixion and rising from the dead. They know that the Jewish Torah covers parts of the Old Testament and the Koran is a sacred book for Muslims. They also have some awareness of aspects of Hinduism and Sikhism but not in much detail.

257. The school gives a high priority to promoting self-esteem and uses religious education lessons, in particular, to help pupils realise they are "special" and what this means. In the Year 3/4 lesson observed, the teacher effectively helped the class to reflect on what makes some one special. She successfully encouraged them to think about people they knew in school and at home. They enthusiastically came up with a range of appropriate responses from mothers who loved and looked after them to "the man who changes the light bulbs". She then directed them to think what they could do so

that people would know they were special. The discussion was well handled by the teacher so that pupils' ideas were developed and their understanding reinforced. Their thoughts included taking pride in their work, helping others and being kind. She suggested they try out these ideas when recording their responses; two high attaining boys conscientiously tried hard with their writing and illustration and were proud to share this with a visitor.

258. Pupils' knowledge of world religions is not comprehensive but the school uses assemblies and displays effectively to broaden their understanding. During the inspection, the Year 2 teacher leading school worship told the story of Guru Gobina Singh and the foundation of the Sikh brotherhood and, in the hall, there was a well presented display of artefacts and books on different religions.
259. All teachers have taken advantage of the Queen's Jubilee and the annual Helston Flora dance to emphasise the importance of ceremonies, symbols and traditions. Photographs, pupils' written responses and artwork is displayed in Years 1 - 4 as a record of their involvement in local celebrations. In Years 4 - 6, pupils' personal views on conservation and what life was like in the Second World War, indicates an appropriate exploration of feelings and views.
260. While teachers in Years 1 and 2 find the locally agreed syllabus helpful, their colleagues teaching older pupils are not so familiar with aspects of world religions, particularly Sikhism. The school is purchasing further resources, including videos, to provide more interesting and realistic images of ceremonies, practices and places of worship to enrich the curriculum in this area.
261. The head teacher has recently taken on the role of co-ordinator and has a secure knowledge and understanding of religious education. However, the subject has not been a development priority for the school but she is aware of what needs to be done to raise achievement and improve the provision further. In particular, she has started collecting samples of work and linked them to different levels of attainment so as to help teachers be more accurate in their assessment judgements and of the progression of knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education.