

INSPECTION REPORT

DARITE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Darite, Liskeard

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111962

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Smith

Reporting inspector: Nigel Power

2790

Dates of inspection: 27th – 28th January 2003

Inspection number: 247167

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Darite
Liskeard
Cornwall

Postcode: PL14 5JH

Telephone number: 01579 342155

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Barry Dunkey

Date of previous inspection: 9th February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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2790	Nigel Power	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education	Information about the school How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9189	John Horwood	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22685	Natalie Moss	Team inspector	English Geography History Educational inclusion Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22157	Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Darite Primary School has 58 full-time and 7 part-time pupils on roll, which is very small compared with the national average. Most of the pupils come from Darite, which was originally developed to serve the one-time local mining industry, and neighbouring villages, but a few live in Liskeard. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds and overall they match the national average. There are two pupils for whom English is an additional language, but they have a good command of English. Currently, just over seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals: this is below the national average. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is in line with the national average. Pupils are placed on the register for a range of conditions and although the number with statements is small the proportion is currently above the national average. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average, although there is significant variation between the most and least able. Most pupils, but not all, have some pre-school experience. The school has recently experienced a period of considerable upheaval, with a significant change in staff, including the appointment of headteacher, and a building programme of extensive proportions given the size of the school. It now looks forward to a period of stability.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides an effective education for its pupils. Although results in national tests fluctuate quite widely from year to year standards are in line with national averages and the trend is upward. Teaching is good, as are the leadership and management of the school: these factors provide a positive learning environment in which pupils enjoy their work and make good progress. After a period during which improvement in the quality of education had slowed, the school is now well placed to take significant steps in its determination to raise standards. There is room for further improvement and this is recognised and desired by the new headteacher and governors. The school is generously funded compared to many, but finances are used wisely and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school enables and encourages pupils to achieve well and make good progress
- Teaching is good overall and stimulates good standards of learning
- Leadership and management of the school are good: there is a shared vision for the school's future and good teamwork amongst the staff and governors to achieve it
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and this helps them to achieve well
- The attitudes, behaviour and relationships of pupils are very good as is the provision made for their moral, social and cultural development
- The partnership with parents is good

What could be improved

- Standards of the higher attaining pupils could be raised by encouraging them to work more quickly in lessons
- The provision of more opportunities for pupils to write at length
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in mathematics and across the curriculum
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching by subject co-ordinators for which there are plans to equip them with appropriate skills

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected 5 years ago, when it was found to provide a satisfactory quality of education, but there were some areas that needed improvement. Improvement since then has been good, although the rate of progress on the key issues of the last inspection has varied according to other priorities in development. Most key issues have now been successfully addressed, although further work is needed in a few areas. However, where work still has to be done, this is subject to current plans and the school has the will and capacity to improve further. Significant areas in which there has been clear improvement are the quality of teaching and the partnership with parents. Improvement overall has been good, with some very significant improvements to the school building.

STANDARDS

Results in national tests for pupils in Year 6 have exceeded the national average over the last three years in English, mathematics and science. In the 2002 tests, pupils attained in line with the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. In comparison with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, results were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. However, care must be taken in interpreting these results, since there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, over forty per cent. The size of the year group was very small and the information is therefore unreliable as an indication of attainment. Year groups vary considerably; in 2001 there was an exceptional year in which all Year 6 pupils achieved very highly in the national tests, in the top five per cent nationally in English, mathematics and science. The school also had above average results and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2002 in writing, average results in reading and below average results in mathematics, though results were lower when compared with similar schools. The national test results overall this year show satisfactory achievement, given the average starting points when children enter the school, but there were very few above average performances. The trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national average. The targets set by the school each year are achieved but these are related more to pupils' previous performance than setting a challenge for continuing improvement.

Achievement by Year 6 pupils has improved overall in science over the past three years, improved slightly in mathematics and remained satisfactory in English. In lessons and on the evidence of work in pupils' books inspectors found standards to be very similar to those recorded in last year's national tests in English and science, but improved to meet the national average in mathematics. In other subjects standards by Year 6 are at least average, and above average in art and design and physical education. At the end of Year 2 standards are above average in music. Children's work shows good achievement in reception in all areas of learning, except mathematics. The majority of children are likely to be ready to move on to the National Curriculum by the end of the reception class. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in speaking and listening and in reading. Pupils' work also shows good achievement overall in English, mathematics and science throughout Years 3 to 6.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. There are no significant differences in the amount of progress made by boys and girls. The school does not, however, always ensure that expectations for higher attaining pupils are sufficiently high and this results in a lack of higher level performances in the national tests. With the new period of stability in the school, after the disruption caused recently by the new building and the changes in staff and leadership in the last few years, the school is now in a good position to raise standards further.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are happy at school: those of different backgrounds and ages relate well to each other and none feels left out. Pupils participate fully and with enthusiasm both in lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good throughout the school with only a very small number of pupils presenting challenging behaviour. Such occasions are well managed. There have been no exclusions this year or last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are friendly, confident and polite. They have very good relationships with each other and all adults in the school. All pupils are included in all activities.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance and unauthorised absence are both similar to the national averages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good throughout the school and in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. All lessons seen had at least satisfactory teaching: the teaching was predominantly good or very good, especially in lessons with the younger pupils. Lessons are well planned, pupils know what they are to learn and they receive individual attention when they need it. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together. Teachers have good knowledge of the topics they teach and manage pupils well: they inspire very good attitudes to learning in their pupils. The marking of pupils' work is very good and provides clear feedback of how well it has been done and what can be done to improve the standard. The standard of presentation in pupils' work is good. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and as a result they achieve well. However, expectations of some of the higher attaining pupils are not high enough and they could be challenged to work more quickly: the pace in some lessons could be improved. Teachers generally teach literacy and numeracy well in the lessons devoted to English and mathematics, but more could be done to develop and use these skills in other areas of learning. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to use ICT across the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. ICT is not yet fully developed as a learning tool across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and work is carefully planned to extend them to their full potential.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good. The school pays particular attention to pupils' moral and social development and does a great deal to encourage their cultural development. Spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides good care for its pupils. It ensures that pupils are well known to staff, that their welfare receives constant attention and that the school is a safe place for both pupils and staff.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	Good. There is a positive two-way partnership, including good communication supported by an open-door policy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear and appropriate vision for the future development of the school and is ably supported by an effective staff team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are effective in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. They provide conscientious support for the work of the school and encourage the staff in addressing the development priorities of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school needs to improve its procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and has identified strategies to do this. There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' performance year by year.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school now has an effective and stable staff (teaching and non-teaching) and uses its much improved building very well. Overall, learning resources are adequate and used effectively in lessons. Finances are well managed to ensure that funds are used to achieve the best value possible.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is easy to approach if they have concerns or suggestions• The school is well led and managed• Teaching is good• The school works closely with parents• Their child(ren) like(s) school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views of the school expressed by parents. Inspectors examined the area that parents would like to see improved and consider that the range of activities provided outside lessons is good, especially for a very small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good overall achievement by pupils, an improvement since the school was previously inspected.

Strengths:

- Achievement is good throughout the school.
- Standards have risen in reading and mathematics since the 2002 national tests.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and they communicate well.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Areas for development:

- Expectations of higher attaining pupils.
- The amount of sustained writing achieved by pupils across the curriculum.
- ICT skills to support learning across the curriculum.

2. Although national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2002 were average in English and science and below average in mathematics, inspectors found standards to be average overall. Test results have shown that Year 6 pupils have exceeded the national average over the last three years in English, mathematics and science. Year groups vary greatly from year to year and are very small, so that test results by themselves are unreliable indicators. For instance, in 2002 more than forty per cent of pupils taking the tests at the end of Year 6 had special educational needs and two of these had entered the school only between Years 3 and 6. In the last few years, the school has experienced significant changes of staff and leadership, as well as undergoing extensive building works very recently. It is only now that it is experiencing stability after this period of disruption and inspection evidence shows that pupils are now achieving well throughout the school.

3. The school has a clear objective to raise standards. Targets are set for performance in national tests. Understandably, these do not show an incremental rise from year to year, but take account of the variations in year groups. Generally the targets are realistic, but the school needs to ensure that they present the challenge that is necessary to stimulate improvement and add value and are not simply predictions based on past performance.

4. The trend in the school's results is now broadly in line with the national average. Achievement for Year 6 pupils has improved overall in science over the past three years, improved slightly in mathematics, improved in speaking and listening and in reading and remained satisfactory in writing. Inspectors found standards to be very similar to those recorded in last year's national tests in English and science, but improved to meet the national average in mathematics. In other subjects, standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are at least average, and above average in art and design and physical education. At the end of Year 2 standards are above average in music. This, too, represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards in ICT and religious education were below the expected level, but where achievement is now good. Progress in speaking and listening has improved since then, as have opportunities to develop techniques in writing, the rate of progress in all areas of mathematics and in the use of computers.

5. Children's work shows good achievement in the reception class in most areas of learning, although some are unlikely to achieve the expected standard by the end of the year in their mathematical development and some aspects of physical development. When children enter the reception class, teachers' assessments show their attainment to be broadly average. Many have above average physical, personal and social, and literacy skills. However, the basic number knowledge of a significant number is below what is expected from children of this age. Nearly all make good progress, especially in reading, writing and personal and social skills. Children become confident learners, who socialise well with others and make good progress in communication skills. Most children are likely to be ready to move on to the National Curriculum by the end of the reception class. The school is now in a good position to continue to raise the rate of achievement.

6. Inspectors found standards in reading and mathematics to be above those recorded in last year's national tests. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' work shows above average standards of reading. Pupils read with ease and fluency, with good phonic skills. They read aloud with expression and their comprehension skills are good. Pupils' standards in mathematics are now average. They are able to work with mental mathematics with speed and interest. They are confident with numbers and have a good grasp of shapes and measurement. They are also confident at solving problems. However, higher attaining pupils are capable of higher standards.

7. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. They are, from early in the school, able to communicate sensibly, contribute to discussions freely and with interest and to speak with a sense of structure. As they develop through the school, they become articulate and fluent in speech, with a good sense of the style of speech appropriate for the occasion. Teachers consciously offer themselves as good role models for pupils and do much to encourage their command of the spoken word. Pupils listen well, with interest and comprehension. They listen to their teachers and do what is asked of them, cheerfully and accurately for the most part. They listen well to each other and by Year 6 can debate with confidence and collaboration.

8. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and given work which is carefully targeted to enable them to make progress and overcome their specific problems. Work set for them offers appropriate challenges and gives them interesting work to do. Individual education plans are used effectively to measure progress and set realistic targets for pupils' progress. Early identification of problems ensures that these pupils make the same progress as their peers. Good teaching and high quality support by teaching assistants supports these pupils in reaching their full potential. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers.

9. Expectations of higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently high. These pupils are not always provided with the stimulus to work with independence or to carry out research work on their own initiative. This is reflected in the small proportion of pupils who reach the higher than expected levels in the national tests. Work for these pupils does not always offer the challenge, which they are capable of meeting, especially in English, mathematics and science.

10. Standards in writing by the end of Year 6 are not as high as in other areas of literacy. This is because pupils' writing is too often restricted to what can be achieved in the time allocated within the literacy hour each day. Opportunities are missed to enable them to write at more length both in English and in other subjects throughout the curriculum, such as history, geography and science. This lack of practice in writing at length disadvantages pupils when taking the national tests.

11. Although the teaching of ICT skills and its provision have improved since the previous inspection, the subject is not used in a sufficiently widespread manner to support subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' research skills would benefit from more consistent access to ICT, such as desktop publishing, word processing and its use in numeracy and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and to learning. Their behaviour throughout the school is good and often very good. Relationships throughout the school are very good.

Strengths:

- The relationships established throughout the school.
- The very good attitudes within the school.
- Very good behaviour, pupils are courteous and kind to each other.

Areas for development:

- An increase in the opportunities pupils have to demonstrate initiative.

13. Pupils, most of whom are brought to school by adults, arrive at school in a quiet, orderly manner and are clearly happy to come to school. They are friendly, confident, polite and well mannered when moving around the school and this results in a well-disciplined community. Their attitudes throughout the school are very good with pupils paying attention in lessons and working hard. Pupils show interest in the activities available to them with participation in activities outside lessons, including the school council.

14. Around the school, including break and lunch times, the behaviour is good with no evidence of any bullying or other type of unsociable behaviour. There is adequate friendly supervision at all times during the day. Attendance and unauthorised absence levels are similar to the national average. There have been no exclusions last year or this year.

15. The small size of the school allows it to operate as a 'family' community in which staff and pupils communicate very well and the very good relationships allow pupils to talk to staff about individual problems. The school ensures that all pupils are encouraged to join in all activities: as a result all pupils play and work well together. Within the school there is mutual respect and trust. On entry to the school many of the pupils are at a very early stage of personal development, but as they move through the school they clearly become sensible, polite and show respect to others. The pupils' personal development is well supported through the personal, social and health education provision as well as the assessment/reporting system. Pupils have limited opportunities for exercising responsibility, but they willingly take on tasks such as membership of the school council or, in the classroom, carrying out duties such as taking dinner registers to the office or handing out equipment. Some pupils take on responsibilities as 'buddies' or helping in the library. Within lessons pupils are very enthusiastic to answer questions and to participate, but there are few opportunities for them to use their own initiative by, for example, suggesting their own methods for solving problems.

16. The qualities of the attitudes, behaviour and relationships have been maintained at similar high levels since the last inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching is good overall in the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, although there was some room for improvement in some lessons. Five lessons in every six were at least good and the teaching in every class was predominantly good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Strengths in teaching and learning:

- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the concepts and content of their lessons, so that pupils feel confident about the work they are given;
- Organisation of lessons so that pupils are clear about what they are going to learn and aware of the purpose of the tasks they are set;
- Teachers' knowledge of the progress of each of their pupils so that they are able to provide a range of activities from which all pupils can learn;
- Careful scrutiny and informative marking of pupils' work so that future tasks can be planned to support pupils' further development and encourage them to want to learn;
- The liaison between teachers and teaching assistants that enables pupils of all abilities, especially those with special educational needs, to make progress.

Areas for development:

- Higher expectations of the amount of progress that can be made by higher attaining pupils;
- More purposeful pace in the teaching in some lessons

18. The teaching of the youngest pupils in the reception class is purposeful and effective. It is well planned and the co-ordination between the class teacher, the reception class assistant and the support staff is very good. These pupils are making satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress with the early learning goals, although some of them have very limited literacy, numeracy and social skills when they enter school. The wide range of attainment on entry is well handled by the class teacher and assistants, who respond to the individual learning needs of each child, giving careful attention to the development of each one. The creative development of the children receives appropriate attention and is no longer a weakness. Although there are still limitations in the outdoor facilities for the physical development of these children the new hall provides a very good alternative indoor space and they receive teaching which they enjoy and from which they benefit.

19. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are good. The teaching is well prepared and appropriately focused on the previous achievement of the pupils. With the support of other adults, who make a good contribution to lessons, the class teacher is able to arrange tasks for pupils that match their stage of development. Pupils respond well: they listen carefully to explanations, answer questions enthusiastically and concentrate on the tasks set them or engage fully in practical activities. Occasionally, the pace of the lesson slows while the teacher allows slower workers to complete tasks: this results in the quicker pupils marking time and although they may be given additional work it does not stretch them sufficiently. A good feature of the work with the pupils in their first three years of school is the way in which they are encouraged to talk about their work, using appropriate technical language. Their ability to listen and respond, to adults or each other, is providing a good foundation for their learning in later years.

20. For pupils between Years 3 and 6 also, teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and what pupils are to learn is clearly shared with them. Teachers know the pupils in the classes well and generally match the activities well to their needs and in such a way that all can make progress. However, on occasions the focus of the lesson is too general and while meeting the needs of most of the pupils it does not stretch the higher attaining pupils enough.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is comprehensive and secure. They approach lessons with confidence and often with enthusiasm, which inspires pupils to participate fully throughout the lesson. Although pupils are generally very well behaved, teachers are alert to any over enthusiasm or disruption. With good liaison with support assistants they achieve good classroom management, with resources ready to hand and pupils organised to pursue specific activities. Teaching methods are generally good and appropriate for the topics taught. However, the structure of some lessons is rather lax as, for example, in a mathematics lesson where activities were allowed to continue for too long without pupils being set any targets to complete work in a given time. Similarly, in a physical education lesson, pupils were required to be inactive for too long after they had completed their warm-up.

21. A strong feature of teaching in the school is the quality of marking of pupils' work. Their books are marked regularly and the comments in them are good summaries of the quality of work that has been done. Pupils also know from the comments how they can improve and what they will be moving on to next. The quality of marking demonstrates that teachers know how well each pupil is progressing. This is of great benefit to pupils with special educational needs as the work that is planned for them subsequently is appropriately targeted to the next stage of their development: as a result these pupils achieve well and make good progress relative to their levels of attainment.

22. The special educational needs co-ordinator has specific expertise in teaching pupils with special educational needs and during her day a week in school teaches throughout the day and offers valuable guidance to class teachers and learning support assistants. She has worked with the headteacher and the special educational needs governor to revise and update the schools' policy for special educational needs. As the pupils for whom English is an additional language already possess good skills in English, no special provision is made for them.

23. The lack of pace in some lessons and the occasionally excessive amount of repetition in the tasks set them mean that too few of the higher attaining pupils achieve the higher levels in the national tests at the ages of 7 and 11. In particular, the older pupils should be writing more extensively and on a wider range of subjects. Although teaching and learning are undertaken conscientiously there is sometimes a lack of urgency to complete tasks in a given time.

24. As yet little use is made of ICT as a tool for learning. Although ICT skills are taught as a separate subject, insufficient use is made of the techniques pupils have mastered to aid their learning in other subjects such as literacy, mathematics, science, geography and history.

25. In addition to the good quality of teaching overall, pupils achieve well because they are keen to learn. They are developing basic skills well, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and when given opportunities to utilise the skills across the curriculum, usually do so with confidence. They show interest in their studies, concentrate very well, work well together and support each other in practical activities, and take care in the presentation of their work. The older pupils are interested to know how well they are progressing and are developing good skills of self-assessment as, for example, at the end of a mathematics lesson they responded to their teacher's questions about whether they felt they had fully achieved the lesson objectives. Overall, the teaching and learning in the school are preparing pupils well for their studies in the future.

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

26. The school provides pupils with an appropriately broad and relevant curriculum. Provision for ICT and religious education has improved since the previous inspection. The school has also provided, with the help of the National Numeracy Strategy, a detailed scheme of work for mathematics and has successfully raised the quality of planning for children under five. Planning is now more rigorous and, overall, meets well the prior attainments of pupils and the needs of pupils in the mixed age classes. The provision for pupils' moral and social development, their cultural development and, especially, their spiritual development has also improved with clear planning and direction, so that the ethos of the school is one which encourages pupils' personal development very well.

Strengths:

- The school fulfils its statutory requirements for all areas of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
- Work is often well planned in topics that form good links over several areas of the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils have very good equality of access to and opportunity in all areas of the curriculum.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for its pupils, uses the contribution of the community well and has constructive relationships with other schools.
- Provision for moral and social development, including pupils' personal development, is very good, as is provision for their cultural development.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual education is good.

Areas for development:

- The school does not always challenge higher attaining pupils in all subjects of the curriculum.
- The use of ICT throughout the curriculum is not yet as wide as it might be.

27. The school fulfils all its statutory requirements in respect of the curriculum, as well as in meeting the needs of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school is working effectively to the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Most other subjects are now planning in accordance with nationally recommended schemes of work, so that pupils are helped to make clear progress in the skills of each subject. Almost all subjects now have a subject co-ordinator who plans long-term work and checks pupils' progress through their written work, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Children in the reception class are provided with a broad and productive curriculum, which enables them to make satisfactory progress overall.

28. A strength in the school's curriculum is the way in which subjects such as geography, history, art and design, science and design and technology are planned, so that each subject complements the skills and knowledge of the others. This was seen in many areas of the school's work, such as the combination of history and art and design in the collages of famous people from history, such as William Morris, Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale, as part of the current Year 5/6 topic on the Victorians. Geography work on local settlements is integrated with historical study on settlers and invaders through history. Science studies are well linked with environmental geographical topics in, for instance, the study of rivers. These linkages enhance pupils' knowledge of subject areas while helping them to gain a broader view of life and an understanding of social problems and a sense of citizenship.

29. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs, who are given full access to all areas of the curriculum. These pupils are supported by good planning that targets the learning needs outlined in their individual education plans and helps them to make good progress. The level of support given to these pupils is very good: the support is provided through the use of high quality teaching assistants who ensure their understanding and the acquisition of skills. All teachers know the needs of their pupils well and deliberately adapt their planning to meet specific needs. Occasionally, work set is not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils. Teachers' expectations of the amount and quality of work of which these pupils are capable is sometimes too low. Although teachers overall ensure that work is matched to the abilities of pupils, occasions were observed where learning in the subject was not as good as it might be. This is reflected in the numbers of pupils who, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, do not reach the higher than expected levels in the national tests.

30. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum and follow the same programmes of study, including sex education and drug awareness. Lessons are also provided for all pupils in personal, social, health and citizenship education, which helps to enrich their personal development and relationships with others. All pupils are developing language skills that enable them to understand and participate fully in their lessons. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language, but who speak English well, are very well integrated into the life of the school, to the extent that one pupil was observed teaching others words in his own first language.

31. The school provides its pupils with a good range of extra-curricular activities. This is a small school with few teachers, but pupils have opportunities to take part in sports activities, recorder clubs and a range of other lunchtime or after school events. In conjunction with other primary and secondary schools, they are able to take part in musical and dance productions and sporting events. One of the school's initiatives is the arrangement made with Liskeard Community College for the use of their ICT suite, thus extending the ICT provision made for pupils. There are residential trips linked with outdoor activities and with fieldwork in geography and science. Visitors are frequently welcomed to the school, such as 'Artists in Residence' and for sculpture work in liaison with the Eden Project. The school uses the local area well in history and geography, focusing on its past as a mining village and its proximity to the moor and the coastline. Elderly visitors from the village come into school and provide good source material on its past and topics such as the Second World War. The policeman, school nurse and other community members are frequent visitors. The school has good links with local nurseries and pupils in Year 6 are given good opportunities to prepare for their transition to secondary education.

32. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and this teaching is reinforced by the school's rules, the celebration of achievement in assemblies and a system of rewards, such as being invited to 'The Captain's Table'. Pupils' behaviour demonstrates that they follow the very good example set for them by their teachers and other adults in the school. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. The nature of the school provides a 'family' atmosphere, in which the older pupils look after the younger with care. Pupils are thoughtful towards each other's needs and ideas and have a strong sense of what is 'fair' and what is not. Pupils eagerly accept responsibilities, such as those of weekly monitors in the classrooms. Year 6 pupils readily look after younger children at playtimes. Socially, pupils learn well how to become responsible members of society and are very aware of their duty to the environment. They raise funds for charities, visit the elderly and are considerate, polite and friendly. Older pupils have opportunities, during residential trips and fieldwork, to develop a sense of teamwork and collaboration. Culturally, pupils learn a good deal about other faiths and cultures. They learn about the festivals of other faiths by celebrating them and from

visitors encouraged by the school to widen their cultural experience. In subjects such as English, history, geography and music they become aware of their own rich heritage, including their Cornish background. A wide range of visits and trips helps to extend their appreciation of their own and other cultures very effectively.

33. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development and awareness is good. In assemblies, pupils are interested in and remember what they are taught. Religious education lessons help to promote a sense of the spiritual and other curriculum subjects also take advantage of opportunities to encourage pupils' appreciation and understanding of the wonders of the world around them. This was evident in the display on creation and in the role play in which pupils engaged during a religious education lesson.

34. Although provision for the teaching and learning in ICT has improved since the previous inspection, pupils do not as yet have as many opportunities for its use in subjects across the curriculum as they might.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school provides good care for its pupils and has appropriate procedures in place for child protection. The welfare of the pupils is underpinned by the close relationships within school ensuring that pupils are well known to staff and that the pupils know whom to contact about any problems. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic performance are satisfactory and those for their personal development are good.

Strengths:

- Procedures for ensuring that pupils behave very well
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour
- Pastoral care

Areas for development:

- Ensure that procedures are amended to include the names of current post-holders

36. The class 1 teacher is the child protection officer; she is trained in procedures and members of staff are aware of whom to contact. Procedures are currently being updated to ensure that she is clearly identified in the child protection policy and this should also be referenced through the staff handbook. All members of staff are briefed in child protection procedures and this includes new personnel who receive an induction pack to assist them. The school has a sound approach to health and safety and has regular inspections by the local education authority, any recommendations of which are followed up quickly. Risk assessments are carried out based on the outcome of audits as well as for all activities. The health and safety policy was reviewed in 2002. The site and activities throughout the day are adequately supervised. The school carries out fire drills and alarm tests on a regular basis and good records are kept. The school has satisfactory provision of medical facilities including qualified first aid staff and support from external medical staff as required. Whilst the designated staff are identified within their own responsibilities, there is not a first aid policy, linked to the health and safety policy, where the designated post holders are identified.

37. Staff promote pupils' personal development well and monitoring is formalised through the assessment/reporting system for all pupils, with additional monitoring for pupils with special educational needs. All activities during the day are adequately supervised. The school has a system of early intervention where the reception class co-ordinator maintains links with pre-school groups to target children due to join the school who already have identified special educational needs, or those likely to need extra support. In the main school, classteachers

perform an effective role in observing pupils who may show cause for concern in their learning and liaise closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator.

38. Attendance figures have been close to or above the national average for many years and the school/parent partnership ensures low levels of unauthorised absence. Recent figures show a slight reduction but this is a result of illness and a few families taking holidays in term time – in a small school this has a significant effect on the statistics. The school encourages parents to ensure pupils attend and to send letters about absence. High levels of attendance are the normal situation for the school and the number of pupils arriving late for school is low. The attendance procedures ensure registrations are recorded accurately and any absence is followed up to ascertain the reason. Procedures are not sufficiently tight to ensure contact is made with parents on the first day of absence to confirm pupils' safety. Formal analysis of attendance data is carried out every term. The school sends out reminders to parents who do not send in letters about absence.

39. The behaviour policy is well known to staff and pupils. Rules are clearly displayed in classrooms and pupils are aware of expectations. Teachers use good classroom management skills to apply the procedures and they are clearly effective. There is an absence of unsociable behaviour demonstrating the effectiveness of procedures to prevent bullying.

40. Planning and assessment were key issues in the last inspection and there has been good support from the local education authority adviser in developing the assessment action plan and in leading staff meetings on aspects of the action plan. The use of assessments to guide planning is now satisfactory across the school. All teachers have ongoing assessment procedures and complete an assessment each year that tracks each pupil's progress year on year. A Record of Achievement commences when pupils start school and at the end of each year pupils complete their own self-assessments: there is a focus on pupils being more involved in their own day to day assessment. Procedures in place for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in English and mathematics are good and in science they are satisfactory. The analysis of these assessments leads to the setting of targets. However, the re-writing of the assessment policy to reflect these improvements has not yet been completed, but it is the aim of the school to have the policy written by the summer term 2003.

41. Since the last inspection the care of pupils has continued to be a strong feature within the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. There is a good partnership between parents and the school. The school has an open-door policy and welcomes parents into school. The information provided for parents is good. Parents' views of the school and the partnership between the school and parents have improved since the time of the last inspection.

Strengths:

- Good partnership between school and parents
- Parents have very positive views of the school

43. A home/school agreement is in place and the school welcomes parents into school. Parents' views of the school, expressed through the questionnaires and the parents' meeting, are very supportive and raise no significant concerns. Approximately thirty percent of parents returned the questionnaires and attendance at the parents' meeting was average for this type of school. The most pleasing aspects for parents are the approachability of the school, the leadership and management of the school, the good teaching, how closely the school works

with parents and that their children like school. The only area in which a few parents would like to see an improvement is the range of activities outside of lessons. The inspection team investigated the opportunities available and found that the provision is good for the size of school.

44. Teachers are always available on an informal basis. Within the school, staff work as a team and clearly parents are made to feel part of that team in what is a friendly and welcoming environment.

45. The school sends home a regular newsletter that is well presented and in a format that encourages parents to read it; these are supplemented by letters on specific topics as needed and sometimes contain photo-copies of work produced by pupils. The school brochures and the governors' annual report meet requirements, are well presented and informative. The reporting system to parents on progress is good and comprises parents' meetings and an annual report that provides comments about the child and progress. In all subjects the comments are clearly personalised and explain what work has been done and how well the child has done. Rather than include grades and targets in the reports the school makes good use of a separate letter in which literacy and numeracy targets are shared with parents. The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual education plan targets are shared with parents and their child at the time of review and both sign the individual education plan to agree the new targets set. In addition, parents are able to obtain advice and support, in helping their child, from the local education authority parent partnership scheme.

46. There is a parent teacher association at the school that arranges events for pupils, staff and parents as well as raising significant funds for the school. Events are well supported. A few parents help in school during the year but numbers are limited because in many families both parents work. Other parents support the school as parent governors, members of the parent teacher association or by helping on trips or with activities. Parents support their children's education well by encouraging homework and by attending parents' meetings.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school overall are good, although there are some features that could be improved. The headteacher is aware that there are some aspects of the school's improvement plan that have yet to be implemented fully, but consideration has already been given to the way in which these can be tackled.

Strengths in the leadership:

- The headteacher's clear vision for the future development of the school
- The shared objective of the headteacher and governors to raise standards
- The strong working relationship between the headteacher and the chair of governors
- The joint approach to school development shared by the staff under the guidance of the headteacher

Strengths in management:

- The smooth daily operation of the school, when staff and pupils know what is expected of them and conduct themselves purposefully throughout.
- The support of the school by governors, including monitoring of school finances, regular meetings of the full governing body and termly meetings of committees.
- The arrangements for the education of pupils with special educational needs.
- The organisation of the school that ensures that no pupils are excluded from any activity and given every opportunity to participate in all school events.

Area for development:

- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching, especially by subject co-ordinators

48. The school has recently been through a period of upheaval and the current term is the first for some time that could start with any semblance of stability and normality. The headteacher, staff and governors have successfully managed the financing and building of extensive additions to the school. These additions, including an extra classroom, a school hall of generous proportions and offices for the headteacher and secretary, have considerably enhanced the educational facilities available to pupils. In particular, the school library, which during the building had to be used as a classroom, is now fully available in the centre of the school as a valuable resource and support for pupils' learning. The headteacher is aware of the need to improve wheelchair access to the school. However, the changes of staff and the attention to the building work have reduced the capacity of the headteacher, staff and governors to make as much progress on some development areas as they would have wished.

49. Now that the building extension has been completed and is being fully used, the headteacher has given more thought to the future development of the school. She has a clear vision for the way in which the school can move forward and has a perception of the stages and possible timescales of that development. For a very small school, in which much of the headteacher's time is devoted to class teaching, this vision and the timescales are appropriate and realistic with a firm initial basis on which to build.

50. In spite of the disruptions to progress, many of the key issues identified at the last inspection have received attention. The governors are still working to arrange better outdoor play provision for children under five and hope to have a grassed area for them to use when the weather permits. Attention has been given to the inadequacies in the teaching of religious education, but more has to be done on the development of ICT across the curriculum and its use as a learning tool. With respect to ICT much useful development has already been achieved in conjunction with Liskeard Community College. However, ICT as a management tool is not used as much as it could be, although the staff are currently part way through a training programme that will give them additional skills. The school has also noted and responded appropriately to new requirements, such as changes to the special educational needs code of practice and the need to have a policy on racial equality.

51. Governors have successfully recruited effective staff, both teachers and classroom assistants, that enables the school to look forward to a period of stability and further improvement. Currently, the budget allows the school to employ sufficient support staff for each class to benefit, but governors are mindful that this situation needs to be watched to ensure that finances are not over committed. The headteacher and governors apply the principle of best value when devising the budget and making purchases: the finance committee meets monthly and the chair of the committee works closely with the headteacher and the external bursary service in monitoring the school's finances. They have purposely used finances on staffing and resources in the drive to raise standards. Expenditure is monitored to ensure that the learning resources purchased will benefit the whole school and will be used regularly rather than sit in cupboards for most of the year. The school benefits from additional funding as a very small school, but although it is generously funded in relation to many primary schools the finance is used well and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

52. The school has a clear set of aims that govern the way it operates and what it strives to achieve. They give rise to the positive atmosphere and effective working environment that pervades the school. It is also a happy place where pupils and staff feel valued and where

their self-esteem is fostered. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together and their training days are often attended by governors, who thus gain a closer insight into the work of the school and its development. Regular weekly staff meetings enable the staff to exchange ideas and information and to plan work for the future. These meetings are sometimes attended by visiting educationalists who offer additional expertise on specific topics.

53. All teachers and classroom assistants manage pupils very well in the lessons and around the school. Where movement around the school is necessary it is managed smoothly and with the minimum of fuss. Teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of pupils in their class well and have satisfactory procedures to assess their progress regularly.

54. All teachers have responsibility for the co-ordination and development of one or more subjects of the curriculum. However, their involvement in monitoring and evaluating the teaching in the subject is not effective in achieving consistency in teaching techniques or in identifying how the teaching could be improved. This is an area of improvement that has been delayed through two changes of headteacher, each accompanied by periods of acting headship, and concentration on extensive additions to the school building. Some action has already been identified that will begin the process of providing subject co-ordinators with the skills needed to monitor teaching. Plans are in place for the literacy co-ordinator to receive training later this term in monitoring and evaluating teaching. The governors have already recognised the resource implications of this activity and have budgeted for subject co-ordinators to spend time in other classrooms. In order that such time is used efficiently subject co-ordinators need the skills to judge the effectiveness of the teaching in their subject and time to share good practice with their colleagues.

55. The management of special educational needs is good. A good start has been made to bring the procedures in line with the new special educational needs Code of Practice. The special educational needs co-ordinator, who is a part-time teacher and also works in another school, has good systems for reviewing pupils' progress. She works closely with classteachers and the learning support assistants who work with specific pupils. The governors are very supportive to the special educational needs provision and the special educational needs governor at present meets the special educational needs co-ordinator twice a term to discuss matters of importance to the special educational needs provision. However, it has been recognised that a more regular formalised system is required to monitor the special educational needs provision in the school and this is an area that is being developed. The learning support assistants who work in the school are very effective in the work they do to support pupils with special educational needs. Resources for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs are sufficient and there is a special educational needs base.

56. The school improvement plan effectively identifies priorities for future development. A particular focus this year is the induction and support of new teaching staff. On the evidence of the inspection this is being achieved successfully and both of the teachers to have joined the staff most recently are pleased with the support they have received and happy to be working in the school. All co-ordinators also have their own priorities for improvements they wish to make in the subjects for which they are responsible. Now that other major improvements have been made the school is in a good position to work on its current priorities. Governors have their own development plan with the intention of being even more effective in their support of the school. They ensure that the school fulfils all its statutory functions, although they need to ensure that nobody who works in the school chairs any of their committees. Although all governors cannot give the same level of commitment many make time to visit the school regularly, to attend staff training and planning events and some

have joined the school on educational visits. The governors are a dynamic part of the school community.

57. The daily operation of the school is efficient and the ancillary staff, including the school secretary, play an important function in supporting the management of the school. Now that the school is working in its enhanced premises the parents, governors and, most of all, the staff and pupils are delighted with the good level of accommodation. The school now has the staffing, resources and capability to move forward in its resolve to raise standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to improve standards and enhance the quality of educational provision, the school should:

- (1) seek to raise the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils by using the time in lessons more efficiently and giving them more challenging work to do;
(Paragraphs: 9, 19, 20, 23, 29, 77, 80, 84, 90, 106, 114)
- (2) encourage pupils to write at greater length by:
 - extending the time allocated to writing outside that of the literacy hour;
 - giving pupils the opportunities to write at length in a wider range of contexts in other areas of the curriculum;(Paragraphs: 10, 23, 77, 107, 115, 136)
- (3) make more use of ICT as a tool for learning in mathematics, English and other areas of the curriculum;
(Paragraphs: 11, 24, 34, 50, 78, 85, 90, 92, 108, 116, 120, 128, 138)
- (4) ensure that the plans to equip subject co-ordinators with skills of monitoring and evaluating teaching are realised so that they can stimulate pupils to achieve more highly by:
 - more effectively leading and supporting the development of their subjects;
 - sharing, throughout the school, good practice in teaching their subjects.(Paragraphs: 54, 76, 92, 109, 117, 139)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	18	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	8	75	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	62
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Where the number of pupils in the year group is ten or fewer, the results are not published.

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

Where the number of pupils in the year group is ten or fewer, the results are not published.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	40	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.523
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.2
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	178 809
Total expenditure	175 525
Expenditure per pupil	3 191
Balance brought forward from previous year	19 720

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.04
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.04

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	60
Number of questionnaires returned	18

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	28	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	39	0	6	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	50	0	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	39	0	6	0
The teaching is good.	61	39	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	44	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	28	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	28	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	16	11	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	33	22	0	0

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

59. Although the knowledge and skills children have when they enter the school varies between them, the attainment on entry overall is in line with that expected nationally. With the help of good teaching and very supportive parents, children make good progress during their time in the early years.

Strengths:

- Good teaching and very supportive parents that enable children to make good progress.
- Very good liaison between class teacher and reception class assistant.
- Support given to pupils with special educational needs and the progress they make.

Areas for improvement:

- Mathematical development.
- Facilities for outside play.

60. The inspection findings confirm judgements recorded of children's attainment when they join the school. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most children are likely to attain the nationally recommended expected standards for children of their age, with a few still being below the standard in the areas of mathematical and physical development. An area in need of improvement that has been identified is mathematical development and this is an area that is being focused on in the reception class in order to raise standards. Of special mention is the support that is given to pupils with special educational needs and especially the good progress they make.

61. Children make good progress, which is an improvement on the last inspection, when it was reported that children make satisfactory progress in the early years. At the time of the inspection there were 8 children in the reception class, with 4 attending full-time and 4 children attending part-time. Open sessions are held for new children and parents before they start school and the reception class co-ordinator makes fortnightly visits to St. Cleer Pre-school to foster links. Parents are kept fully informed through regular meetings as the school assesses their children's early performance against the expected standards. The co-ordinator has now begun to work on the new reception class profile and will be undertaking further training shortly.

62. Teaching observed in the reception class during the inspection was consistently good. Class 1 consists of the reception class, Year 1 and Year 2. Whilst the reception class co-ordinator teaches the overall age range there is a reception class assistant who works alongside the classteacher and takes the early years pupils for a significant amount of time during the week. The consistently good teaching is due to the good practice shared by the classteacher with the reception class assistant. Furthermore, this close teamwork is a strength that has a direct impact on the quality of learning and the development of all children in the reception class. Members of staff who work in the reception class have very good relationships with the children and manage them well. As testament to this it was found that when the last intake of children started in the reception class there was a significant number who could not interact or share with each other and were very noisy. The staff recognised this and set up strategies to change their behaviour. It was noted on inspection that these strategies have been very successful and the judgment made on children's attitudes and relationships is very good overall, thus acknowledging the success of the action taken.

63. There is good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development and this was evident by how well children worked together and their friendliness with each other and with adults. The way in which pupils take part in independent or group activities is very impressive, demonstrating how well their confidence has built up since September. In structured free play, for example, children interacted well with each other and shared the resources and activities selflessly.

64. The indoor provision for children in the reception class is satisfactory, providing a secure, caring and calm environment and as a result, children made good progress. There are weaknesses in the outdoor area in that there is no climbing apparatus and the present playground area is not suitable for wheeled toys because of its shape and slope. This is a school area for development.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. When the children start in the reception they quickly become used to school routines and enjoy coming to school. They are happy and secure and most settle well to the activities provided. Most children play happily alongside one another and this was seen in their free play sessions. Members of staff keep a close eye on these activities and take every opportunity to involve the children in activities where they learn to share and take turns. Opportunities are planned for the children to talk about and show what they have done with other children. As they mature and grow in confidence they develop their social skills and, by the time they are ready to leave the reception class, they play happily together and begin to form friendships. Children enjoy the range of activities provided and show good levels of concentration for their age. Children are happy and secure in school and are developing good attitudes to learning. They try hard with the activities offered and are developing very good levels of concentration. They are learning to share toys and take turns and are becoming sociable and co-operative. By the time they transfer to Year 1 many children are likely to attain the expected standards for this aspect of their education.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Children make good progress in speaking and listening and are very keen to talk about what they have done. For example, in the Jolly Phonics session where the children sat in a circle and passed the 'specs' puppet around they were very involved in sounding out the letter card when they received the puppet. Any child who found difficulty was helped and encouraged by the other children. To encourage guided reading the Foundation Assistant uses a Big Book and all the children follow or read along with their teacher. Children enjoy looking at books, listening to stories and their library time. They are keen to talk about books they have and two children were keen to show the books they took home. They talked willingly about the illustrations and one child completely read his book right through very confidently. In addition, the reading diaries show the very good links that have been forged between home and school and parents and teachers regularly communicate in these books to share the progress each child is making. When the children arrive in the morning they are helped to read and write their own names. They enjoy tracing, colouring and mark making on the writing table. To help children in holding pencils, new pencil grips have been provided and the children are just getting used to using them. Children make good progress in this aspect of learning and by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 most children achieve the expected standards in communications, language and literacy.

Mathematical development

67. Mathematical learning is an area that has been identified as an area of concern as many children start school with very little knowledge of numbers or shapes. In order to redress this weakness a focus is being made on the provision of storybooks which develop mathematical skills, counting songs and playground games. However, children show an interest in numbers and enjoy taking part in shopping role-play, having shopping lists and sorting coins. They develop their counting skills through counting games and some can count from 1 to 10 and back again, but others have very limited awareness of the sequence of numbers: to reinforce number concepts there are displays around the classroom. There is a satisfactory range of mathematical equipment and photographic evidence of pupils using this equipment. Children confidently use the computer for number work and for sorting games. However, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 not all children are likely to have made sufficient progress from a low starting point to attain the expected standards for mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. When they start in the reception class most children have had some experience and understanding in this area through holidays, helping with cooking at home and making things. Children are curious and interested in their surroundings and enjoy exploring the new experiences offered in the reception class. The class environment is stimulating and challenges the curiosity of the children. Since the last inspection the environment has been much improved and this has made the class area much more manageable for the staff to teach in and better for the children to move around in. They listen to a range of music and enjoy rhythmical music. They enjoy going outside in the garden – an area that is being developed with plants and herbs. The children enjoy using the computer and are developing good control. For example, one child who was working with the Learning Support Assistant was identifying and sorting favourite foods into groups. Although the child knew what to do with the mouse the Learning Support Assistant helped her in holding the mouse button down while she ‘dragged’ and ‘dropped’ each food into its category. Children are introduced to the world about them such as the school environment and by visits into their locality. Children have many opportunities to take part in construction using building blocks and a range of tools. Children make good progress and by the time they start Year 1 many are achieving the expected levels in this area of learning.

Physical development

69. The outside area is unsatisfactory for play: for that reason, outside activities are limited. The staff are fully aware of this limitation and make every effort to ensure that children get regular access to the outside. However, at the present time there is only one wheeled toy, although there are plans in hand to purchase more in the summer term, and there is no climbing apparatus. The new school hall is used regularly to support children’s physical development: as a result, children are developing confidence in physical activities by learning to be aware of their space and that of others as they move around the hall. In class they use pencils, brushes, scissors and other small tools with increasing confidence and skill. For example, in an activity where they were revisiting the story of Goldilocks the children were cutting out chairs from a furniture catalogue and choosing which one would be the best for Daddy Bear, Mummy Bear and Baby Bear. However, because of the limitations of outside activities only a few children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goal for this aspect of physical development by the end of the Reception Year.

Creative development

70. Children make good progress in this area of learning. The classroom is a stimulating and interesting environment and an inspiring area for children to work and learn. Opportunities are available for children to make 3-dimensional models using play dough clay to mould and make models. A display in the classroom shows that children have had experience of some interesting weaving using natural materials: there is also photographic evidence of children's chalk pictures in the playgroup based on a Hindu festival. Another photograph shows the class's assembly 'Bring on the Clowns.' They enjoy singing, clapping rhythms and playing percussion instruments. By the end of the reception Year most children are likely to attain the expected standards for Creative Development.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in English, from an average base on entry to Year 1, are average by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the position at the time of the previous inspection. However, what has changed since then is the good progress now being made in speaking and listening, reading and the technical skills of writing.

Strengths in the subject:

- Standards attained by pupils in speaking and listening and in reading by the end of Year 6 and the progress they make.
- The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.
- The good quality of teaching.
- The good links made between literacy and other subjects.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Areas for improvement:

- Provision of more opportunities for pupils to write at length, especially for higher attaining pupils.
- The development of the use of ICT in the subject.

72. Over the last three years national test results confirm that standards of attainment in Years 1 and 2, with fluctuations attributable to very small year groups, are above average and that in Years 3 to 6 they are average. Across the school, teachers work hard with the three mixed age classes to ensure that pupils progress well in the target areas of the subject. In their turn, pupils work with energy and growing independence and application, factors that have a good impact on the progress of their learning. Pupils work with concentration when working by themselves or in groups. Pupils with special educational needs progress as well as their peers because of the high degree of support, extra work and individually targeted plans provided for them. Standards of speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. Pupils contribute in lessons with interest and readiness and, increasingly, learn to speak in structured sentences and an appropriate sense of occasion. They listen well, both to their teachers and each other. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can discuss sensibly, produce a persuasive argument and communicate with ease and fluency. Standards of reading are also above average in all years. By the time pupils reach Year 6, the majority reads well, finding it easy to decipher unfamiliar words and with a wide vocabulary and good expression. A Year 4 pupil was able to read a difficult text, including phrases such as 'laughing, leaping, sliding, reeling, rolling' with good dramatic sense and without hesitation, recognising sophisticated word patterns. Comprehension skills are secure, and literature well used to stimulate pupils' understanding. From the reception class onwards, writing grows well in accuracy, breadth of style and presentation. Pupils' work demonstrates that they write on a wide variety of topics and in a wide range of styles, including poetry, instructions,

fictional stories and descriptions. However, standards in writing are not as high as those in reading, speaking and listening.

73. The National Literacy Strategy has been well incorporated into the curriculum. This, together with good teaching, has resulted in good learning in most areas of literacy. A good range of learning opportunities is provided to develop oral skills, reading and the technicalities and styles of writing well. This was evident in the well-structured lessons, in pupils' written work and in discussions with pupils. In a good Year 3/4 lesson, shared reading was very well used to strengthen pupils' powers of atmospheric description through an extract from J.R. Tolkien's 'Fellowship of the Ring'. Pupils were encouraged to participate by highlighting adjectives on the shared text. During the lesson the teacher provided good encouragement for pupils to read with expression, comprehension was well promoted and much examination of style and form took place, on such features as personification and simile. Pupils then examined, in groups, other passages graded according to ability, as stimulus for their own piece of descriptive writing. Pupils took great pleasure in explaining their own descriptive words, so that speaking and listening were well enhanced. Through the use of dictionaries and other reference books, they learned to extend their research skills.

74. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good across the school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are strong and ensure that they can plan with the confidence that they are providing a solid base for pupils' consistent progress through the school. A strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers ensure that their long and short-term plans are appropriate to meet the needs of all pupils and to aid their continuing progress. Much time is given to very productive guided reading sessions, outside the literacy hour, which effectively promote the good reading skills demonstrated by pupils, as well as supporting the lower attaining pupils and providing them with encouragement and help. Extra teaching is provided for those who need it, through additional English classes, in which pupils are sure of individual attention. Booster classes help other pupils who are not attaining as highly as they might. Overall, teachers have high expectations of their pupils. In a very good Year 5/6 lesson, a legend 'The Cloud Eater' was used very successfully to stimulate pupils to write their own legends. The teacher used and explained the technique of a 'story wall' very well, thus giving pupils the structure on which to build their own stories. Pupils were exceptionally receptive and involved in the task and worked with purpose and effort. The teacher's expectations of both understanding and effort were high, with the result that the pace of the lesson was good and pupils' learning greatly enhanced. In a Year 1/2 lesson, using a story 'The Giant's Accidents', the teacher succeeded in extending the pupils' vocabulary into words such as 'staggered' by her expectation of their effort and understanding. Teachers use a wide variety of engaging methods and very good management of pupils to encourage a good level of effort. Teachers and very competent learning support staff work very well as teams in order to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential. Teachers use assessment well to help in future planning and to check pupils' understanding of past work.

75. Good links are made with literacy skills across the subjects of the curriculum. Teachers go to great pains to introduce pupils to the vocabulary specific to different subjects, as in mathematics, religious education and history. They also ensure that pupils learn to write in styles that suit the subject in hand, such as reporting skills in science, note-taking in history and answering problems in mathematics. For example, in collages of famous Victorians in Year 5/6, pupils have written formal biographies of the characters to accompany the pictures. As a result, pupils practise oral, reading and written skills relevantly in many curriculum subjects.

76. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator's very good planning and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy have made a good contribution to the good learning and acquisition of skills and knowledge in the subject. Results of assessments of national and other tests are used to find priority areas for improvement and to plan appropriate future action. Assessment is also well used to arrange specific work for individual pupils to help them to make good progress, such as the additional literacy lessons for under-achieving pupils. The co-ordinator examines teachers' planning and pupils' written work regularly and this ensures that standards continue to rise. She ensures that the new library is well used to promote skills of reading and research. However, she has yet to monitor and evaluate the styles and quality of teaching throughout the school.

77. Although pupils' written work covers a good and wide variety of styles and is technically good in spelling, punctuation, structure and presentation, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to write in an extended manner. The amount of written work accomplished is often only that done within the literacy hour, so that it is frequently unfinished. Opportunities are missed to present pupils with written tasks of good length in other subjects, such as history, geography, science and religious education. This lack of practice in writing at length disadvantages pupils in the national tests, where they are expected to write at length, within a given time. Higher attaining pupils, particularly, who are capable of much longer pieces of work, are not always extended fully, either through working independently to finish their work or through being set research tasks which would entail longer units of writing.

78. Although the school is making much progress in the practice of ICT skills, their use in literacy is not yet as fully developed as it might be, either in word-processing, desktop publishing or research work.

MATHEMATICS

79. Standards in mathematics are close to the national average, although the results in national tests for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 have varied in recent years. The reasons for the fluctuations are the small number of pupils in a year group where one pupil can make a significant difference in the performance of the year group. In 2002, the overall performance was below the national average for 11 year-olds, but the number of pupils with special education needs in the year was exceptionally high in comparison with the national picture. A further reason is that few pupils achieve the higher levels in the tests, although the performance in 2001 was high compared to the national average. The performance of 7 year-old pupils has been below the national average in the last three years, but standards have been rising and the evidence from the inspection suggests that this trend will continue. The mathematical knowledge of pupils when they enter the school is below average, with many unsure of numbers and with limited capability in counting.

Strengths in the subject:

- Pupils are developing a good facility with mental calculations and their numeracy skills are developing well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary and they work conscientiously in mathematics lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they make good progress.
- Teaching is good and the marking of pupils' work is a very effective support to pupils' learning.
- Pupils are learning how to use their numeracy skills and mathematical knowledge to solve problems in other subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- The teaching of higher attaining pupils lacks urgency and they spend too much time on repetitious exercises.
- Pupils do not use computer technology sufficiently in mathematics.

80. Since the last inspection staff have concentrated on improving the standard of pupils' understanding and manipulation of number skills. Younger pupils were seen counting confidently, both forwards and backwards and extended this to doing so in twos starting with odd or even numbers. Most can also count in fives and can transfer their knowledge of numbers to work with money. In the same lesson the teacher challenged pupils to add amounts of money mentally. She varied the difficulty according to the knowledge and understanding of the pupils and all responded well. In the subsequent tasks pupils, at different stages of development, worked well to extend their understanding of money. Some were able to find several ways of using coins to make a specific amount and were beginning to do so mentally. Older pupils have a good grasp of number and are developing their skills in problem solving well. The work in their books shows a very good degree of understanding and accuracy. However, their books also show that they repeat work on the same process many times, even when they have clearly understood what they are doing. This repetition is restricting the development of pupils who could be extending their knowledge and working at higher levels. A recent re-introduction of booster classes for the most advanced will go some way towards helping these pupils to attain higher levels.

81. The teaching in all classes is good overall, with some very good features. Lessons are carefully prepared and what pupils are to learn is shared with the class. Good use is made of the support provided by classroom assistants who usually work with lower attaining pupils and those on the special educational needs register. Class management is effective and pupils respond well: they behave well and work industriously at the tasks set them. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and plan the work appropriately to enable pupils to gain a good foundation for future study. In particular they concentrate on numeracy skills which pupils are able to apply in other areas of learning. As a result pupils are developing good mental skills, which they can apply both to number work and their developing concepts of space and shape. The quality of marking is very good and comments in pupils' books tell them how well they have done and what they need to do to improve further.

82. Pupils generally apply themselves well in lessons and work conscientiously. The youngest children make satisfactory progress overall and all other pupils show good levels of achievement, both in lessons and in the work they do in their books. The attention that is given to the acquisition of numeracy skills enables pupils to apply those skills in other curriculum areas, such as science, design and technology and geography, thus enhancing their learning in those subjects.

83. Pupils' appreciation of the properties of both two- and three-dimensional shapes is good. In a lesson with the oldest pupils the teacher asked them to visualise a combination of shapes as she described them and then to sketch them. They all did this accurately and those with special educational needs also enjoyed success. Later, pupils designed nets of solids of differing complexities, during which they demonstrated that they have a good understanding of the properties of shapes. The teacher encouraged them at the end to say whether they thought they had been successful in what they had set out to do. Throughout pupils used mathematical terminology correctly.

84. In all lessons observed teachers recognised the wide variation in attainment within their class with pupils of different abilities across a wide age range. They provide tasks at different levels of difficulty so that all can make progress. The provision made for lower attaining pupils is good and the tasks are well targeted: as a result they achieve well.

However, the tasks set to the most able do not extend them sufficiently: the lesson pace for these pupils is too slow and they do not achieve as well as they could. The work in the books of these higher attaining pupils shows that they work industriously and present their work neatly, but do not achieve as much development in their thinking and understanding as they could.

85. Too little attention has been paid to the use of ICT in mathematics and this is an area that teachers realise that they have to address, particularly in work on data handling and with shapes. There was very little evidence that pupils use computers in their mathematics lessons and this area of the mathematics curriculum is currently under developed. The staff meets regularly to discuss their teaching methods and there will be early opportunities to rectify this omission.

86. Generally the subject is well led, although there have been many other calls on the co-ordinator's time recently. There has been steady improvement in the subject since the last inspection and there are areas where attention will provide further improvement. A particularly successful feature has been a mathematics evening for parents when the methodology employed by the school could be explained against a background of information about the content of the mathematics curriculum. This was successful and much appreciated by the twenty or so parents that attended. The co-ordinator is planning to hold another meeting in the near future.

SCIENCE

87. Standards for seven and eleven year olds are in line with national expectations for their age. In the 2002 standard attainment tests, teacher assessments for seven-year-olds were close to the national average, but no pupils gained the higher levels, whereas by eleven there was a proportion of pupils who gained the higher levels. However, in comparison to similar schools standards were below those expected nationally. Overall, the standards in science are similar to the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject:

- Good teaching overall.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and engagement in practical activities.
- Good progress made by pupils with special educational needs.
- Effective system of assessment.

Areas for improvement:

- Balance of time spent on the programmes of study by younger pupils.
- The use of ICT is currently under-developed.

88. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall because of the good support they have from the special educational needs co-ordinator, their class teacher and support staff. Only one lesson was observed in the juniors and further evidence was gained through looking at pupils' previous work, teachers' planning documentation, displays and photographs around the school, and discussions with teachers and pupils.

89. The school has identified, as a priority for improvement, the development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry across the school: the evidence gained from the scrutiny of work confirms the clear focus on this area of learning and that it is beginning to have an impact on standards. However, in the lessons with younger pupils there has been an emphasis on physical processes where they have looked at forces and motion to investigate what make things work and how they move. They have undertaken investigations into light sources where they have looked at reflective materials and predicted from a range of materials which

material they thought would let light through. They have also constructed electrical circuits in order to light a bulb and have compared a range of sounds made by musical instruments. Other areas of science study show that pupils have undertaken some work on 'materials and their properties', such as comparing natural and manufactured materials and how some materials change when heated, involving looking at food before and after cooking. They have also done some work on being alive and what we need to stay alive, including the importance to maintain a balanced diet. However, when looking at pupils' work for the previous year and this year it is clear that less time has been devoted to 'materials and their properties' and 'life process and living things' compared with the more extensive amount of time spent on 'physical processes'.

90. By Year 6 the time spent on the programmes of study for science are better balanced than they are at present in the early years. The work seen in pupils' science books is generally neat, with a good system for writing up experiments through the use of symbols for each stage in the investigation. This system is consistently applied with pupils in Years 3 to 6 and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. Furthermore, there are some good links with mathematics in the use of tables, graphical representations and labelled diagrams. However, although there were some examples of graphical representation using ICT, the use of ICT is an area that is under-developed at the present time. The range of work seen included investigations into solids, liquids and gases where pupils learned how some changes in materials can be reversed. For example, they know that when water is frozen it turns to ice, how on heating it can be changed back to water and if further heated to boiling point it turns to steam. They also know that force is measured in 'newtons' and know how to use the forcemeter to measure different objects. Pupils also learn about the major body organs, such as heart and lungs and how important it is to keep healthy through a varied, but balanced, diet and exercise. One investigation looked at the difference between the pulse before and after exercise. In this experiment pupils undertook the data collection through measuring the pulse before and after exercise and represented their results in graph form. As well as looking at what keeps us healthy pupils also think about harmful substances: as an example a poster design on Harmful Substances referred to smoking and the effect it has on the lungs and health. In the lesson observed pupils were planning and carrying out an investigation in comparing materials: specifically to compare the absorbency of paper towels. This lesson was well planned and enough resources were available for pairs of pupils to work together on the investigation. However, the lesson was spread over the whole afternoon and for some pupils this was too long and they began to lose concentration. This did not support good gains in learning for these pupils, whereas a more brisk lesson would have enabled them to make better gains, because they would have been more stimulated and interested.

91. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are good: they respond well to good teaching and enjoy practical work. The quality of learning is good overall and pupils are acquiring a good body of knowledge. The quality of teaching is good overall and is beginning to make an impact on standards. There is a good system of assessment through the assessment and recording sheet that is completed by the teachers as each science unit is completed. This is also accompanied by the curriculum monitoring diary that informs the subject co-ordinator of the progress of each science unit as it is completed and also highlights areas of need for resources to support the teaching and learning in the unit. Furthermore, the day to day assessment, used to influence future planning, is good and is consistently applied across the school. This is particularly seen in the good marking that is accompanied by comments designed to move pupils on in their learning, which is reflected in the consequent gains in pupils' learning.

92. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Several good initiatives have recently been implemented, but they have not yet had time to make a significant impact on the standards pupils attain. The school policy for science has been recently updated and the

scheme of work is based on national guidance for teaching science. Since taking over the management of the subject again the science co-ordinator has attended relevant training, to develop her leadership skills in the subject further, and has produced trays of resources linked to the scheme of work. An audit of science across the school has resulted in an action plan that identifies a number of areas as priorities for development. These include developing procedures for monitoring of teaching and learning and developing a school portfolio of pupils' work in science. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching across the school is still a priority for further development. Further priorities are to develop the use of ICT within science and to incorporate the electronic microscope with school computers. The school has very good links with Liskeard Community College that has resulted in pupils from Year 6 visiting the science department to take part in a science experimental afternoon. These links have been extended to include visits to the school by members of the science department to help class 3 and to support classes 1 and 2 during the school 'science week.' The local education authority link adviser, who is a science specialist, has given good support in helping the school with setting up investigative procedures.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Standards in art and design are above those expected of pupils by the ages of seven and eleven. This is a good improvement on the previous inspection when the judgement was that standards were in line with those expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall.

Strengths in the subject:

- Standards are above average.
- All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject.
- Teaching is good.
- Good curricular links, particularly with history.

Areas for improvement:

- More attention to colour mixing and matching and to pencil shading techniques.
- Studies of the work of famous artists.

94. As it was not possible to observe any lessons in art and design during the inspection, evidence on art and design in the school was gained from a scrutiny of sketchbooks, displays around the school, photographic evidence and in talking to pupils. For example, a good display of the weaving of natural materials by younger pupils and photographs showing their chalk pictures in the school playground indicate the standard of the art and design of which they are capable. The above average standard attained by older pupils was illustrated by a good display of the work they had undertaken in developing an instructional picture sequence for younger children to follow on "How to Draw a Face." There were good examples of facial portraits of other pupils and links to historical studies on the Tudors based on the techniques used by the Tudor artist Hans Holbein. Other displays include border designs for Victorian samplers and representations of stained glass designs inspired by the work of the famous designer William Morris. The Craft Club completed a large hanging quilt for the Millennium celebrations and ladies from the local Quilting Society helped the pupils to put the whole quilt together. Further work, based on the pupils' historical studies, was evident in the displays of Victorian cross-stitch and large paintings and collages of famous Victorians. Although there was limited 3-dimensional work on display, photographic evidence was seen of clay masks and, reflecting knowledge of other cultures, examples of Diwali clay lamps.

95. A range of pupils' first-hand observational still-life sketches was seen, including some from last year's Year 6. In these latter studies the artist had used a range of media to draw

and colour, including pencil sketches, charcoal, pastels and water colour, all completed to a very high standard. Samples of other pupils' sketches show some good examples of facial features and moving figure sketches, but there is little evidence of colour mixing and matching or of pencil shading techniques. Furthermore, although there was evidence of studies of famous artists and designers, this is too limited and pupils have not yet built up skills and techniques through studying the works of famous artists. However, good use has been made of pupils' printing skills, where classroom curtains have been designed and printed by pupils, including hand prints and tie and dye. In addition, photographic evidence demonstrates a high quality of pupils' art and design in the Christmas cards that celebrate pupils' art and design work from across the school.

96. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Although no lessons were seen, the evidence of pupils' work in photographs and on display indicates that teaching is effective in helping pupils to achieve good results. Pupils have good attitudes towards the subject and are keen to talk about what they have done in art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Standards in design and technology by the age of seven and eleven are similar to those of pupils of the same age nationally, although there is some imbalance in the pupils' experience of the subject. Judgements on standards were made after looking at samples of pupils' work, examining displays and through discussion with teachers and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress over time. This is a similar judgement on standards to the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject:

- Good teaching overall.
- Enthusiastic attitudes of pupils.
- Use of computer aided design, in conjunction with the secondary school staff.

Areas for improvement:

- The establishment of a scheme of work for the subject to ensure a balance in pupils' experiences.

98. The subject co-ordinator took on the responsibility for design and technology in September 2002 and in that time has undertaken an audit that has resulted in the purchase of new resources to support teaching and learning in the subject. However, although the subject policy was updated to include the requirements for Curriculum 2000 it has been recognised that it is again in need of review. Additionally, there is no set scheme of work at present, but staff have been able to access national guidance, for the teaching and learning of design and technology, to support planning. Design and technology is highlighted as a focus for future school development. There is a range of photographic records of pupils' achievements in design and technology, but as yet this has not been co-ordinated with examples of pupils' 'design and make' plans in a portfolio of pupils' work. However, two good displays were seen of 'design and make' planning briefs for 'An Alarmed Money Box' and 'Bridges.' Further photographic evidence included puppets, rigid structures to hold an egg, photo frames, moving pictures, pop-up books, sandwich making and winding mechanisms. A very good link is made with the Liskeard Community College where older pupils have been able to work in their computer suite using programs on computer aided designs.

99. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Teachers are confident in teaching the subject and provide a range of imaginative practical tasks to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm. It was clear in the two lessons observed that pupils' attitude to design and technology is one of enthusiasm, particularly when they become very involved in

their projects. However, in both lessons, one with younger pupils and the other with those more senior, there was an emphasis on food technology. This preponderance was also seen through the scrutiny of work. The lack of balance confirms the need for a scheme of work that ensures that:

- the planning for lessons focuses on pupils learning the necessary design and technology skills for 'planning and making',
- attention is given to building on those skills progressively and systematically year on year as they move through the school.

100. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject, supported by good quality teaching and learning in lessons, but the lack of balance means that their acquisition of knowledge and skills is not as wide as it could be.

101. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall, but in order to raise standards more emphasis is needed to ensure a more consistent planning and teaching approach. Such development also needs to be supported by monitoring and evaluation of the teaching of the subject across the school, so that good practice can be shared and developed.

HUMANITIES

102. History and geography are taught in blocks, as part of a two-year rolling programme to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. This is looked on as an effective opportunity for pupils to make strong links between the subjects and with other subjects across the curriculum. History is linked with literature, as in the use of Pepys' diary, teaching pupils the use and style of diary-keeping. Art and design are well incorporated, as in the collages of historical Victorian characters in the Year 5/6 classroom and the work done on portrait painting in the style of the Tudor artists. History and geography are very strongly linked in the use made of physical features of past and present, the social implications of census information and in studies of local history and topography.

Geography

103. Standards at the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 are average. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is similar to the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject:

- Good use of links between geography and other subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- An increased level of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Further provision of opportunities to practise writing skills in an extended form.
- Greater use of ICT skills.
- The sharing of good teaching practice throughout the school.

104. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the inspection, since the subject is blocked in a two-year rolling programme against history. From a scrutiny of pupils' work it is clear that they are making sound progress in the required areas and skills of the subject. Pupils make very good use of local studies of their area, are able to read and understand maps and have some knowledge of other countries. They are able to compare other countries and areas with their own, as in older pupils' studies of rivers and coastlines. They are able to deduce the effects of humans on their environment, as in the study of their

own village and locality. Younger pupils know about the nature of settlements and have an understanding of weather.

105. Partly through the rolling programme between geography and history, there are very good and relevant links made with other subjects, such as science, art and design and design and technology. Teachers make opportunities to link these subjects and so enable pupils to form a clear understanding of the relationships between the physical makeup of an area, the use of artistic skills in mapping and local work study. Older pupils have made contour models of two local Tors, combining elements of design with practical knowledge. There are also good links with social education and environmental issues through, for instance, a comparison between their own village and the nearby coastal settlement of Looe. The curriculum is enriched by trips, such as to the Windfarm, and by visitors, which help pupils to link their learning at school with the wider world.

106. Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to work with independence and to extend their studies as far as they might do, so that full advantage is not taken of their enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity.

107. The amount of written work in the subject is sometimes thin and does not encourage as fully as it might the development of literacy skills. This is especially true of pieces of longer writing, which are rarely seen. Thus, opportunities are missed to give pupils the chance for writing at more length on factual topics.

108. The use of ICT skills in the subject are not yet as widespread as they might be in order to help pupils develop research skills and to become independent learners.

109. There is no opportunity for the subject co-ordinator to observe other teachers' lessons and share the best practice with them.

History

110. Standards are broadly average by Year 2 and by the end of Year 6, but pupils are making good overall progress across the school in their knowledge and acquisition of the skills of historical study. These standards are similar to the time of the previous inspection, but progress is now more rapid, largely through good planning and teaching.

Strengths in the subject:

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
- Good teaching.
- Pupils' positive attitudes and interest in the subject.
- Good use of links between history and other subjects.

Areas for improvement:

- An increased level of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Further provision of opportunities to practise writing skills in an extended form.
- Improved use of ICT skills.
- The monitoring of teaching throughout the school.

111. Pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, have thorough understanding of the topics they have studied, such as Ancient Greece, and clearly enjoy their work. Pupils gain, in their progress through the school, a good sense of chronology, emphasised by the presence of timelines in classrooms and much graphic display. From Years 1 and 2 they become aware of the influence of the past upon the present and the relationship between the two, in the study of topics such as toys from the present and from the past. They learn to use source material with interest and common sense, as observed in a Year 1/2 lesson in which pupils were learning about the effects of the Great Fire of London. By using part of Samuel Pepys' diary they became engaged with and absorbed in the atmosphere of the event.

112. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and resources used extensively, imaginatively and to good purpose. Teachers work with enthusiasm and good knowledge of the subject, as seen in a Year 5/6 lesson on changes in the local area. In this lesson pupils were shown some of the historical features in a brief trip out of the classroom and were thus stimulated to focus on the task with curiosity and effort. A strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers use questions not only to extend pupils' knowledge, but also to encourage pupils to advance their own ideas and hypotheses. Pupils are given many opportunities to visit places of historical interest to help their learning in the subject, such as Buckland Abbey when they study the Tudors, Plymouth Museum and the Potter Museum. Visitors to the school make useful contributions that help to bring topics alive, such as a drama day on the Ancient Egyptians. Teachers take great care to ensure that the skills of historical study are well developed, through the use of artefacts from the past and of original material, such as the maps of the village used in the lesson on the history of the local area.

113. Pupils are very ready to think hard and to draw their own conclusions from historical evidence. They show great interest in and enjoyment of the subject, some of the older pupils undertaking research work on their own to supplement their studies. This was evident in a scrutiny of work, where some pupils in the Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 classes had completed their own booklets on Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. They work without fuss and with a mature attitude, for instance when they are taken out of the classroom to observe living resources for themselves, and they show good concentration.

114. Occasionally, insufficient challenge is offered to the higher attaining pupils in providing them with extension opportunities for individual research. Many pupils are keen to take work on some of their topics further, but lack the necessary guidance.

115. Pupils learn to use literacy skills in the form of recording their knowledge and understanding of the subject and in learning to read factual material. However, they are given too little opportunity to develop their skills in extended pieces of writing, of both a factual and creative nature, for which the subject offers scope and which would support their learning and practice in writing.

116. The use of ICT skills in the subject are not yet used as widely as research tools in the subject as they might be, in order to help pupils become more independent learners.

117. The subject co-ordinator currently has no opportunity to observe lessons given by other teachers, in order that the good practice in teaching can be developed and shared.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils by the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement on the judgements of the last inspection when standards were below those expected by pupils of a similar age. One of the key issues from the last inspection was to 'raise standards in ICT.' There was also a lack of adequate planning for the subject.

Strengths in the subject:

- Good progress in the development of pupils' ICT skills.
- Very positive attitudes of pupils to the subject.
- Direct teaching is of good quality.
- The constructive start made by the co-ordinator in organising the subject throughout the school.

Areas for improvement:

- The use of ICT in other curriculum areas.

119. The slow progress in meeting the key issue for ICT, from the last inspection, has been largely due to changes in the leadership of the school, lack of expertise in undertaking the action plan and financial constraints that delayed the purchase and use of essential ICT hardware and software. However, this has now changed and planning has improved because of the high priority given to the subject in the School Development Plan, the initiation of the SciP (School Improvement Project) and associated training and support given by the local education authority ICT adviser. Furthermore, important links with the ICT department at Liskeard Community College and the appointment of a new subject co-ordinator, combined with the commitment of the staff towards raising standards, are just beginning to have a positive impact upon standards.

120. Although the school does not have a computer suite, good use is made of the computer in each classroom where the teacher will teach a skill in ICT and then pupils will refine this skill into their own repertoire of ICT skills. The class computer is supported by a large screen monitor on a trolley with associated mouse and keyboard that can be passed around the class for pupils to demonstrate to their peers their own skill in loading, accessing programs and a variety of associated computer skills. Two lessons were observed, one with the infants and one with a junior class, demonstrating the good progress that is being made in the development of ICT skills. For example, in the Class 1 lesson pupils were concentrating on the collection of data of school dinner numbers and then representing the data graphically in the form of pictograms. Pupils were also engaged in sorting names by long and short names according to the number of letters in the name: they then represented the names in a pictogram. They were confidently using the mouse and 'dragging' and 'dropping' the names into order above a row of digits 4 5 6 7 8 and 9 depending on the number of letters in the name. The junior class was engaged in planning pages for a multimedia presentation and this lesson was well led by the ICT co-ordinator. A demonstration of how to record and insert sounds was given and pupils were confidently using the mouse and keyboard in front of their peers. In the small sample of work seen, older pupils had been learning about accessing the Internet and some work on data collection and producing databases. However, although there are some examples of ICT being used in other subjects, the use of computers and associated technology as tools to support and enhance learning is capable of further development. Pupils already have a good range of skills – they need more opportunities to use them to research information for themselves and to present and communicate their findings in a variety of appropriate ways, such as word-processing, use of control technology and simulation, and graphical or tabular representation of data. In particular, the use of ICT could enhance learning in English, mathematics, science

and humanities subjects. There were, however, some examples of journalistic writing and biographies of famous Victorians in the Year 5/6 class.

121. The school has a 'Roamer' that can receive programmed instructions to control forward or backward movement or turning to right or left. This resource is for use in control technology work and is based in the Early Years, but there is no evidence of it having been used during the academic year. However, there was photographic evidence showing the older pupils using Robolab to program a Lego car to race around a track using a light sensor to guide, but no date to indicate when this work was undertaken. There is a digital camera that is used consistently in the school (during the inspection it was used to good effect to support learning in music and religious education lessons). The school has also built up a comprehensive range of photographs showing the daily life of the school and activities that pupils engage in across the curriculum. There are also listening centres complete with earphones and a computer link-up with five earphones.

122. Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT, and show genuine excitement at some of its uses and effects. They behave very well and show respect for the equipment. The quality of direct teaching is good overall and this was consistent in the lessons observed across the school. Teachers now have good knowledge and understanding of techniques in the subject and organise lessons well so that pupils are fully involved. Pupils respond conscientiously, apply themselves well to the activities provided and make good progress. The quality of learning is good.

123. The subject co-ordinator was appointed to the school in September 2002 and has already had experience in another school as ICT co-ordinator. In the short time she has been in post she has worked hard to develop the subject. This has been successful in regard to the training that teachers have had or are having, organising uniform hardware and software across the school to ensure consistency and progression and developing a scheme of work based on national guidance with the support of the local education authority ICT adviser. The policy is in the process of being reviewed and focus on assessment is highlighted with courses arranged for the summer term 2003. The only monitoring undertaken has been in looking at planning, but no opportunities have been available to monitor the teaching and learning in the classrooms. Good links have been forged with Liskeard Community College and this is confirmed by the head of ICT who records the use made of the facilities at the school by the pupils of Darite Primary School. In addition, technical support is being arranged with the Liskeard school.

MUSIC

124. Standards attained by the younger pupils are above average, where singing, in particular, is of very good quality with both a pleasant tone and good accuracy in timing. The standards of the older pupils are in line with national expectations. It is not possible to make a statement about improvement since the last inspection, as there was insufficient evidence on that occasion to support a judgement.

Strengths in the subject:

- Very good singing by younger pupils.
- Good teaching that encourages full participation by pupils, who enjoy practical music making.
- Good progress is being made by pupils towards holding an independent part in performance.

Areas for improvement:

- Acquisition of more resources, including keyboards.
- Opportunities for pupils to sing and play instruments on more occasions than in music lessons.

125. The school has recently introduced a new scheme for the subject and it has provided teachers with ideas and confidence to carry them out. This is evident in the quality of teaching and learning that was observed in two classes during the inspection. The younger pupils sing with enthusiasm and with a commendable level of skill. They keep together in time, their pitch is secure and they produce a pleasant tone that is good to listen to. They are also developing knowledge of several percussion instruments and appreciate that some can be played in more than one way. Older pupils have a reasonable sense of rhythm as demonstrated in their ostinati playing and their singing is confident and mostly accurate.

126. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers prepare carefully, ensuring that all the resources they plan to use are set out in readiness. They have clear objectives and they involve all pupils. Activities are designed so that all pupils can take part and teachers are able to extend pupils' thinking by following up opportunities, such as when a boy held a triangle so that it could not reverberate. The teacher involved him in demonstrating the different sounds made depending upon whether the instrument was allowed to vibrate. Although pupils are keen to experiment with their instruments teachers are quick to ensure that any such experimentation does not cause disruption or interrupt the flow of the lesson. Generally, pupils are well behaved and keen to learn.

127. In a lesson with pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher encouraged them to play two repeated rhythms on tuned percussion. They accomplished this successfully, but had more difficulty when divided into two groups to perform the two ostinati at the same time. Pupils' enthusiasm was not matched with the necessary discipline to keep the beat steady. Nevertheless, they improved during the lesson and began to appreciate the nature of listening to each other and keeping together in ensemble playing. The teacher in this lesson, used technology successfully, including CD player, tape recorder, video camera and video player so that pupils were able to appreciate the performance, in which they had been engaged, as a whole. The mix of instruments used was not ideal and there was some slight variation in pitch, but the shortage of resources did not impede pupils' learning.

128. Having established a new scheme of work and begun to inspire and support her colleagues, the co-ordinator, who is in her second year of teaching, is seeking to extend the role of music in the school. The facility for singing displayed by a substantial number of pupils and the co-ordinator's intention that singing should be included in most music lessons, could well be used to enhance other aspects of the life of the school. In neither assembly during the inspection was there any singing to enhance worship. Pupils have already begun to appreciate the nature of musical notation and some have a well-developed skill in playing the recorder. However, there is only one keyboard and no piano in the school, which is a limiting factor for pupils to engage in practical music making where chord sequences are involved. The acquisition of more keyboards and other musical instruments, together with the use of ICT in music, are targets to which the co-ordinator is working for the future.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. By the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 standards of attainment in physical education are above those expected of pupils of a similar age. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

130. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson, but judgements are also made on the basis of information supplied by the subject co-ordinator and the manager of the local partnership development programme in which the school participates.

Strengths in the subject:

- Above average standards
- Good teaching and learning
- Much improved facilities for the subject and involvement in local and national development projects

131. The school has been included in the local education authority Active Sports Co-ordinators programme and is now linked to a local sports college. The school became part of the programme from February 2001 and evidence of the involvement of pupils in a range of different physical education activities was collected from documentation, displays in school and through talking to the local Partnership Development Manager and the school's Primary Link Teacher. The school has taken action to respond to the urgent need to develop staff expertise, address lack of suitable physical education equipment, and overcome poor indoor and outdoor facilities and a field that was frequently unusable because of inclement weather.

132. Since the commencement of the scheme the school now has a new well equipped hall, a new policy and action plan, a focused area for physical education on the School Development Plan, a more confident subject co-ordinator and staff who also feel more confident in teaching physical education. There is a comprehensive physical education curriculum that includes gymnastics, dance, swimming, table tennis, football, cricket, netball, rounders, tag rugby, basketball and gymnastics. Pupils have also been able to take part locally in tennis and participate in festivals for rugby, High 5 netball and local fun events. The school has certificates for taking part in the Liskeard Tag Rugby Festival and a certificate from the Football Association recognising achievement of the FA Charter Standards for Schools. Furthermore, the school has been invited to take part in the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) Physical Education Sports Project

133. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and although only one lesson was observed the evidence of the Sports Project, regular training for the staff, combined with the enthusiasm for the subject, place the school in a good position to raise standards further. In the lesson observed pupils were clearly demonstrating well-developed skills and were enthusiastic and keen to do their best, showing a good awareness for the space of others and going about their activities with confidence. However, there was one problem that did affect the lesson and that was the low temperature in the hall. It was evident after pupils had warmed up that whilst observing others demonstrating their skills to the class they quickly lost the warmth gained during their warm-up.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards of work in religious education are in line with national averages. Pupils are acquiring knowledge about different religions and developing an understanding of the impact that religion has on the lives of believers. Since the last inspection the provision, in terms of the programmes of study in the subject, has been revised and improved well.

Strengths in the subject:

- Teaching is good and pupils respond well to religious education lessons.
- The subject is co-ordinated well through the use of a carefully structured scheme.
- There are good links with religious communities outside the school.

Areas for improvement:

- There is a lack of extended writing in pupils' religious education books.
- More use could be made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

135. Since the last inspection the scheme of work for the subject has been reviewed and revised. While still complying with the county's agreed syllabus, the order of the topics has been restructured to provide two or three year rolling programmes suited to a small school where pupils spend more than one year in a class. Teachers are much happier with the new arrangement and pupils are responding well to the lessons that are constructed around the scheme. A further improvement has been the acquisition of more resources to support teaching and learning.

136. The evidence in pupils' books indicates that they are assembling good knowledge about principal events, beliefs and practices in four different religions including Christianity. On the evidence of the one lesson observed and from the work in their books, pupils achieve well and make good connections between faith and behaviour. They also have a good appreciation of the nature of prayer and its importance to a religious person. However, much of the work in books was limited to a list of facts or answers to prepared questions and insufficient opportunities were provided for pupils to write their own accounts of specific events and explain their own understanding of the impact and meaning of the events they had studied.

137. Teaching is sensitive and well planned. Pupils listen well and engage diligently in the tasks set them. In the lesson observed, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils had remembered the experiences of Guru Nanak that they had heard about the previous week. Two pupils enacted a specific event in his life involving a dangerous animal while the teacher recounted the circumstances. The acting of the pupils helped to portray the account and the remainder of the class watched and listened carefully. Later in the lesson pupils examined, in different ways according to their intellectual maturity, several accounts of encounters of Old Testament characters with dangerous animals. One group was encouraged by the teacher to dramatise their 'story' during which she recorded it using the video camera. This was later shown to the whole class as they discussed their conclusions about all the incidents they had examined. Pupils were fully engaged during the lesson and all made good progress, both in their knowledge and their understanding. All pupils participated well, including a group of lower attaining pupils who worked with a support assistant.

138. Although good use was made of technology in the lesson seen, the school has not yet incorporated ICT into the subject in the way the staff hope to achieve. Some ICT resources have now been acquired and there are plans to use them to extend pupils' knowledge, where first hand experiences, such as places of worship in different religions, are not available. The school has good links with local religious communities and welcomes visitors who help to extend pupils' awareness. There are also links between the religious education programme and school assemblies, but none was witnessed during the inspection.

139. Now that the revised programme has been implemented the co-ordinator has identified assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding as a priority area for development across the school. This process, when introduced, will also enable the staff to determine the success of their teaching and to identify any amendments that are necessary in the future. Further areas of development will become evident when the co-ordinator has opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching to determine the success or otherwise of the implementation of the revised programme for the subject.