

INSPECTION REPORT

BERRYCOOMBE SCHOOL

Bodmin

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111924

Headteacher: Mr D Rushton

Lead inspector: RWG Thelwell

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 255494

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	219
School address:	Berrycoombe School Berrycoombe Vale Bodmin Cornwall
Postcode:	PL31 2PH
Telephone number:	01208 74969
Fax number:	01208 74969
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Twigg
Date of previous inspection:	6 th – 9 th July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Berrycoombe is a primary school situated on the western edge of Bodmin. At present, 219 pupils are on roll; this includes 25 children in reception. Whilst pupils are drawn from a cross-section of socio-economic backgrounds, the majority come from families living in social housing or other rented accommodation. Most children attend pre-school settings before joining school at the start of the school year in which they become five. Attainment on entry to reception is assessed as being below that expected for children of this age; around a third have levels of performance well below the norm. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is above average. Eleven pupils have statements of SEN allocated to them under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice¹. Proportionally, this is well above average. All pupils have English as their first language. The school experiences a high turnover (mobility) of pupils which can have a significant impact on performance profiles. Such was the case for pupils in Year 6 who were assessed in 2003 where only two-thirds of the year group had attended Berrycoombe since being assessed at the end of Year 2. As such, comparison with similar schools is made against schools with a similar eligibility for free school meals. Having gained the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2001, the school is now working towards achieving the 'Inclusion Quality Mark'.

¹ The Department for Education and Skills' Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20977	Mr RWG Thelwell	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Science, Geography, History.
13911	Mrs J Gallichan	Lay inspector	
27180	Mrs E Whiting	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, Information and communication technology, Religious education, Personal, social and health education.
20671	Mr J Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school that serves its pupils well. Under the good leadership of the headteacher, the staff and governors have established a positive and caring ethos. Following a drop in standards after the last inspection, attainment is now rising, and pupils achieve well. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's commitment to inclusion results in good provision for all pupils irrespective of their stages of learning, or their physical or sensory needs.
- Despite an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain average standards in English and science, and in mathematics at Year 6. This represents good achievement. Attainment in mathematics at Year 2 is below average.
- Teaching is good throughout the school; it was good or better in two-thirds of lessons seen.
- The school pays good attention to the health, safety, welfare and guidance of all its pupils.
- There is no whole school approach towards personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- The element of the information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum relating to 'control' needs to be developed further for pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The school improvement plan does not focus sufficiently on raising pupil attainment.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in 1998. Following a drop in standards after the last inspection, performance for pupils in Years 2 and 6, as indicated by average point scores in statutory assessments, have risen. The quality of teaching has improved considerably, as has the quality and use of assessment. Governors are now more involved in the work of the school. Whilst the role of subject co-ordinators has been developed significantly in English, mathematics and science, more needs to be done to develop the leadership in other subjects. All other issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed, and improvements have been made to accommodation and resources.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E
Science	E	E	E	D

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
As fewer than 80% of pupils have appropriate data relating to the previous key stage, comparisons with similar schools are based on eligibility for free school meals within the range of more than 20% and up to 35%.*

Whilst making considerable gains over the previous year, results in each subject were still well below average. When considering two out of every five eleven year olds assessed had SEN, achievement was satisfactory. However, only two-thirds of those in Year 6 had attended Berrycoombe since Year 2. Separate analysis of their results shows standards in English and mathematics were average, and below average in science. This is good achievement when taking into account a third of the year group had SEN when assessed at Year 6. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in English and mathematics, and average in science.

Pupils achieve well overall. Children currently in reception achieve well. However, due to below average attainment on entry to reception, a significant minority will not meet the officially recognised levels in communication skills or in mathematics by the time they leave reception. Children are on

course to reach expected levels in all other areas of learning. Pupils now in Years 2 and 6, where the proportions of pupils with SEN (although lower than in 2003) are still above average, achieve well to reach nationally expected levels in English and science, and in mathematics at Year 6. Attainment in ICT now meets expected levels. Inspection evidence confirms pupils work at appropriate levels in other subjects, and that provision for religious education (RE) meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Across the school, pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and behave well in and around the school. Overall attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good overall with strengths noted in reception together with the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan thoroughly to provide tasks well matched to pupils' stages of learning. Pupils benefit from a good curriculum, enriched by a wide range of visits and out-of-class activities. The school gives pupils good care and guidance. Good links are made with the community and other schools. Partnership with parents is satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The school is given good leadership by the headteacher. He receives good support from the deputy and assistant headteacher. Management is effective. Governors carry out their duties very well and are fully involved in strategic and financial planning. They ensure all statutory requirements are met, and that in keeping with the school's inclusive outlook, all pupils have good equality of access to the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have many positive views about the work of the school. They are particularly pleased with the accessibility of staff and the progress made by their children. Parents consider children are taught well and treated fairly, and that the school is well led and managed. Pupils state they enjoy school and the work given them. They like their teachers and feel they are given good support.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are to:

- Raise standards in mathematics for pupils at the end of Year 2.
- Adopt a whole school approach to the provision of personal, social and health education.
- Develop further the 'control' element of the ICT curriculum for pupils between Years 3 and 6.
- Involve co-ordinators for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, more in monitoring the quality of education in subjects for which they are responsible.
- Ensure the school improvement plan focuses more clearly on raising standards of attainment.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in English, mathematics and science are average for pupils now in Year 6. This represents good achievement in terms of the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Pupils currently in Year 2 achieve well to reach average attainment in English and science. Standards are below average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards as assessed in Year 6 have been improving in English, mathematics and science.
- Despite ongoing improvement, attainment in mathematics for pupils now in Year 2 is below nationally expected levels for pupils of this age.
- Pupils with SEN make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

1. In recent years, standards at the end of the reception year have been below officially recommended levels in communication skills and mathematics. As such, a significant minority of pupils have started Year 1 with below average standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and number. However, this represents good progress and achievement when taking into account overall attainment on entry is below, and for a third of children, well below levels expected for their age.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (15.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results of seven year olds in 2003 show significant gains made in each subject over those of the previous year. Standards were above average in reading, average in writing, and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results were well above average in reading, above average in writing, and average in mathematics. Pupils achieved well when considering one-third of pupils in the year group had SEN.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.7 (23.7)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.5 (23.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.7 (25.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The table above shows that whilst well below average, scores for each subject confirm a marked improvement on those of the previous year. This is a creditable achievement considering two out of every five eleven year olds had SEN. When compared with all schools, standards in English and mathematics were average, and below average in science. Compared with similar

schools, attainment was above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. This is good achievement when taking into account one third of the group in Year 6 had SEN.

4. Children currently in reception make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning. Inspection evidence indicates nearly all are on course to reach the recommended levels in personal, social and emotional development, in knowledge and understanding of the world, in physical and in creative development. However, because of the low starting point on entry to reception, around a third of the children will not meet the officially recommended levels in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development by the end of their reception year.

5. In addition to an ongoing focus on speaking, listening and writing, following a review of statutory assessments, the school decided to give greater emphasis to investigative activities in mathematics and science. Lesson observations, together with a review of pupils' work, confirm these foci to have been successful in terms of raising pupil performance.

6. Achievement is good. Both Year 2 and Year 6 work at appropriate levels of performance for their ages in English and science, and in mathematics in Year 6. However, attainment in mathematics is below that expected for Year 2 despite good progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) meet nationally expected levels, and achievement is satisfactory. However, further emphasis is required on the 'control' element of the subject for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Whilst no overall judgement is made on attainment in religious education, provision meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Although no other subjects were inspected in depth, programmes of study for each comply with the needs of the National Curriculum. Pupils who have SEN attain standards appropriate for their age, abilities and personal circumstances. They achieve well and make good progress because of the support from teachers and support assistants in lessons, and from the SEN support teacher when withdrawn from class to work in small groups.

7. The school missed the targets set by the local authority for the proportion of pupils in Year 6 to reach the expected levels in literacy and numeracy in 2003. Whilst the targets set for 2004 are challenging, they are attainable, and the school's positive attitude to raising standards will ensure pupils should achieve their full potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Pupils enjoy school. Attendance is good, and punctuality is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are interested in their learning and well motivated in most lessons.
- Good behaviour in lessons and around the school results from adults' positive approach to behaviour management and high expectations.
- Teachers promote pupils' personal development as a natural part of lessons and the school day. However, provision is not underpinned by a planned whole school approach.

Commentary

8. Pupils in the reception class know routines well and quickly settle on the carpet at the beginning of sessions ready to listen to their teacher. In a lesson about directional language they waited in eager anticipation for instructions whispered in the teacher's ear by the animal hand puppet and then followed the instructions carefully. Older pupils concentrate well on their work and are keen to do well. Year 6 pupils were challenged effectively by a competitive mathematics game – one team, behind after the first few rounds persevered and managed to edge ahead as the game progressed.

9. Most lessons proceed at a good pace because pupils listen, follow instructions and behave well. Occasionally pupils do become distracted but most teachers manage pupils well, and the lesson soon gets back on track. Learning support assistants help individual pupils who find

concentration difficult, enabling such pupils to learn as well as others. Behaviour around the school is good, including lunchtimes. There have been just two fixed term exclusions in the last year for very valid reasons. The school code of conduct and class rules give pupils clear guidance about how they should behave. Good manners and politeness are encouraged – even the catering manager gets involved – she has written a ‘rap’ reminding pupils to say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ when being served lunch.

10. Regular support of charities illustrates pupils’ willingness to support those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are accustomed to working in pairs, groups and teams, which promotes their social development. During the inspection teachers encouraged pupils to close their eyes and reflect upon the issue under discussion, for example, pupils imagined what it would have been like to be in the Fire of London or to live with a lack of rainwater. This enables pupils to reflect upon issues beyond their everyday lives. Pupils join with the community for such events as Heritage Day, as well as visitors to the school, contributes to pupils’ understanding of their own cultural heritage as well as the multicultural nature of Britain today.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.2
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

11. Attendance levels have been falling over the last three years but are still above the national average. However, parents do not always let the school know why their children are absent, which means several absences remain unexplained. The school works closely with the education welfare officer to support pupils with poor attendance records or who regularly arrive late.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
103
3
1
85

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching is good with strengths noted in reception, and the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science. Assessment of pupils' achievement is good. The school provides a good curriculum, enriched by a wide range of visits and out-of-class activities. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. The school takes good care of its pupils. Partnership with parents is satisfactory, and good links are made with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Strengths are in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science, and of children in reception. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in reception are taught well.
- Across the school, the key skills of literacy and numeracy, together with science, are taught well.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge, together with effective planning results in lessons that, with few exceptions, meet the needs of all pupils.
- Learning support assistants have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Procedures and the use of assessment are good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	8 (17%)	22 (47%)	14 (30%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. The teaching of children in reception was good or better in three-quarters of lessons observed. Good knowledge and understanding of the needs of this age group were reflected in the preparation and delivery of lessons, and in the careful monitoring of children's performance. Detailed planning, based on recommended Early Learning Goals, covers all required areas of learning for children of this age. Children are provided with a good range of interesting activities with an appropriate balance between teacher directed activities and those children choose themselves. As such, much learning is gained through play, with adults often working alongside children to explain, question and enthuse. Many opportunities are created to develop and extend children's language, and these are a marked feature of the good practice observed.

13. Teachers make effective use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to plan lessons that are both interesting and challenging. All teachers focus well on pupils' speaking and listening skills, and questioning is nearly always used well to elicit pupils' understanding and to develop vocabulary and use of language. Pupils' reading books are matched closely to their abilities, and pupils are given good opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects. In mathematics, interesting activities, allied to clear explanations, reinforce pupils' understanding of concepts taught. A particularly effective element of numeracy lessons is the emphasis placed on mental activities at the start of lessons, and on pupils having to explain how they arrived at their answers. Teaching of science, in which the majority of lessons were good or better, resulted in pupils carrying out a range of investigations that enabled them to use their developing skills of scientific enquiry to good advantage and learn well.

14. Thorough planning, underpinned by teachers' good subject knowledge, ensures that nearly all lessons observed met the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. In most lessons observed, lesson objectives were shared clearly with pupils at the outset, ensuring they knew what was expected of them. The majority of lessons build well on what has been learnt earlier, and teachers

have suitably high expectations of pupils. However, in two lessons judged unsatisfactory, both at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), tasks and expectations were inappropriate, and lessons lacked pace. As such, pupils did not achieve as well as they should.

15. Pupils with SEN are taught well, and, in keeping with the inclusive nature of the school, are included in all activities. Regular, well-focused learning opportunities are provided for them both in the classroom and during withdrawal sessions; such support allows pupils to meet their learning targets.

16. In lessons observed, a significant contribution to pupils' learning came from the school's team of learning support assistants. Staff work in close partnership with teachers who ensure that all persons working with them have a clear understanding of lesson objectives, and of methods and resources to be used.

17. Since the last inspection the school has developed further its procedures and use of assessment. Information gained from the school's now good procedures to assess what pupils know and can do, is used effectively to track and measure pupil progress, modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning. Oral feedback given to pupils in class, together with marking of work in pupils' books, is good. Teachers take much care to record appreciation of effort and ensure pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced.
- There are effective links across subjects which make pupils' learning purposeful.
- The good range of visits and visitors with expertise, bring a sense of purpose and life to pupils' learning.
- Classroom assistants make a significant contribution to learning.
- Comprehensive schemes of work exist for all subjects apart from personal, social and health education (PSHE).

Commentary

18. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and all pupils are fully included, regardless of their stages of learning, physical or sensory needs. It is rich, wide ranging and constantly improving, and provides pupils with a breadth of experience that many would otherwise not enjoy. The curriculum prepares pupils well for their next stage of education.

19. Curricular provision for pupils with special needs is good. Individual education plans are well written and most pupils know their targets and are involved in setting them. This enriches their learning. The school is committed to inclusion for all and does this effectively. All pupils have access to curriculum opportunities. Good links existing between the school, pre-school providers, and local secondary schools enable the smooth transfer of pupils between schools.

20. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection, which in turn, has resulted in improved achievement by pupils. Teachers work together to produce plans, which are monitored termly by the headteacher to ensure that the curriculum is taught well. With the exception of PSHE, for which there is yet no whole-school approach to provision, schemes of work ensure the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school. Sufficient emphasis is placed on aspects of citizenship, sex and relationships education, and the school follows a comprehensive scheme for drug and alcohol abuse.

21. The school's good curriculum provision is enhanced by a good number of visits and visitors. Experiences have included residential trips for pupils in Years 5 and 6, visits to the Eden project, coastal activities and trips around the immediate locality to visit shops and the library. Theatre and musical groups visit the school to share their work and the school has participated in dance productions. The good number of clubs provided after school enhance curriculum provision for the pupils who attend them, and support the development of pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

22. Within the teaching staff there is an appropriate balance of expertise and a good level of teamwork. The good number of high quality classroom assistants enables teachers to plan small group work closely linked to the needs of pupils. This has a significant impact on raising standards and improving curriculum provision.

23. Resources for National Curriculum subjects are satisfactory overall. The school's new computer suite and refurbished library are significant improvements to the school's provision for learning in ICT and English. The general look and fitness for purpose of the school has been significantly enhanced since the last inspection; accommodation has been improved by the addition of two classrooms, and office and reception areas. This has been a well planned and deliberate process, driven on by the headteacher and ably supported by the governing body. Displays are colourful and celebrate the achievement of a wide number of pupils.

24. The design of the building offers shade, and children have access to climbing equipment. There are areas for sporting activities and quieter areas for pupils to use at playtimes. Good use is made of the school grounds, which include a pond and environmental area, to support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

There is good attention to the day-to-day care, welfare, and health and safety of pupils. Good support and advice is based on teachers' thorough knowledge of pupils' personal and academic needs. Arrangements to seek, value and act upon pupils' views are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction procedures are good when pupils join the school in reception.
- All adults work hard to meet the needs of pupils as individuals – pupils enjoy good trusting relationships with the adults who teach and support them.
- The health and safety of pupils are good and are achieved through adults' sense of responsibility and caring relationships, rather than strict adherence to rigorous policies and procedures.

Commentary

25. Close liaison with the early year's unit, on site, means children preparing to join the reception class become familiar with the reception teacher and classroom before they start school. Meetings between staff ensure children's needs are known well and planned for carefully; this ensures children get off to the best possible start when they first join the reception class. Parents were very positive about this aspect of the school's provision.

26. Adults know pupils and their families very well and strive to meet the needs of individuals. Relationships are relaxed and trusting and staff give that 'bit extra' to those who need a little more help. For example, three volunteers run a ten week course in the spring term for quieter pupils to help develop their social skills and boost their self-esteem. Results are very positive: these pupils are already finding it easier to make friends. Pupils are helped and encouraged to improve their work and are confident to seek guidance when they need it. Targets for pupils to work towards are set as a result of careful assessment by teachers.

27. Regular surveys are made of the premises to identify and eliminate any potential hazards. Risk assessments are carried out with good care and attention and fire drills organised termly. Most

pupils enjoy classrooms which offer an attractive, safe and healthy learning environment. However, displays in one class completely block all natural light so pupils work in artificial light most of their school day. Hand railings alongside steps help pupils move safely around the school premises, although the wearing of unsuitable footwear, especially by girls, is potentially dangerous. First aid procedures are satisfactory and child protection requirements are met.

28. Adults listen to, and appreciate, pupils' ideas and suggestions in an informal way. Pupils are involved in discussions to decide upon their own class rules. The introduction of a school council is planned, but at present time there is no formal system to involve pupils in decisions about wider school issues.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with the community and other schools are good and enhance pupils' learning opportunities. The partnership with parents is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the school and especially appreciate the approachability of the headteacher and teachers.
- The school works closely with outside organisations to extend the services offered to pupils, parents and the community.
- Learning opportunities are enhanced by good links with the local secondary school.

Commentary

29. The school has a very good reputation amongst its parents who appreciate the quality of education provided and the care taken of their children whilst in school. Parents are happy with the quality and quantity of information they receive about school events and activities. Reports record well what children can do and the progress made over the year. However, a number of parents do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on and this might be because reports do not state clearly what level of attainment has been achieved. Although the school has sought parents' views on issues such as homework it does not regularly canvass parents' views on a wider range of school issues.

30. Parents receive useful information when their child starts school to enable them to support their children effectively as they begin to learn to read. Parents help with reading at home during reception and Years 1 and 2. This helps pupils to make good progress. Despite the school's efforts to involve parents more in their children's learning some do not take up the opportunities available. For example, only a few parents of pupils with SEN attend formal meetings to discuss individual education plans and be involved in planning their child's next steps in learning. In contrast to this parents do support the school in other ways. Some join trips out of school, a small number help in classrooms and there is good support for events organised by the PTA.

31. The school has been very successful in identifying needs within the community and then seeking funds to meet these needs. For example, by working with Surestart, a nursery facility will soon be available on the school premises. Children's Fund grants have been used effectively to widen the school's programme of multicultural events. Pupils have experienced visits from African and Asian musicians and residential writers and poets. Additional learning opportunities are organised as a result of the good links with the secondary school, for example, pupils enjoy sporting tournaments, science and dance sessions. Regular visits such as these mean pupils are familiar with their new school before they are due to transfer, which they then do with confidence.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership, and the effectiveness of management is good. The governance of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, deputy head and assistant head make a very effective senior management team.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Whilst subject co-ordinators are effective in the leadership and management of English, mathematics and science, the role of subject leaders in other subjects requires further development.
- Results of National Curriculum assessments are analysed thoroughly.
- The management of special educational needs is good.
- The school improvement plan is not sufficiently explicit about its intention to raise standards, nor are costs clearly indicated.
- The school's finances are managed effectively.
- The school is well placed to improve further.

Commentary

32. The headteacher's absence on secondment for much of last year enabled the deputy head and assistant head to gain valuable experiences in the leadership and management of the school. These experiences are now being put to good use in supporting the headteacher and making an effective senior management team. Together, they have established a caring, supportive and inclusive ethos that promotes learning. The school is well placed to improve further.

33. During the headteacher's absence, the governing body embarked on a steep 'learning curve'. Governors now make a major contribution to the leadership of the school, and are fully involved in development planning. The governing body has a clear focus on improving the quality of provision. It is very well organised, carries out its duties very well and ensures all statutory requirements are met.

34. The last inspection reported the role of the co-ordinators to be 'underdeveloped'. Good progress has been made in this area with the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science. However, the role of most other subject leaders is still underdeveloped, especially in the aspect of lesson observations to find out how well the subject is being taught and to share good practice.

35. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are managed well by the learning support teacher. They are reviewed regularly, and have appropriate targets for pupil improvement.

36. The school uses a good range of assessment materials to evaluate performance. Thorough analysis of test results in English, mathematics and science provides information that gives co-ordinators and class teachers, a good understanding of where pupils' strengths and weaknesses lie. Such an understanding enables staff to modify curriculum provision, plan work according to the needs of pupils, and set targets for learning.

37. Although the school improvement plan is a useful document for overall school development, it does not give specific information as to how standards are to be raised, nor does it adequately indicate the financial implications. However, the details in individual subject action plans are far more explicit, and are effective tools to promote the development of each subject.

38. Governors and staff have a shared understanding of what needs to be done to improve, and a commitment to do it. The major barrier to achieving higher standards of attainment is the high mobility of pupils, especially as statistics show that many of the incomers have special educational needs.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	548,634.58
Total expenditure	540,995.58
Expenditure per pupil	2,383.24

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	33,000
Balance carried forward to the next	40,639

39. Finances are managed effectively and the school seeks to ensure that the services it receives are provided at the best value. Although the 'carry forward' is higher than recommended levels, inspection evidence confirms this has occurred through a variety of reasons that are well founded, and will be remedied in the current round of spending. The most recent audit of the school's financial arrangements, undertaken on behalf of the local authority shortly before the inspection, has identified a number of recommendations for further improvement; appropriate action has already been taken. Bearing in mind the school's cost per pupil and the good achievement, it gives good value for money, a judgement in keeping with that of the last report.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (reception) is **good**. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made for children's outdoor structured play. At present, 25 children are in reception. Effective liaison with pre-school settings, particularly the independent nursery on site, helps children's smooth entry to reception. Over recent years, assessment of children on joining reception has shown overall levels of performance to be below those expected for children of this age. A third of the children are well below the norm, particularly in terms of personal, social and emotional development, and in skills relating to communication and mathematics. Despite making good progress, because of their low starting point on entry, a significant proportion do not reach the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, or in mathematical development by the end of reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children currently in reception achieve well, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, in communication skills, and in mathematical development.
- Children are taught well and benefit from a curriculum that provides a good range of relevant and interesting activities for each required area of learning.

Commentary

40. Children make good progress in their **personal, social and emotional development**, and achieve well. They settle quickly into the routines of school through effective teaching and the support given them by their older friends during lunch and playtimes. Sensitive talk and guidance from adults help children understand the difference between right and wrong, and reinforce their understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Adults set up a good range of activities that require children to share and take turns. Children do so willingly. They follow adults' clear, well paced instruction and begin tasks eagerly. All children are given the opportunity of being 'helper of the day', and respond well to the responsibilities and tasks given them.

41. Achievement in **communication, language and literacy** for children now in reception is good. Children are taught the importance of listening carefully and taking turns to speak. There are many planned opportunities for children to speak with, and listen to, adults and classmates. For example, in a lesson designed to develop the ability to ask and answer simple questions, children took turns to question their friends and then gave their own thoughts about their favourite parts and activities of the day. Carefully chosen texts, together with a well taught programme of phonics (letter sounds) are used well to help children recognise an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. Whilst all children were observed to identify carefully and 'fish out' a range of one to four letter words from the 'pond', a small number of children were heard to read texts confidently from the reading scheme. Through a range of activities, children are taught the correct way to shape letters and copy examples of writing with increasing control. Whilst by the end of reception, nearly all children write their names unaided, around one third need support to write simple sentences.

42. Progress and achievement in **mathematical development** is good. Children count and order numbers to ten, and understand 'one more than' and 'one less than'. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games, and put together number puzzles and jigsaws to reinforce learning. Children sort objects in a variety of ways, and were observed to identify and repeat patterns successfully involving size and colour sequences. In a lesson on 'directional words', children responded well to the puppet 'Mr Fox', who helped develop their understanding and use of words and terms including 'behind', 'beside', and 'in front of'. Most children know the correct mathematical names for a square, circle and triangle. Through all activities, adults work directly with children to support, reassure, question and praise.

43. Achievement in **knowledge and understanding of the world** is good. The current topic is 'My Family'. Children understand how they and their needs have changed since they were babies. They learn to appreciate the work of the many people 'who help us'. Children carry out simple investigations such as finding out whether objects float or sink. Good use is made of the immediate locality to help support children's awareness and understanding of place. Walks along the nearby Camel Trail enable children to observe, listen and talk about the differences brought about by the changing seasons. Children have satisfactory opportunities to use computers to develop skills in the use of the mouse and keyboard.

44. Achievement in **physical development** is good. In their fine manipulative skills, children show appropriate development in the way in which they handle tools, scissors, paint brushes, construction kits and malleable materials. In an indoor activity lesson, children responded well to adult encouragement as they rolled, threw and caught small balls with increasing control and confidence. A review of planning confirms appropriate opportunities for children's outdoor structured play, with activities to support physical development and enhance aspects of children's co-operative and imaginative play.

45. Progress and achievement for children's **creative development** are good. Although little observation was made of children carrying out activities relating to this area of learning, work on display and a review of planning confirm children use a good range of media to draw, paint and print. Children were observed making effective use of 'small world' toys to create imaginary environments. Good provision is made for children's structured role play activities in the home corner, with adults often supporting activities to add realism and encourage the use and development of language. In music making, children enjoy singing songs from memory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are improving and are now better than in the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well.
- Assessment is used well to promote pupils' learning.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils produce very good examples of imaginative writing.
- Teachers extend the teaching of literacy skills across the curriculum well.

Commentary

46. Standards for pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected for their ages. This represents good achievement when taking into account the below average levels of attainment on entry to Year 1, and the above average proportion of seven and eleven year olds with SEN. The school's ongoing emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills results in attainment in levels of performance at Years 2 and 6 that are in line with national expectations. Many pupils speak confidently and listen attentively. In class, they contribute enthusiastically and co-operate well in group discussions, taking turns to speak and valuing each other's opinions. Teachers ask open-ended questions and encourage quieter pupils to make contributions.

47. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in reading match nationally expected levels and represent good progress and achievement. Pupils benefit from a range of reading activities in school. Pupils' knowledge of letter sounds, blends and basic spelling patterns (phonics) are promoted well. Guided reading sessions are well organised and thorough. Reading records identify areas for development so that targets can be set. Teacher comments in reading diaries encourage parental support at home. Pupils tackle new reading material confidently. However, the co-ordinator

is aware of the need for supplementary reading material to challenge further a number of older, higher attaining pupils. The purchase of books to this end already forms part of the action plan in English. The library, which is put to good use by pupils, is organised on the Dewey system, and older pupils were observed to locate non fiction texts and information with ease.

48. Standards in writing for pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally for their ages. The school places much emphasis on the development of writing skills. Pupils are given good opportunities to write for a range of audiences and purposes. Creative writing in particular shows much imagination and flair. Good use is made of newspaper articles for journalistic writing and pupils are given sufficient time to draft and edit their work. Good attention is paid to spelling and handwriting, both of which are at appropriate levels for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Although punctuation is generally accurate, it sometimes becomes 'erratic' in longer passages of writing.

49. The previous inspection identified the need for the school to implement the National Literacy Strategy. This has been done and is reflected in the overall good quality of teaching observed. Teachers make effective use of the strategy, which, underpinned by their good subject knowledge, enables them to plan lessons that meet the need of pupils at different stages of learning within the same class. In nearly all lessons, teachers share with pupils what they are going to learn, and, at the end of the lesson establish whether they have met their learning objectives. Where possible, teachers expand their teaching to make lessons more exciting. In the most effective lessons, brisk introductions and clear explanations enable pupils to grasp quickly the concepts being taught. For example, in a class for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher referred to a class visit to the church to consider why churches did not burn down during the Great Fire of London. This engaged the pupils fully in the lesson. Targets for learning are displayed prominently in rooms. Teachers' marking of work in pupils' books, together with oral feedback in class, is effective and ensures pupils have a clear understanding of what they have to do to improve.

50. Pupils with special needs are identified early and given good support either in class or when withdrawn for small group teaching. A range of commercially produced computer programs offers additional guidance for pupils with spelling difficulties, and a comprehensive range of books is available for older and less confident readers. The 'Attack Learning Programme' provides a systematic approach to phonics, and is used to good advantage.

51. The subject is led and managed well. The very experienced subject co-ordinator has a clear vision on how to improve standards and is most enthusiastic about the subject. Monitoring is thorough, and additional time will be allocated as part of the action plan for more formal monitoring.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Most subjects contribute well to the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. For example, in mathematics pupils often discuss their tasks with partners and 'write up' their findings, whilst in science, pupils produce written reports of their investigations. In history, geography and religious education, pupils write detailed accounts, often in role, of events and lifestyles, and write up the notes of their research gained either from reference books or the Internet.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst standards for pupils now in Year 6 meet nationally expected levels, attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average.
- Overall, teaching is good.
- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Analysis of test results is very good.

- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The subject action plan is clearly aimed at raising standards.
- Good improvement has been made in many areas since the last inspection.

Commentary

53. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average. However, the fact that pupils enter the school with a low level of mathematical ability means they have made good progress. Pupils now in Year 6 attain average standards. This represents good achievement when taking into account a quarter of the year group has SEN.

54. The good achievement is due largely to the effective teaching pupils receive. Lessons are well planned, with clear learning objectives made known to pupils. Different work is planned to suit the needs of pupils at different stages of learning. Those with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and learning support assistants, enabling all pupils to be included fully in all activities. Explanations and demonstrations of new skills are clearly made, and resources are well prepared to support teaching. Pupils are well managed and well motivated through interesting activities, and appropriate encouragement and praise. All these factors enable pupils to work hard and make good progress. However, in a very small number of lessons, the pace of teaching is too slow, and teachers' expectations of pupils' performance is not high enough. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they should. Information and communication technology is often well used to support learning in mathematics, although it is not yet an integral part of planning.

55. The subject is led and managed well by a co-ordinator who has a good understanding of what is happening in mathematics throughout the school. He has prepared an effective action plan to take the subject forward. Effective analysis of statutory and optional test results, together with end of unit assessments, indicate clearly pupils' strengths and weaknesses in knowledge and understanding. Plans for teaching are then adapted accordingly to eliminate the weaknesses, and targets for improvement are set. The co-ordinator observes and monitors the quality of teaching, and, in order to raise standards of teaching and learning, has given demonstration lessons to share good practice.

56. The last inspection reported that what was to be learned in lessons was not always clear, there was some lack of challenge for older pupils, and planning and assessment was not fully established. These points have been addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Mathematics is used well across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils measure what is happening in their experiments, collect data, and present their results in the form of graphs. In geography, pupils use scales and co-ordinates in their map work, whilst in history, timelines are used to help pupils place historical events in chronological order.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment for pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 matches that expected nationally for their ages; this represents an improvement on recent years, and good achievement.
- There is a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry.
- Older pupils do not make enough use of ICT to report and illustrate findings of investigative work.
- The quality of teaching results in pupils' positive attitudes to science.
- The subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

58. Statutory assessments in 2003 showed standards in Year 2 to be below average. At Year 6, where two out of every five pupils had SEN, attainment was well below average. A review of assessment results confirmed the need to focus more closely on pupils' investigative work. Inspection evidence indicates standards for pupils now in Years 2 and 6 are average. Whilst the proportion of pupils in each year group is lower than last year, it is still above average. As such, achievement is good.

59. Observation of lessons, together with a review of pupils' work, confirms a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry. The focus on practical activities, together with the school's ongoing focus on speaking and listening, enables pupils to learn well through setting up and conducting a good range of interesting investigations requiring them to predict, experiment and observe. In so doing, pupils gain a clear understanding of the need to ensure their investigations are carried out in a 'fair' manner. The subject provides good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, to discuss how to solve tasks, and talk about what they observe. Whilst pupils' developing writing skills are used to good advantage within science, older pupils have too few opportunities to use ICT skills in reporting and recording their activities. The school has already identified this as an aspect for further development and is now taking steps to improve this element of provision.

60. Teaching, which was never less than satisfactory, was good or better in the majority of lessons observed. Effective planning, underpinned by teachers' good subject knowledge, ensures a programme of activities that are well matched to pupils' stages of learning. Pupils are given clear explanations of lesson objectives and of what is expected of them as lessons unfold. Teachers encourage pupils to observe carefully, predict what might happen, carry out the activity before trying to explain using the correct vocabulary. Pupils enjoy the practical nature of science lessons and respond well to adults' praise and encouragement.

61. Leadership and management of science are effective. Through monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and using information from statutory and 'end of unit' assessments, the co-ordinator ensures curriculum provision is constantly under review, and that pupils are given every opportunity to perform to the levels of which they are capable.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about ICT.
- The school recognises the need to develop further the 'control' element of the curriculum for pupils between Years 3 and 6.
- The subject co-ordinator has not yet had sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching in the subject and share good practice.

Commentary

62. The previous report stated that standards in ICT were below nationally expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are now in line with nationally expected levels for seven and eleven year olds and this represents sound achievement. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for ICT, clearly enjoy lessons and work well with partners or groups.

63. Since the last inspection, the school has improved provision for ICT. The recent acquisition of laptops and two new interactive whiteboards indicates that the school is well placed to move forward and raise standards further. Whilst benefiting from the addition of an ICT suite, space is limited in the room chosen. This impacts on the number of pupils able to use the room for lessons.

64. Use of national guidance as the basis for planning ensures that pupils experience the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the school has already identified the need to give further emphasis to the 'control' element of the curriculum for pupils between Years 3 and 6.

65. In the small number of lessons observed, teaching was good. A review of pupils' work indicates pupils use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet, and data handling to appropriate standards. Discussions with pupils confirm they are confident in accessing the Internet for research and using electronic mail for the interchange of information, but are less secure with the use of video and digital photography. There is good support for all pupils, and the school promotes 'Safe use of the Internet' guidelines.

66. Leadership and management of ICT, by a co-ordinator who has a clear vision for the development of the subject, are satisfactory. The subject leader has succeeded in providing support for staff regarding the practical use of ICT. Although he has conducted some monitoring of staff skills, including planning and use of ICT in other subjects, he has not had release time to monitor the quality of teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. With the exception of reporting and illustrating investigative activities in mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6, pupils make satisfactory use of ICT in other areas of the curriculum. However, during the inspection, little use was made of class-based computers, thus missing an opportunity for pupils' independent work.

HUMANITIES

68. No lessons were observable in geography, and only two lessons could be seen in both history and religious education. As such, insufficient evidence is available to make overall judgements on standards or the quality of teaching. However, a review of planning, together with past work, shows the programmes of study for geography and history meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, and provision for religious education complies with the locally agreed syllabus.

69. Pupils' previous work, together with displays, confirms that in **geography** pupils in Years 1 and 2 have satisfactory opportunities to learn about their own environment, and compare and contrast it with life in other localities. Pupils regularly carry out and record weather observations and understand the effect of the changing seasons. Work of pupils currently in Years 3 to 6 confirms satisfactory development of their understanding and use of maps. Pupils undertake a detailed study of a village environment, consider why settlements are located where they are, and study the formation of rivers. Work reviewed was to a standard in keeping with levels expected for pupils' ages.

70. In **history**, pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain a satisfactory understanding of the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. They gain a sound understanding of life in a Victorian home, including an appreciation of how toys have changed since then, and of how a modern seaside holiday differs from one in 1900. In an excellent lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 built on their good knowledge of the Great Fire of London as they developed their understanding and use of primary sources of evidence to prepare their own eyewitness accounts of the event. Between Years 3 and 6, work reviewed shows pupils' topics on 'The Tudors', 'Invaders and Settlers' and 'The Victorians' are at an appropriate standard. Good emphasis is placed on pupils' understanding of primary and secondary sources of evidence. This was evident in a satisfactory lesson in which pupils in Year 5 used a range of sources to investigate aspects of life in a Victorian school.

71. Both lessons observed in **religious education** were for older pupils. Effective teaching, based on a comprehensive scheme of work, resulted in pupils who were interested and motivated to learn. Resources, including a video about Judaism, and a collection of artefacts relating to the Sikh faith, were used to good advantage. In lessons observed, pupils confidently used the vocabulary of a range of faiths, and made considered comparisons between a Jewish Bar Mitzvah and 'twenty-first birthday celebrations'. In both lessons, pupil attainment was good. Each subject makes a positive

contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and, for pupils between Years 3 and 6 in particular, use of ICT to research information.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only two lessons could be observed in both music and physical education, and one in art and design. No lessons were observable in design and technology. As such, it is not possible to form overall judgements about standards or the quality of teaching in any of them. However, a review of planning indicates provision for each subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

73. Pupils' **art** displayed around the school considerably enhances the learning environment. Much good work has been completed where pupils paint in the style of other artists, such as Mondrian, Delaunay, Monet and Rousseau. Art is linked well with other subjects. For example, pupils draw and colour geometric patterns to link with mathematics, they illustrate written work in English, and they make collages of weather scenes to enhance work in geography. Impressive murals in the hall form a timeline depicting historical events.

74. Whilst there was little to observe in **design and technology**, teachers' plans and pupils' designs indicate that appropriate work is done in designing, making and evaluating a range of artefacts. For example, pupils in Year 2 are currently designing and making a paper bag capable of carrying an Easter present. Food technology has been improved since the last inspection.

75. In **music**, a satisfactory standard of singing was heard during assemblies, and Year 6 pupils were able to start on a composition of their own to represent the jungle. They used percussion instruments, some of which they had made themselves, showing good links with design and technology and science. The curriculum is enhanced with opportunities to perform and listen to others. For example, pupils sang carols at Bodmin Hospital, and took part in music making with other schools at a service to celebrate St Piran's Day. Music makers who have visited the school to perform include African music makers and drummers. Such events have contributed well to pupils' cultural development.

76. In **physical education**, all requirements of the National Curriculum are met, including swimming at the local pool. By the time pupils leave the school, nearly all are able to swim the required 25 metres. There is a variety of clubs, most of which are formed to prepare pupils to take part in local tournaments and festivals. Evidence from two lessons does indicate a need to pay more attention to health and safety matters with regard to wearing jewellery and tying back long hair. The school works in partnership with secondary schools to offer specialist inputs, currently rugby.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

77. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**. Whilst no direct teaching was observed, discussions with staff and pupils, together with a review of planning, confirm that the school considers pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. Pupils are taught to appreciate the difference between right and wrong and to accept responsibility. They help to establish class rules, set up the hall for assembly and assist in the dining hall during lunch breaks. Assemblies and religious education contribute well to personal, social and health education, and inclusion for all pupils is a good feature. There is good provision for drugs awareness and sex education. Pupils learn about people in other countries and cultures, and help raise funds for a good number of charities. In so doing, pupils come to appreciate the situation of others less fortunate than themselves. The school has already recognised the need to adopt a whole school approach to this important aspect of its work, and to designate a member of staff to co-ordinate its provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement**Grade**

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).