

INSPECTION REPORT

BRUNEL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Saltash

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 131248

Headteacher: Mr P Roberts

Lead inspector: Mr M S Burghart

Dates of inspection: 6th – 8th July 2004

Inspection number: 255645

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:	418
School address:	Callington Road Saltash Cornwall
Postcode:	PL12 6DX
Telephone number:	01752 848900
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Mepstead
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a large primary school in Saltash in Cornwall housed in two separate buildings of two previous junior and infant schools on the same campus. The school includes a 52 place nursery where children attend either mornings or afternoons. The school is home to both an Area Resource Base (ARB) with provision for 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties, and a unit to support hearing impaired pupils. Currently five pupils are associated with the ARB and three with the hearing unit. Throughout the school the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is much above the national average including a very high 25 pupils with formal statements of need. Only one pupil speaks English as an additional language but requires no specific support. The attainment of most children when first entering school is below average (with a significant proportion well below). The level of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The school provides fee paying Breakfast and After School clubs for pupils of this and other schools in the area.

The current head was appointed less than two terms ago with the acting deputy in post the term before. During the inspection a Year 6 teacher was absent having broken her leg. Her class was taken by a temporary teacher who regularly works in this year group.

The school holds a Dyslexia Friendly award and participates in a variety of links for parents' learning and community initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Lead inspector	Information and communication technology, Special educational needs.
9487	Mrs F Hurd	Lay inspector	
20977	Mr R Thelwell	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Art and design, Design and technology.
20671	Mr J Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics, Music, Physical education.
30438	Mr R Guest	Team inspector	English, Religious education.
18498	Mrs D Morris	Team inspector	Personal, social and health education, Provision for pupils in the ARB and hearing impaired units.
32366	Mrs J Buttriss	Team inspector	Science, Geography, History.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with very good features, where all pupils regardless of their ability and experience are fully included in all activities. The curriculum provided is relevant to pupils' needs. Very good relationships are at the centre of the school's positive ethos. The school takes very good care of pupils. Very good leadership from the recently appointed head means the school gives good, and improved, value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The way in which the school ensures all pupils are included in all activities is excellent.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good with excellent features in the hearing impaired unit.
- The Area Resource Base (ARB) provides very good support for statemented pupils.
- Nursery and reception provision is very good.
- Teaching is good and consequently pupils achieve well.
- The monitoring role of some subject co-ordinators needs further improving.
- The absence of a marking policy leads to inconsistencies.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used enough to support other subjects.
- Links with parents are good and with the community very good

Progress since the last inspection, particularly in the last year, has been good. Issues raised in 1998 have been, and in some cases continue to be, addressed. Improved planning and developments to assessment in English, maths and science are having positive effects on pupils' achievement. Teaching now better supports learning, as do improvements to facilities for ICT and the new library. The school continues to target further improving the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators to ensure continuity across key stages¹.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The table suggests that standards are at least satisfactory with strengths in mathematics and science. Trends over time are up although early indications of 2004 tests show a slight decline. However, SEN levels are higher in Year 6 this year and overall pupils continue to achieve well for their ability. Year 2 results in reading, writing and maths are likely to be better than the weak results in 2003. Pupils at seven are still performing below the national averages in English and

¹ Key stages are: Foundation Stage (nursery and reception), Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6).

maths but with very high SEN levels in this year group achievement is judged as good. Inspectors find standards (as seen in lessons and books) in Year 6 are in line with national expectations in English and maths with strengths in the quality of writing and science. Children in reception and nursery are achieving very well to move from below average on entry to nearly all reaching the expected early learning goals before joining Year 1.

Standards in other subjects are at least in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There are strengths in art, geography, history, singing and swimming, but a relative weakness in ICT where Year 6 pupils have not yet covered all required work in sufficient depth.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships and moral, social and cultural development are strengths. Spiritual development has been improved and is now good. Pupils throughout the school respond very well. Attitudes are very positive and behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided is good based on good teaching, very good support for SEN and the Foundation Stage, and a good curriculum. Improved planning supports all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education (RE). Assessment is good in English, maths and science, and satisfactory in most other subjects. There are particular strengths in teaching for SEN, the Foundation Stage and in literacy and numeracy. Questioning, relationships and management of pupils are effective features. Areas for further development are in the pace of some lessons, some lack of challenge, and making more use of ICT. The school continues to take very good care of pupils and maintains good links with parents and very good links with the community. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning. Although spacious the split site building presents some problems, and the absence of a secure, outside area for reception is a disadvantage.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The recently appointed head and the acting deputy lead the school very well. The school's renewed vision is clear in the school improvement plan based on the contributions of teachers, support staff and governors. Provision in the ARB, for the hearing impaired and nursery children, is managed particularly well. Subject co-ordinators make a satisfactory contribution to management (with strengths in English, maths and science), but monitoring opportunities are still in need of improvement to guarantee quality and consistency across Years 1 to 6. Induction to the nursery and reception is judged very good. A real strength of management is that the school is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors support the school well. Their governance is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has a good reputation. The vast majority of parents have positive views, notably about SEN provision, expectations and teaching. Those who have concerns over induction procedures can rest assured inspectors find provision to be very effective. A significant proportion of parents would like more information about how pupils are getting on. Provision is judged satisfactory. The school is now reviewing its practice to see how it can make improvements. Most pupils are very enthusiastic about their school. They especially like extracurricular activities, and that their views are listened to.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further develop the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators' monitoring; providing opportunities for them to observe the quality of teaching and learning in all year groups other than their own.
- Make more use of ICT to support other subjects.
- Formalise the school's policy for marking.
- Provide a secure outdoor play area for reception children.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall standards are in line with what is expected of pupils of this age group. With above average proportions of pupils with SEN (most notably in Years 2 and 6) and a below average profile of attainment on entry, this represents good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in nursery and reception (Foundation Stage) and continue to do so throughout the school.
- Standards are below average in English and maths for pupils aged seven, but this represents good progress from the start of the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' attainment is above average in science, geography, history and art and design at the end of Year 6.
- As a result of being a focus for development writing standards are above average.
- ICT standards are below expectations for Year 6.

Commentary

1. Inspection evidence points to pupils achieving well and in the case of those with extreme SEN very well. There is clear progress throughout pupils' time at the school because provision is good. Staff are able to show that the school adds considerable value to pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 from the Foundation Stage where most children begin with below average ability.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.6 (15.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.3 (13.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.4 (15.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.6 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results for 2003 were well below average for Year 2 but this is not surprising as over 40 per cent of the year group had special needs. School records indicate good achievement. Early indications of 2004 results where the level of SEN is equally very high are of improvement to below average from very much below in reading and maths. Results for writing are likely to be (very commendably) close to the national average.

3. Year 6 results in 2003 were average in English, above in maths, but well above in science. This profile confirms good progress. Scores for 2004 are down slightly but are still likely to be average in English (especially writing) and maths, and above average in science compared with all schools. Comparisons with similar schools are a little lower, principally because of the extreme nature of some SEN. In essence the school continues to help pupils achieve well and demonstrates that where it focuses extra emphasis: for example in writing, it is successful in raising and maintaining standards in content and presentation.

4. In so far as it is possible to collect sufficient evidence in other curriculum areas standards appear good (being above expectations) in:

- Geography and history which are well taught in a combination of discrete subjects and topic work approach;
- Art and design where pupils show good technical and appreciation skills as well as the capacity to express themselves;
- Swimming where most pupils exceed the required standards by the end of Year 6;
- Singing where pupils participate tunefully and enthusiastically: for example in very successful performances such as 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat'.

5. Attainment in other subjects is at least consistent with what is expected nationally or in the case of religious education, the locally agreed syllabus. The exception is ICT where new initiatives have not yet been fully implemented and some teachers lack expertise and confidence. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have not covered all required elements in sufficient depth. Standards are below expectations at the end of Year 6, but in a good sign for the future, Year 2 pupils' attainment is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes towards their school and expect to enjoy the tasks and opportunities they are given. Behaviour is generally good, and often much better. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' education are very good across the school, with some areas of excellence.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' ability to learn and to get the best out of school life is greatly improved by the very good relationships between adults and children, and amongst themselves.
- Pupils show a very good understanding of what it means to be part of a community. They willingly accept responsibility and welcome opportunities to help others. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- A small minority of pupils find conforming and co-operating difficult.
- The promotion of local, Cornish cultural heritage in the school is excellent.
- Peer mediation strategies provide a very good framework for moral and social development.
- Very good opportunities are made to build a sense of spiritual awe and wonder.
- Pupils demonstrate very good social skills, sharing and working together in lessons and in the School Council.

Commentary

6. Attendance is in line with national averages, declined since the last inspection. This reflects low attendance by a very small number of pupils. The attendance of pupils is largely dependent on the efforts of parents and carers, which are satisfactory. Good efforts are made to promote regular attendance. Registration procedures fulfil statutory requirements, and data is analysed electronically. Unexplained absences are followed up on the second day of occurrence. However, current best practice is for this to happen on the first day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
412	6	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0

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

7. Behaviour during the inspection was good, and often much better. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed. In lessons, where teaching lacked pace, or challenge was inappropriately pitched, behaviour was still satisfactory. These occasions were rare: pupils in all classes normally enjoy their lessons. Pupils co-operate well and show good concentration: debate in some older classes was impressive. Pupils are generally caring and considerate:

pupils with disabilities are supported and accepted by their peers. The school site makes it difficult for junior and infant pupils to mix, but Year 6 pupils act as infant play monitors and peer mediators at lunchtimes. There is a twice weekly whole school assembly, and pupils compete in house teams for sporting events. The School Council gives pupils a voice in the running of the school. Councillors are proud of the play equipment purchased through fundraising, and of their role in the selection of the headteacher and other staff. They are articulate, committed, and excellent ambassadors for their school. However, the school has not used questionnaires or other methods to gauge the opinions of a wider range of pupils. Behaviour management is made much easier by very good relationships. The small number of pupils whose behaviour can disrupt the learning or leisure times of others is very well managed. Good use is made of organisations such as the Pyramid Trust and the Scallywags scheme in managing behaviour.

8. Cornish cultural heritage is a very strong aspect of the distinctive character of this school. Pupils have excellent opportunities to learn the Cornish language and Cornish songs, to learn local legends and to share local news. Multicultural provision is strong, through workshops with visitors and in the ambitious 'Brunel 2' project, fundraising to help provide a new school in a developing country. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. The school has developed a very successful mediation approach to resolve issues and pupils treat each other with high levels of respect and compassion. Good spiritual development is planned in assemblies and in some lessons. Very good opportunities for reflection and excellent examples of pupils experiencing awe and wonder were observed during the inspection. Pupils are encouraged to develop very positive and co-operative attitudes in lessons and through the School Council, listening to and respecting each others' views and making valuable contributions to the school community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided is good with particular strengths in SEN support and how all pupils, regardless of ability or experience, are included in all activities.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good and positively promotes learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and support in the nursery continues to be very good, and are both consistently good in reception.
- Special needs teaching co-ordinated through the ARB is very good and teaching for pupils with hearing impairment is excellent.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well because teaching is good and expectations are high.
- Some staff lack confidence and expertise in ICT.

- Marking, although very good in parts, is inconsistent because there is no whole school policy.
- There is a lack of challenge and pace in a minority of lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 81 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (6%)	19 (23.5%)	36 (44%)	21 (26%)	0	0	0

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

9. In a distinct improvement since the last inspection no unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The percentage of very good or better lessons has risen from 9 per cent to almost 30 per cent. All staff were observed unannounced on a variety of occasions by different inspectors, nearly all had at least one good lesson, thirteen had very good sessions and four teachers accounted for the five excellent lessons. Conversely eleven teachers had satisfactory lessons.

10. Highlights in teaching feature:

- Very good consideration of the value of structured play as a means to help nursery and reception children make progress against all areas of learning;
- Very good relationships which support the school's good ethos and promote a strong feeling of trust;
- An absolute commitment to including all pupils regardless of their needs and potential in all lessons and activities;
- Good questioning which challenges pupils to think before answering;
- Teaching assistants and nursery nurses make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.

11. Strengths were observed in literacy and numeracy which are both well planned and delivered; and in support for all pupils with SEN as the result of very good assessment, tracking and target setting. Excellent lessons were seen in ARB support, Year 4 maths, Year 6 English and science, and in the hearing impaired unit.

12. The school is aware of some teachers' lack of proficiency and confidence in using ICT particularly in some lessons for Years 3 to 6. This has led to standards being below expectations and ICT insufficiently used to support other subjects.

13. Areas for development in teaching in general even in this good overall profile are where the pace and interest levels of lessons do not reflect high enough expectations: for example in some aspects of Year 3 and Year 5 work. The absence of a common approach to marking leads to inconsistency. Some marking is of high quality leading pupils to learn from their mistakes, but in some classes pupils are too infrequently made aware of how they could improve. Gaps in the monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' delivery in some subjects – especially in those in addition to English, maths and science, have failed to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. This is compounded by the layout of the school buildings and a lack of time for the purpose.

14. The teaching of children in the nursery and reception was consistently good; it was very good in over a third of lessons seen across the age group. This marks an improvement on the

last inspection, particularly in reception, where teaching was previously judged to be satisfactory overall. Very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the Foundation Stage are reflected in the thoughtful preparation and delivery of lessons, and in the very careful monitoring of children's performance. Detailed planning, based on the recommended early learning goals, covers all required areas of learning. Teachers provide children with a very good range of interesting activities that contain a good balance between adult directed activities and those children choose themselves. Many opportunities are created to develop and extend children's language, and these are a marked feature of the good practice observed.

15. In response to the recommendations of the last inspection, significant improvements have been made to the school's procedures for, and use of, assessment. These are now good overall. Procedures to monitor and guide pupil performance within the school's Area Resource Base (ARB) and for pupils with impaired hearing are exemplary, as is the use made of assessment regarding the school's above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Very good procedures are now in place to assess what children and pupils know and can do in the Foundation Stage, and in English and mathematics. Good procedures are in place for the assessment of science. Data gained from these assessments is used to very good advantage to track and measure pupil progress, modify curriculum provision, and set targets for learning. Evaluation of pupils' progress in other subjects is satisfactory. However, the current assessment policy, written shortly after the previous inspection, is outdated and does not reflect the school's current practice.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a broad, balanced curriculum, which is totally inclusive.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and includes good support for those who are higher achievers.
- The curriculum is enriched by an extensive and varied range of visits and visitors together with a good range of out of class activities.
- A lack of monitoring time given to co-ordinators has contributed to inconsistencies of delivery and timing of some subjects.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.

Commentary

16. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and a strong feature of the school is the effective manner in which all pupils are included regardless of differing needs. Teachers are now making effective use of national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. In other subjects there are effective schemes of work, supported by the schools' teaching and learning policy, which has now been developed and further enhances curriculum provision. However, the roles and responsibilities of some co-ordinators have not been fully developed to ensure the careful planning is delivered in a coherent and systematic manner to guarantee progression in pupils' learning across the school. Thus opportunities for further spreading excellent practice in some areas are missed. The acting deputy in her role as curriculum overseer has good awareness of this and how developments may be made when finances permit. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are well developed in many curriculum areas.

The school is developing links between subjects effectively, although more use could be made of information and communication technology in lessons. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education including sex and relationships education, attention to alcohol and other drug misuse, and citizenship.

17. There is a good range of visits (including residential) and visitors to the school, which enriches the curriculum. Parents provide support in some classrooms and in other activities. The school provides a range of additional activities at lunchtime and after school.

18. The school has good links with secondary schools locally and it is preparing pupils well and positively for their impending transition. The school is developing procedures for ensuring a smooth transition between Years 2 and 3. Links from nursery into the school are well maintained and effective.

19. Within the teaching staff there is a good balance of experience and expertise enabling full coverage of the curriculum. Within lessons teaching assistants make effective contributions to pupils' learning. Whilst accommodation is in some ways good, huddled accommodation is not appropriate to meeting modern needs and the nature of the site makes delivering a cohesive curriculum difficult. The school uses its facilities well and outdoor space is impressive with the whole site being well maintained. There is a library in each building with good access for pupils. Some Year 2 pupils were proud of the fact that they could sometimes 'go to the big library in the other building'. Provision of resources is good overall.

20. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and support is very well planned and delivered. Many issues relating to the last inspection have been improved, notably provision for special educational needs pupils, the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the development of target setting. Curriculum planning is now more consistent, but monitoring of delivery has yet to fully ensure the spread of good practice. The acting deputy head has an overview of the curriculum which allows her to be working, with the head, towards consistency in timings (both within lessons and at the beginning of the day where curriculum time is sometimes being eroded) and ensuring full application of plans when classes are taken by temporary teachers.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is very good overall, an improvement since the last inspection. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good, especially for pupils with special educational needs. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- The extent to which pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school is very good.
- Pupils have very good access to well informed support, advice and guidance, particularly those with special educational needs.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are good overall, and very good for children entering the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

21. The school takes very good care to ensure that all members of the school community are well looked after. There are appropriate numbers of first aiders, and staff are trained to treat pupils with special medical needs. Risk assessments, which are carried out for all offsite visits, ensure that all pupils, including those with disabilities, are fully included. A new system for health and safety auditing, introduced by the new headteacher, ensures that any concerns are swiftly investigated. The site supervisor's diligence is a principal factor in the high standards of health and safety. There are very few problems with vandalism or intruders. The two fully trained child protection liaison officers ensure that staff are fully briefed. The school has very good links with the health centre and the social services. The importance of a healthy and safe lifestyle is strongly promoted: the school hosted a 'Healthy Living Festival'.

22. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, besides those in the two special units. Some other children have difficult home lives or have undergone traumatic experiences. The school provides a caring and happy setting for all pupils who are treated with courtesy and consideration by all staff. The staff provide very good role models. Academic assessment and guidance is good overall and very good for pupils with special educational needs. The close and trusting relationships which many pupils form with staff increase their confidence and allow them to achieve more successfully. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils and is developing ways of supporting them. Staff are skilled at finding ways to celebrate pupils' achievement: the boy praised as 'best smiler' and the girl as 'best eater' were both delighted.

23. The induction arrangements for children entering the nursery are carefully planned to ensure that both they and their parents or carers feel very welcome and confident about the future. Similarly, those who go on to enter the reception classes, and later, Year 1, follow a gradual process of integration well adapted to their age. Staff will make home visits before children start in nursery or reception whenever possible, to get to know children in their family setting. The school has a significant proportion of pupils who join after this time, and good efforts are made to ensure that they are introduced to others with similar interests and supported through their first weeks at Brunel.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good overall. Links with the local community are very good. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and deal with any concerns and complaints are very good.
- The contribution of links with parents to pupils' learning at school and at home, particularly when those pupils have special educational needs, is very good.
- The provision to parents of information about the school and pupils' standards and progress is satisfactory and improved since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- The involvement of parents through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is secure and now improving since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- Mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to secondary school are good.

Commentary

24. All staff are available for informal consultation without an appointment whenever possible. The school office staff provide a friendly and efficient public face. Concerns are swiftly investigated and feedback given. The results of the first in a series of parent questionnaires were fed into the school's improvement plan. Parents are strongly encouraged to put forward suggestions for improvements.

25. The Friends' Association fundraising makes a valuable contribution to the school's budget. Events are well supported by most parents and carers. About a dozen parents help regularly in class, and parents helped develop the garden area. Most parents are very keen to support their children's learning, but lack the time, or feel they lack the expertise, to do it. The school has begun to address this: the county numeracy advisor discussed modern mathematics teaching, and the two initiatives for parents of children in the nursery and the reception classes (Link into Learning and Jump Right In) have both been very much appreciated. The support and guidance which parents of pupils in the two special units receive is of outstanding quality, and greatly improves their ability to help their children achieve. Breakfast and After School care, as well as a unit for pre-nursery aged children, are provided by independent contractors.

26. Some parents feel information could be improved in quantity and quality. Newsletters are now sent out monthly, and curriculum information is given through a termly meeting and in writing. The school's new website will be useful. The prospectus and governors' report fulfil statutory requirements. Pupils' annual reports this year will be in a style designed to be common to both halves of the school. Until now reports did not clearly identify the levels achieved by pupils, but some parents report that teachers provided this information verbally. Reports do not provide an opportunity for pupils to reflect on their progress and achievement.

27. The school's position in the civic centre aids learning, and the development of very good community links. The leisure centre and the library provide 'outreach' services on the school site for pupils and others. There are regular and one-off lettings to many different groups. Good use is made of local resources to support learning. Older residents have talked about their lives: some have been recorded for the Saltash Reminiscence History Project. Local clergy take assemblies, and the emergency services support personal, social, health and citizenship education. Saltash Rotary Club organises events in which the school participates. Brunel is proud of its Cornish identity and pupils are taught about Cornish language and history.

28. Good links with Saltash Community College help pupils make the transition to secondary education, with a programme of visits for parents and pupils. Year 6 pupils begin a project which is completed in Year 7. From September, the College will provide technical support for information technology and language teaching for Year 6 pupils. All Saltash primary schools regularly meet for sporting and creative events. The school has links with Callington Community College with regard to physical education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The management of the school is good. The leadership of a variety of other key staff is good. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision and high aspirations.

- The leadership and management of many other key staff are good with very good features.
- The school improvement plan is well focused on raising standards.
- The leadership of some subjects is underdeveloped.
- The governing body is well informed and supportive of all that is done.
- The internal control of finances is strong.

Commentary

29. Since the last inspection, the school has come a long way in the merging of the two former schools, although there is still more work to be done. With the departure of the previous headteacher and deputy head the school reached a plateau in its development. The new headteacher has brought renewed vision to the school's development, with inclusion, higher standards and team building, at its heart. He has an effective team supporting him, including those leading the ARB unit, the nursery, and the hearing impaired unit. All staff are working well as a team and are promoting excellent inclusion throughout the school.

30. The school improvement plan is clearly designed to raise standards, and has input from teachers, parents and governors. It sets out the priorities for development, and is appropriately costed, with timescales and success criteria. The emphasis on English, maths and science has meant that the leadership role of other subject co-ordinators has been, in some cases, underdeveloped, particularly in monitoring. This means that some subjects are not improving at the rate they could. The same is true of marking and assessment policies.

31. The governors' focus had been on the integration of the two schools and good work was done in that direction. The focus now is in supporting the new leadership of the school, and governors are beginning to challenge as well as support. Overall governance is judged satisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,047,221	Balance from previous year	72,750
Total expenditure	1,100,802	Balance carried forward to the next	19,169
Expenditure per pupil	2572		

32. Finances are managed effectively by the school secretary with financial responsibility, with support from the local education authority accounting technician. The school seeks to ensure that the services it receives are provided at the best value. Governors are kept well informed, enabling them to ensure that finances are kept in good order. There were several recommendations in the last audit report, and these have all been addressed. Currently the school is judged as giving good and improved value for money.

THE AREA RESOURCE BASE

Provision in the Area Resource Base (ARB) is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in the ARB achieve very well because of very good teaching, which has many excellent features.

- Support staff are skilled in helping pupils to achieve their goals.
- Opportunities for inclusion are excellent.
- The ARB is very well led and managed.

Commentary

33. The Area Resource Base provides a secure and welcoming environment for the five pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 who are based there for part of each day.

34. The very good teaching that pupils receive in the base, ensures that they make very good progress. The pupils spend approximately half of each day in the base, working alongside some of their mainstream peers on their literacy and numeracy tasks. Because of the very high staff ratio, and the very skilled teaching, pupils enjoy lessons, behave very well and have very positive attitudes to school life. In one literacy lesson, pupils achieved very well as they read aloud in class and wrote a letter to a friend. Because the tasks were based on a story they had previously read, they were confident in the tasks and eager to have a turn.

35. The very skilled support that pupils receive from the teaching assistants ensures that they have constant access to help and guidance when required. This helps them to maintain high self-esteem. One pupil was keen to share his work with a visitor, showing real pride. Teaching assistants work closely with the pupils from the base when they are integrated into their mainstream classes. This provides very good continuity and ensures that achievements are regularly and consistently monitored. Inclusion opportunities are excellent, and a major strength of the work of the base and the school.

36. Very good leadership and management ensure that the work of the base is very well organised. Clear targets are set for each pupil and these are monitored regularly. Pupils have meaningful input into the target setting process, and have a mature approach to assessing their own strengths. Effective links with local authority support services ensure that the base has access to a wide range of support and guidance when necessary. Links with parents are very effective, ensuring that a coherent approach is available for each individual pupil.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Provision for pupils who are hearing impaired is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with hearing impairment achieve very well due to excellent teaching.
- Opportunities for inclusion are excellent.
- Excellent leadership leads to very high quality monitoring of each individual pupil's progress.

Commentary

37. Excellent, and often inspired, teaching by the teacher of the deaf ensures that the three hearing impaired pupils supported by the school achieve very well. Teaching is characterised by the use of an exciting range of techniques and strategies to promote communication and encourage good listening. For example, musical instruments are used to emphasise the syllables of words as pupils are encouraged to try them for themselves. Communication books offer visual symbols so that pupils can visualise the length of words and the emphasis of each

syllable. This works very well and pupils show good understanding as they communicate with staff and their peers, accurately vocalising the correct number of syllables for each word.

38. The excellent opportunities for inclusion mean that, for much of their day, pupils are fully integrated into their mainstream classes with their peers. Because of this, they have formed good friendships and enjoy school life. They confidently contribute in class and benefit from very good support so that they succeed with their lessons.

39. The hearing impaired department is led and managed excellently with the very positive relationships promoting a very good ethos for learning. Pupils' progress is very well monitored so that each improvement can be measured. Links with parents are strong, and there is a very high commitment to achieving success.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

With the exception of children in reception not having ready access to a separate secure area for outdoor structured play, **overall provision for children in nursery and reception is very good**. At present, 43 children attend nursery part-time, and two reception classes provide accommodation for a further 47 children who attend full-time. Close liaison with an independent playgroup on site, together with very good induction procedures, helps children's smooth entry into nursery. Effective measures support children's transition from nursery to reception. Over recent years, assessment of children on entry to nursery has shown levels of performance to be below those expected for children of this age. At times, up to one in every five has been well below the norm, particularly in terms of communication and mathematical development. Inspection evidence indicates that four out of every five children currently in reception are on course to reach the officially recommended levels for each area of learning with the exception of that covering children's personal, social and emotional development. Here, nearly all children have gained the expected levels already. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very effective. Provision is managed very well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well in this area of learning.
- In nursery and in both reception classes, children show an enthusiastic approach to work and play. Behaviour is very good.
- Adults working with children provide excellent role models.
- Supportive relationships enable children to feel confident and happy.
- Very good provision is made across the age range to promote children's independence.

Commentary

40. Very effective teaching and support enable children in nursery and reception to settle quickly into the day-to-day routines of their class. From the moment children join nursery, sensitive talk and guidance from adults helps children understand the difference between right and wrong, and reinforces their understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, as for example, when nursery children's appropriate behaviour is encouraged and praised when they sit for their snack and drink. In each of the classes, adults set up a very good range of activities that allow children to make choices, share and take turns. Children do so willingly. Children follow adults' clear, well paced instructions and begin tasks eagerly. Relationships between children, and all with whom they work and play, are very good. By the end of reception, nearly all children demonstrate high levels of social awareness, behaviour is very good, and children are keen to take responsibility: for example, in tidying up, carrying out their duties as 'special person of the day', and in managing their own activities. This results in children developing good levels of independence and prepares them well for future learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Teaching in this area of learning is very effective in both nursery and reception.
- Children make good progress in the acquisition of communication skills and achieve well.

Commentary

41. From the outset, children in nursery are taught the importance of listening carefully and taking turns to speak. They have many planned opportunities to speak with, and listen to, adults and each other. For example, whilst making their 'Butterfly Pasta Salad', nursery children's talk and vocabulary was developed through their teacher's probing questions as to the texture and colour of ingredients, and as to the changes in the pasta before and after cooking.

42. In reception, children respond readily to questions and confidently talk to the class, as for example when a child explained how she had made an ark to go with her work on Noah.

43. Children currently in nursery and reception enjoy books and were seen to listen attentively when a story was read to them. For example, when read the story of 'Amanda's Butterfly', nursery children hung on their teacher's every word. In reception, carefully chosen texts, together with a well taught programme of phonics (letter sounds), are used well to help children recognise and read an increasing number of words in familiar contexts. Such was the case when children enjoyed joining in with the reading of 'The Little Red Hen'. Whilst most children were observed constructing, reading and writing three and four letter words (some which were considered as tricky), several children from each reception class were heard to read texts confidently from the reading scheme. Building on nursery children's enjoyment of a wide range of 'writing' activities, children in reception develop the correct way to shape letters and copy examples of writing with increasing control. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time they leave reception, around three-quarters of children write simple sentences unaided.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a wide range of activities to support this area of development.
- Effective teaching results in children's enthusiastic participation in all activities.
- Across the Foundation Stage age range, progress and achievement are good.

Commentary

44. In nursery children enjoy printing and decorating the wings of their cut out butterflies to make them symmetrical. Children count to ten, and place objects (and their friends) in height order. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games. Much learning is gained from enjoyable activities using bucket scales, and when children use sand and water to compare and investigate the capacity of different containers. In reception, every opportunity is taken to count (even to twenty), and to develop an understanding of *more than* and *less than*.

Children understand and use ordinal numbers to five. They sort objects in a variety of ways, for instance, by colour, shape and size. Children were seen to identify correctly a number of mathematical shapes as the teacher slowly withdrew them from an envelope, confidently explaining what had made them decide on their answers. Throughout the majority of activities, adults work directly with children to support, reassure, question and praise.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of interesting activities promotes learning across all elements of this area of learning.
- Questioning is used effectively to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.
- Children are enthusiastic learners and achieve well.

Commentary

45. Children in nursery are given many interesting activities that through observing, talking about, and doing, develop their awareness and understanding of their environment. Each day, children eagerly look at their butterfly net to see if any butterflies have emerged from their chrysalis. They enjoy finding out which items are attracted by magnets, and observe and talk about the different textures of materials.

46. Children observe the changing weather and, when outside in the play area on a particularly windy day, two children stood on a mound and used a windmill to note how holding it in different directions changed how fast it turned. In reception, a good range of activities enables children to gain an understanding of chronology, and many investigations develop children's understanding of properties of materials – including finding out which items float in water, and those that sink. The school site is used well to support children's understanding of place and position, and frequent opportunities are given for children to 'design and make'. Effective use is made of computers to develop skills in the use of the mouse and keyboard, and good provision is made for children's religious education.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in nursery and reception make good gains in their learning and achieve well.
- Provision for outdoor structured play for children in reception needs further development.

Commentary

47. In their fine manipulative skills, children in both nursery and reception handle tools, scissors, paintbrushes and construction kits safely and with increasing control. Whilst nursery children were observed making effective use of a range of outdoor play resources within their own play area, those in reception do not benefit from such provision. The school has already acknowledged such provision would support further children's physical development, as well as enhancing aspects of their co-operative and imaginative play. However, the timescale for improving this provision is too long and needs to be addressed as a matter of importance. Reception children do have regular access to indoor activities. For example, both reception classes were observed performing successfully a variety of country dances. Performing their routines, children showed good agility, a sense of rhythm, and an awareness of space as they worked co-operatively in pairs and as members of a larger group.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a good range of media with which to draw, paint, model and print.
- Good provision is made for children's structured role play.

Commentary

48. Vibrant displays of children's work enhance the nursery and reception classrooms. The nursery is full of individually and collaboratively painted and printed butterflies, together with impressive 'Hungry caterpillars'. Pastel studies of tropical fruit, together with other noteworthy works demonstrate reception children's good achievement. All children make good use of 'small world' toys to create imaginary environments and play situations. Children in both nursery and reception have good opportunities for structured role play, with adults regularly supporting activities to add realism and encourage the use and development of language. In music making, whilst children in nursery were observed successfully playing a range of simple instruments, those in reception were heard clapping rhythms and enjoying singing songs from memory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst standards remain below average by the end of Year 2 achievement through the school is good and pupils are reaching average standards by the end of Year 6.

- Teaching and learning in English is good overall; being very good or better in two fifths of lessons seen.
- Writing skills are well developed especially with some older pupils where writing is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve well.
- Literacy skills are well used to support other areas of the curriculum.
- Handwriting and presentation of pupils' work is generally good.

Commentary

49. Recent results for 2004 national assessments show standards for pupils in Year 2, whilst remaining below the national average, are improving. Standards by the end of Year 6 are meeting national averages. This represents good achievement through the school and is similar to the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs relating to development of skills in literacy are given very good support and achieve well in terms of their prior attainment.

50. Standards in listening are good throughout the school and those in speaking are satisfactory. The difference is because in some lessons the teaching style over directs and restricts pupils' opportunity to articulate ideas. With more interactive teaching, pupils verbalise ideas well and speak confidently. In a class assembly the narration provided by pupils was clear and articulate. Pupils improvise well during dramatic opportunities in class. They listen well in many situations: in assembly, to class teachers, and each other in groups and paired work. Pupils have further opportunities for speaking at more public performances.

51. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading are below average but pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils benefit from a range of reading activities in school and younger pupils have reading records which they take home to parents. Books which pupils read are appropriate to their interests and abilities and many pupils read with confidence. Phonic and contextual skills are well developed to assist in deciphering unfamiliar words. Pupils have a good awareness of authors and express clear preferences in choosing fiction. Many pupils in Year 6 are avid readers and one pupil said he often fell asleep in bed reading his books. Pupils are familiar with library classification and fiction and non-fiction texts. Most pupils use the local library, which further enhances their access to quality books.

52. The standard of writing is improving through the school and by the end of Year 6 a good standard is reached with extended narrative writing being very good and good examples of many other forms of writing being seen. Pupils have opportunities to draft, discuss and redraft written work to good effect.

53. Writing by the end of Year 2 has yet to meet the national average. However, good teaching is having an impact and writing is improving steadily. Good attention is paid to spelling, grammar, presentation and handwriting. As a result in these aspects of literacy pupils achieve well.

54. Teaching of English is good overall. The best examples of teaching reveal:

- Teachers' very good subject knowledge;
- Good marking of written work extending pupils' ability to attain higher standards;
- Very good support of pupils with special educational needs;
- Good challenging, interesting activities, which sustain pupils' interest;
- Good attitudes and productivity from pupils;

- Very good relationships in class, with teachers able to motivate pupils to succeed.

55. The subject has been well led and managed by the present co-ordinator, who has overseen the development of assessment systems which are comprehensive and very well used. The new co-ordinator is well skilled in the subject and has the potential to lead in a similarly effective manner. She is well aware of the need to monitor and develop very good and excellent teaching to encourage its spread as a means of further raising standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Literacy skills, especially writing, are being effectively used in all other curriculum subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good throughout the school.
- Test results are thoroughly analysed.
- Teaching is good.
- The co-ordinator leads and monitors the subject very well.
- Planning for mathematics sets does not sufficiently indicate different work for pupils of differing abilities.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics lessons.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.

Commentary

57. Standards of work seen are below average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6, which is lower than reported in the last inspection. However, with a high percentage of pupils with SEN at over 40 per cent in Year 2 and nearly 40 per cent in Year 6, this means that pupils have achieved well for their ability to reach these standards.

58. The school makes very good use of test results. They are analysed thoroughly to indicate precisely where each pupil's strengths and weaknesses lie. From this, the curriculum is planned to meet pupils' needs, including intervention strategies where they are appropriate.

59. Teaching is consistently good, with one observed lesson being excellent. Many examples of good teaching were seen and these are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Particular strengths noted include:

- Thorough planning, with clear lesson objectives made known to pupils at the start of the lesson, and suitable work set for a range of abilities (although the latter does not happen where pupils are in sets);
- Good questioning with full integration and involvement of all pupils;

- Very good relationships, eliciting good responses from pupils and producing a good working atmosphere;
- A clear explanation and demonstration of the material to be learned, with good use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary;
- Effective questioning that challenges pupils and encourages them to think about the strategies they use to solve problems;
- Good use of teaching assistants, especially to support pupils with SEN.

60. On occasions, even in satisfactory lessons, there were aspects that impacted negatively on pupils' learning. They included pupils not being fully involved in the introduction to the lesson, and, where pupils are set for mathematics, insufficient planning to challenge different ability pupils, particularly the more able. Even in sets, pupils do not form an homogenous unit, and do need different work set. Marking is inconsistent, ranging from good to poor, with some books having no indications of being marked for several weeks in Key Stage 2.

61. ICT is used satisfactorily when pupils are in the computer suite, particularly for data handling. However, when pupils are in their normal classrooms, there is insufficient opportunity to support their learning with appropriate programs. This is partly due to the number of computers available in classrooms, and partly through a lack of knowledge of the programs available.

62. The leadership of the subject is very good, and is having a positive impact on teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively, which has given a common structure to lessons, and clarity in lesson objectives. She monitors the subject well, including lesson observations, and development points are identified and addressed. The use of a numeracy consultant, together with thorough analysis of pupils' performance, has led to individual targets being set for pupils, and extra help being given where needed. Teaching assistants have been trained, and their support, especially for pupils with SEN, is enabling these pupils to achieve well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Mathematics is used well in many other areas of the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils collect data from taking their pulse rates. In design and technology, pupils weigh and measure carefully in food technology and when making various models. In geography, pupils construct graphs to show temperature fluctuations, and in ICT, pupils enter their data, and produce graphs in a variety of forms.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The science co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and expertise.
- Pupils' learning is supported very well by the use of teaching assistants.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is little evidence of the use of ICT in science across the school.
- The marking of pupils' work is too often cursory.
- There has been no time set aside for the monitoring of science this year.

Commentary

64. Statutory assessments in 2003 showed standards in science to be well above average for pupils at the end of Year 6 and well below average for pupils at the end of Year 2. Provisional results for 2004 suggest that standards are still above the national average at the end of Year 6, despite the increased proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations showed that the standards of pupils' work are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and above national expectations in Year 6. Taking into account the high number of pupils with SEN, this represents good levels of achievement and progress.

65. Five science lessons were observed and teaching and learning in science were found to be good overall, with some variation. There has been a focus on improving the teaching of scientific enquiry and this is ongoing in the school. As a result, pupils' investigation skills are being developed increasingly well. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils demonstrated a basic understanding of the principles of fair testing. Where teaching was excellent, all pupils in a Year 6 class were fully engaged and challenged in highly stimulating investigations into the needs and habitats of sea-creatures. A visiting marine biologist provided a variety of live crabs as the focus for careful observation and high level discussion. Pupils were encouraged to predict and hypothesise, test ideas, make choices, research, devise diagrams and record and interpret findings. As a result of the excellent teaching and support in this lesson, very high standards of work were produced. This represented excellent achievement for pupils of all abilities.

66. Assessment is satisfactory with good features, but does not always inform planning. Marking of pupils' science work is variable across the school. In one Year 6 class, marking has been skilfully used to provide encouragement and support, suggesting development points to help pupils make progress. Where marking is less effective, it is cursory and misses opportunities to help pupils progress.

67. Teachers plan effectively, providing good continuity and progression in the subject. Good resources are used to support teaching and learning. Work is set at appropriate levels for all abilities, offering high levels of challenge for the most able pupils. Those with special educational needs are very well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants. This enables such pupils to have full access to the curriculum. The inclusion of all pupils is excellent throughout the school.

68. There is a good range of displays and good links are made with other subjects, particularly with geography, literacy and numeracy. However, there was little evidence of ICT being used to present pupils' findings. Greater use of computers throughout the school would enhance pupils' interpretation and understanding of scientific evidence.

69. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable science co-ordinator provides good subject leadership. Despite not having any time allotted to her for the monitoring of science in classrooms this year she has managed to gather evidence from teachers and pupils to help her gain a good overview of strengths and weaknesses in her subject. She has a clear vision for the development of science and provides strong support for her colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Facilities are good.
- The appointment of a technician makes a significant contribution to provision.
- Some staff (especially in some Years 3 to 6 classes) lack confidence, knowledge and understanding of the subject and this negatively affects their teaching.

Commentary

70. Standards are in line with what is expected for pupils aged seven. Pupils achieve well from reception, where many have little experience of ICT, to Year 2 where most can demonstrate a good understanding of how to organise, save and retrieve their work. Year 2 pupils are able to import pictures to illustrate their own text, change font and size, and make use of drop down menus to control programs. In a very good lesson in the ICT suite the teacher made very good use of the digital projector, expectations were high and pupils of all abilities achieved very well. Limited evidence indicates teaching and learning are good throughout reception to Year 2 and that pupils make good progress.

71. The judgement of sound progress overall between Years 3 and 6 reflects that some less confident staff still need extra support in teaching ICT. However, there are strengths evident in examples of pupils' work: for instance in multimedia presentations of one Year 6 class and in word processing by pupils from the ARB, which point to good teaching. Overall work in hand is of a satisfactory quality with sound achievement from pupils. However, school records and inspection evidence show some gaps over time in aspects of 'control, and modelling'. A lack of the use of ICT in other subjects points to standards being below what is expected for most pupils by the end of Year 6.

72. Good progress has been made in developing the ICT suite and resources since the last inspection. Some equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and the organisation and furniture in the ICT suite makes teaching difficult. The suite is well used in lessons and computer club. The newly appointed technician is ensuring that hardware does work in order to support staff, a few of whom have a distrust of technology!

73. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of strengths and weaknesses and has begun to monitor the work of colleagues. His leadership is good and his management is satisfactory. Assessment in terms of subject coverage and class performance is satisfactory, but more needs to be done to identify what National Curriculum levels pupils are working at in order to report these to parents.

74. Points for further development include upgrading and networking classroom computers, and ensuring all electrical checks have been carried out.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. The school knows that too little use is made of ICT to support other subjects, although there are good examples in special educational needs and the hearing impaired unit, and in the use of new digital cameras. There is a need to monitor schemes of work to ensure that opportunities for using ICT are specifically planned for rather than adopted on an ad hoc basis. Making use of the good practice which exists in some classes: for example one Year 2 and

one Year 1 class, and ensuring a consistent approach across both Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, is an area for future development.

HUMANITIES

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is developing teaching support packs to assist in effective delivery of the subject.
- The subject is strongly supportive of pupils' personal, social and moral development.
- The use of assessment to inform planning is underdeveloped.
- The timing of lessons is haphazard, some sessions being too short to be fully effective, and others too long to sustain pupils' engagement.

Commentary

76. Standards of work and lessons seen match the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Progress of pupils is satisfactory overall but many pupils find the subject does not engage their interest. This is similar to findings of the last inspection. The last inspection found that the spiritual dimension of the subject was being eclipsed by emphasis on aspects of pupils' social and moral development. This still remains the case.

77. Standards of work seen were satisfactory and demonstrate that the locally agreed syllabus is being followed. Work seen included work on religions other than Christianity notably Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils are made aware of the significance of religious buildings, people who inspire, special places, saints days and festivals. Pupils have access to appropriate artefacts representing faith communities. Pupils have similar tasks in lessons, although their work represents differing levels of achievement. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, during this inspection the focus on people who inspire, and aspects of citizenship in lessons, whilst supporting this aspect of school provision well, did diminish opportunities for the spiritual aspects of the subject. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development and are yet to be used to inform planning. Pupils are attentive in lessons whilst not being enthusiastic about the subject.

79. The co-ordinator is aware that the plans used are not fully supportive of the agreed syllabus. She is developing appropriate sources of lesson packs to further support teaching. She has not had time from classroom duties to monitor teaching in the subject to ensure that its distinctive place is secure in the curriculum. The impact of haphazard timing given to the subject and subsuming it into other subjects has thus not been fully considered. Religious education is thus losing its distinctiveness in parts of the school. As many development points discovered reflect those of the last inspection improvements in the subject have been insubstantial, implying it requires further review.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good standards of work were seen by the end of Year 6.
- Inclusion and equal opportunities are very good.
- Very good use of teaching assistants supports pupils with special educational needs well.
- Geography makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is no evidence that assessment informs teachers' planning.
- There has been no opportunity for the subject co-ordinator to monitor geography teaching and learning.

Commentary

80. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above national expectations at the end of Year 6, which represents good achievement overall. Teaching and learning in the Year 2 geography lesson observed were very good. Pupils worked enthusiastically to locate places on a map and to describe features of seaside areas. Two lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in one lesson and very good in the other. In the Year 6 lesson, very good teaching enabled pupils to present a lively and well informed debate of a topical planning issue in the Scilly Isles, following their residential visit. Pupils demonstrated a very good understanding of the potential impact on various aspects of the environment.

81. Scrutiny of pupils' work in their books and on display around the school showed that pupils are able to develop their investigation and mapping skills effectively and use ICT to help them record and interpret the findings of their investigations by the end of Year 6. But there was no evidence seen of using ICT in geography in other year groups.

82. Teachers' planning is effective and there is some assessment, but there is no evidence that assessment is being used to inform future planning and teaching. This is a weakness and shows little improvement since the previous inspection. Coverage of the geography curriculum is good and is well supported by the good range of visits, field trips and local studies undertaken. Good links are made with other subjects, especially with literacy, numeracy, science and PSHE, as shown in Year 6 pupils' work on coastal areas.

83. Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils with SEN and there is excellent inclusion in some lessons. Pupils' attitudes are positive and geography lessons make a good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through the provision of good opportunities for developing a sense of awe and wonder in the environment.

84. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The experienced and knowledgeable geography co-ordinator is able to provide advice and support for her colleagues and has good ideas for her development of the subject. However, there has been no time set aside for her to monitor provision, with the result that she is not able to evaluate fully the effectiveness of geography provision across the school.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- History makes a very good contribution to cultural and social development.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support for pupils.
- There is very good inclusion in history throughout the school.
- Assessment and marking do not always inform teachers' planning.
- No time has been set aside for the history co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning.

Commentary

85. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. During one good lesson in Year 4, pupils were learning about the feudal system by taking the roles of barons, knights and serfs to gain an understanding of their duties and experiences. Good teaching led to good learning and achievement, with very good inclusion and achievement of pupils with SEN. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were encouraged to use a range of perceptive questions to learn about life in Victorian times. The good teaching in this lesson encouraged pupils to develop a clear appreciation of the differences between life then and now, leading to good achievement for all.

86. Standards of work seen during lesson observations and in pupils' books and displays were in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above national expectations at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers' planning effectively covers all aspects of the history curriculum and pupils' work demonstrates that pupils are learning to make good use of historical skills to investigate the past. In Year 6, pupils had researched, written and illustrated some very good biographies of famous twentieth century people.

87. The learning of Cornish history and folklore provides very good cultural development. Pupils co-operate well together and demonstrate very good personal qualities in history lessons. Teachers provide an appropriate degree of challenge for more able pupils and teaching assistants provide highly effective support for those with SEN, with the result that there is very good inclusion for pupils of all abilities. There are good curriculum links with literacy and geography, but not enough use is made of ICT to support history.

88. Assessment is variable, but good examples were seen in the work of Year 6 pupils, who use 'Marking Ladders' to evaluate their own work and set targets for improvement. This self assessment is supported by good marking by the teachers to identify development points and encourage progress. However, assessment and marking of work is cursory in some classes and does not always help pupils to understand how they can improve their performance.

89. The experienced and enthusiastic history co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership, effective support, and clear vision for development. No time has been set aside for her to monitor the subject this year, with the result that she has not been able to evaluate the teaching and learning of history throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. Too few lessons could be observed in **art and design** to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, inspection evidence indicates attainment at the end of Year 2

matches national expectations, and exceeds them by the end of Year 6; a similar picture to that of the last inspection. A review of work on display across the school confirms pupils experience working with a range of media, as seen in the pastel works by Year 2 depicting Caribbean scenes, to the carefully decorated pinch and coil pots seen being made in Year 1. For older pupils, the school successfully uses the work of famous artists to inspire pupils and support new ways of expression. For example, pupils in Year 4 were seen to use the style of Klee successfully in their work with textiles, pastel and paint. Equally effective use is made of the work of lesser known artists. Such an example was seen in Year 6, where pupils learnt of the Bryher artist Richard Pearce, and created their own stunning interpretations of his style in paint and silk as part of their work in geography on 'A sense of place'. Three-dimensional work is undertaken well. Examples include impressive Aztec masks in Year 5, and, in many classes, clay work which has been glazed and fired in the school's kiln. The subject contributes strongly to pupils' cultural awareness, as can be seen in Year 3's vibrant Aboriginal art, the impressive African scenes produced by Year 6, and the research and subsequent work on Chinese willow pattern plates by pupils in Year 4.

91. Whilst only one lesson was observable in **design and technology**, work on display, together with a review of teachers' plans, confirms appropriate work is completed in designing, making and evaluating a range of artefacts using a variety of materials. As at the time of the last inspection, work seen at the end of Years 2 and 6 is at levels expected nationally for these age groups. Work on display includes finger, sock and pop-up puppets created by pupils in Year 2; chairs created for different purposes by Year 4; and monsters and toys with parts moved by air pressure and cams by those in Years 3 and 5 respectively. Design briefs for Year 6 included making slippers for famous people and well known characters - including 'Miss Piggy' and 'Kermit the frog'; and producing containers for a new range of biscuits. Prior to embarking on their initial plans, pupils undertook research into slippers and biscuit packets regarding appearance, suitable materials and functionality. Finished products were of an appropriate standard and demonstrated pupils' secure understanding of the 'design, make, evaluate' cycle of production. Appropriate provision is made for food technology.

92. **Music** was not a focus of the inspection and insufficient work was seen to make a judgement on standards. However, the singing that was heard was good. From scrutiny of planning, talking to teachers and pupils, watching video evidence and considering extracurricular and peripatetic instrumental provision, it is apparent that **provision is good**. Performance is a strength, with many opportunities offered, including musicals, concerts, assemblies, and performing outside school, such as at the Mayor's Carol Service, and singing to local senior citizens. A new scheme of work has been successfully implemented which is giving confidence to non specialist teachers. However, the use of ICT in music is underdeveloped, and monitoring to improve teaching and learning does not take place.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but swimming at the end of Year 6 is very good.
- Teachers and pupils both have a positive attitude towards PE and sport.
- There are good opportunities for extracurricular activities.
- Teaching is good.

- Good use is made of outside specialists.
- Some equipment is old and worn out.

Commentary

93. There is very good provision for swimming at the local leisure centre, and the school manages the provision very well. Nearly all pupils in Year 6 are able to swim 25 metres, many much further, and nearly all receive awards for water safety and lifesaving. However, overall the subject is effectively managed.

94. Sport plays an important part in the life of the school, and good attention is paid to pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to compete with other schools, and in a recent athletics competition, apart from coming third, the school won the cup for the most sportsmanlike and well behaved team. In football, the school sometimes fields three teams, giving opportunities to a much larger number of pupils than normal. Nearly everybody joins in with the 'Wake up and shake up' activity first thing every morning, including teachers and parents.

95. Teaching is good, with pupils well managed, well motivated, and well organised. Good teaching points are usually made, and plenty of practice is given to help pupils improve their skills. However, on occasions, pupils are just given tasks with no help on how to perform them well. Insufficient attention is given to health and safety aspects such as wearing the correct clothing and removing jewellery. Too often, pupils are wearing unsuitable shoes, trousers, necklaces, rings and earrings, and long hair is not tied back.

96. Specialist tennis coaches and swimming instructors are used to good effect, as are adventurous activity instructors on residential trips, and the area sports co-ordinator. Their expertise is helping pupils to develop their skills, particularly in swimming.

97. The school is endeavouring to replace old equipment for more up-to-date and more easily transportable gymnastic equipment. The lack of consumable resources such as small balls for games impacts negatively on the lessons taken. Storage of PE equipment is untidy and inadequate, with suitable cupboards off the hall being used for non PE equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 2 and are well above by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good with very good features, leading to high achievement.
- The range of learning opportunities is very good and promotes very good awareness of citizenship.
- PSHE contributes very well to good behaviour and very positive attitudes of pupils.

Commentary

98. Pupils across the school achieve well in PSHE, and by the end of Year 6, their achievement is very good.

99. Pupils in Year 1 were observed listening and contributing well to a story linked to 'being kind', and 'working together'. They offered many valid contributions about the best ways of being friendly to their peers and sharing their tasks. One pupil commented that he thought they made 'a great team' as they worked together. Pupils showed good personal and social skills as they offered many different suggestions.

100. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed high levels of confidence in their personal skills. They were seen debating an important environmental issue very well as part of a geography assignment. Pupils undertook role play to put their points across. They achieved very high standards as they showed their very good understanding of citizenship. They were very aware of their responsibilities to future generations as they debated whether or not an hotel should be built on a vulnerable environmental site.

101. Teaching in PSHE is always good, and often very good, particularly in the older classes. Teachers are skilled in providing a wide variety of relevant tasks from the very good curriculum framework. The practical approaches used mean that pupils enjoy lessons and are able to develop their speaking and listening skills through their PSHE studies. Consequently, they develop self-confidence and maturity through the subject. PSHE contributes very well to the development of positive attitudes and an awareness of right and wrong. From the earliest years, pupils are encouraged to discuss how to keep themselves safe and live healthy lifestyles. As they move through the school, they benefit from activities in how to resolve conflict and differences, enabling them to learn how to manage their own behaviour.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).