

INSPECTION REPORT

PORTHLEVEN SCHOOL

Porthleven, Helston

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111985

Headteacher: Mrs P Shilston

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 June 2004

Inspection number: 257214

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:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	285
School address:	Torleven Road Porthleven Helston Cornwall
Postcode:	TR13 9BX
Telephone number:	01326 562249
Fax number:	01326 563665
Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Anne Smith
Date of previous inspection:	22 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Porthleven School is situated in a small coastal town, in rural West Cornwall and caters for children between the ages of 3 to eleven years. The school is larger than most other schools nationally, with 285 pupils currently on roll all of whom come from white U.K. heritage backgrounds. The school roll has increased over the last few years. Porthleven falls into the lowest 20 per cent of wards with deprivation in England. Children join the nursery class showing attainment that is well below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals fluctuates during the year and at 12 per cent, is currently below the national average (17.9 per cent). The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 20.5 per cent is above the national average (17.5 per cent) and proportion of pupils with statements of special educational, at 2.9 per cent, is also above the national average (1.6 per cent). There are ten classes in the school, including a nursery that accommodates 40 children. The school has received the Investor in People accreditation and the national Healthy Schools Award. It participates in a range of community initiatives including offering information and technology training for parents, running a 'Family Learning Programme' and offering a before and after school care club for pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	L Lewin	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology
9712	J Barber	Lay inspector	
8864	P Clifton	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Physical education
34431	M Usher-Clark	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school that projects a very caring and inclusive ethos. Very good leadership and management and good teaching enable pupils to achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Inspirational leadership by the headteacher has helped the school move forward at a good pace.
- Pupils attain above average standards in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and music.
- Very strong provision for promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and very good support and guidance result in the pupils showing very good behaviour.
- Very good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Staff and governors work together as an enthusiastic and highly committed team.
- The school provides a rich and interesting curriculum for its pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils and teachers.
- The school has established excellent links with parents and the local and wider community.

Since its last inspection in 1998, the school has improved at a good rate. All of the weaknesses identified have been suitably addressed so that the school now has good lesson planning systems, a well enriched curriculum, robust procedures for checking pupils' progress, and it fully complies with all health and safety requirements. In addition, the school has made many improvements including: strengthening procedures for staff training, expanding its links with parents and the community, improving its provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs, improving its provision for monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and improving its deployment of teaching assistants. The school has also made significant upgrades to information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. Standards attained by pupils are rising and the enthusiasm and commitment of all members of the school community ensure that the potential for continued improvement is strong.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E indicates pupils performing in the lowest five per cent nationally.*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Overall, pupils achieve well. On entry to school most children show well below average attainment. They progress and achieve well in the nursery and reception classes so that by the time they finish the Foundation Stage, most of them reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning. The good progress and achievement is sustained in Years 1 and 2 and over recent years standards as reflected by Year 2 national tests up to 2003, show pupils reaching above and sometimes well above average standards. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 2 cohort of pupils are on course to achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. As a third of the cohort has special educational needs, this still represents good progress and achievement.

As can be seen by the table above, Year 6 pupils' performance in the tests has been weak over recent years. In 2003 standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science in comparison with schools nationally and other similar schools. The headteacher has worked hard with the staff and put many effective strategies in place to improve attainment in this part of the school. These strategies are now making an impact, and inspection observations show that Year 6 pupils are currently on course to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science and their achievement is now satisfactory overall. A significant minority of the pupils are set to attain above the expected levels and this marks a particular improvement on previous years. Across the school, pupils attain above average standards in ICT, music and religious education and much good quality artwork was noted on display around the school. Not enough evidence was collected to enable judgements on standards to be made in any other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

Provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. This very strong overall provision results in pupils showing very good behaviour and developing positive attitudes. Attendance is satisfactory overall and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education throughout the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Much very good teaching is seen in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Work is well planned and prepared. Teachers show a confident approach with ICT. Teaching assistants provide very effective support for teachers and pupils. Staff are good at encouraging pupils and giving them the confidence to succeed. The school has implemented successful strategies to boost the performance of higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support to help them learn. In Years 3 to 6, teachers sometimes miss chances during lessons to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills further. Overall, good systems have been established to check pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school.

The school has a curriculum that is very well enriched through the wide range of interesting experiences provided for pupils. Support and guidance for pupils are very good. Through a wide range of innovative initiatives that it has implemented, the school has established excellent links and involvement with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. Governors carry out their roles very effectively, provide strong support for the staff and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Through her very good leadership the headteacher has established a climate in which all members of the school community feel valued and work together as a highly enthusiastic and committed team. Co-ordinators and staff with key responsibilities carry out their roles well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Discussions with parents and pupils and their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires issued show that the vast majority have a very high regard for the school and its staff. Most pupils spoken to show they enjoy school and take a pride in the things they achieve. Parents spoken to showed that they have very good relationships with staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

No significant weaknesses were identified in the school's provision during this inspection. However, the school has rightly recognised within its school development plan the need to maintain the momentum with improving standards in Years 3 to 6 and, in particular, focus more heavily on promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills in a more consistent way across the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Their achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school's national test results have improved at a rate above the trend nationally in Year 2 and in line with the national trend in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very effective strategies have been implemented to improve achievement and standards for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and these are now showing an impact.
- The school's rich curriculum coverage helps develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The school is good at identifying and extending pupils who show particular talents.
- Pupils achieve above average standards in ICT, religious education and music and much good artwork is seen around the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school's nursery showing well below average attainment, especially in relation to their speaking and listening and personal and social skills. They achieve well and make good progress in the Foundation Stage, by the end of which they reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning. This good achievement is continued into Year 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.6 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.6 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.0 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Results in national tests show standards being maintained at above average and sometimes well above average levels in recent years. In 2003, results in reading and mathematics were well above average and very high in writing compared both to other schools nationally and when compared to other similar schools. Results are likely to be veering more towards average levels this year as more than a third of the current Year 2 cohort has special educational needs. Nonetheless, work seen and records kept show these pupils to be maintaining good progress and achieving well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.0 (26.8)	26.8 (27.0)

Mathematics	24.7 (25.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.8 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. There is a stark difference in test results for Year 6 pupils compared to Year 2, with performance being mainly below and sometimes well below average in recent years. In 2003, pupils achieved below average results in English and well below average results in mathematics and science when compared to both other schools nationally and when compared to other similar schools. This indicates a tendency towards underachievement by pupils in Years 3 to 6 over recent years. However, since she has been in post, the headteacher has worked hard with the staff and governors to implement a wide range of initiatives to address this problem. These initiatives include:
 - establishing whole-school joint planning
 - ensuring closer liaison and teamwork between infant and junior staff
 - introducing a range of intensive intervention programmes to boost pupils' achievement
 - increasing the level of teaching assistant support in classrooms.
4. There are now clear signs that these initiatives are beginning to bear fruit: the school's very detailed tracking systems show the majority of pupils making sound progress and an increasing and significant number of them to be making good progress. In the past, the school's results have been depressed because of the lack of pupils reaching the higher levels. Tracking information shows these pupils to be now making good progress and this relates directly to the good quality extension/booster intervention programmes that the school has established. For example, Year 5 pupils were observed in one such session producing high quality extended pieces of writing and being encouraged to think in depth about how they plan such work. Current work shows that pupils in Year 6 mainly reach the expected levels in English, mathematics and science, but importantly, a significant number of them are now reaching the higher levels. This means that it is highly likely that the school's 2004 test results will show significant improvement upon last year with pupils attaining average standards overall. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils also currently work at a good level, and this shows how the good achievement in the younger age groups is now working its way through the school.
5. The very broad range of worthwhile activities and enrichment within the school's curriculum is strongly assisting the process of raising standards. It creates an atmosphere in the school in which pupils are motivated to achieve and do well and also establishes a climate in which high expectations are prevalent. Impact from this drive is already apparent with pupils attaining above average standards in ICT, where across the school pupils gain good competency in applying their skills to support learning in a wide range of subjects. Much good quality work in art is seen around the school and this is clearly helping individuals gain self-esteem and confidence through their success with this work. The school is also alert to the needs of identifying any gifted or talented individuals and this is apparent in music where high quality individual performances were noted and where standards overall are good. Pupils sing particularly well, with lots of tuneful part singing by the choir in assemblies and the school has a wide range of good quality individual musicians in its orchestra and 'Samba Band'.
6. Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in religious education across the school. They gain a good range of knowledge and skills through a wide range of interesting activities that includes a good range of visits to places of worship. In geography, history, design and technology and physical education, too little evidence was collected during this inspection to enable any judgements to be made about the standards of work.
7. The school is good at identifying pupils with special educational needs at an early stage and provides very good support for them in lessons so that, in the main, they manage to cover the same areas of work as their classmates, albeit sometimes at a slightly lower level. These pupils make good progress and achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good overall and often very good. Their behaviour is very good. Other aspects of their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are also very good. Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average and punctuality is good. There has been good improvement in these aspects since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and where teaching is good or better, pupils' attitudes are very good.
- All staff are very good role models.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to have a voice in running the school.

Commentary

8. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. In the Foundation Stage and Year 1 and 2 classes the quality of teaching ensures very good attitudes to learning. In Years 3 to 6 pupils have good attitudes to learning and where there is high quality teaching, they show very good attitudes. Pupils are happy and feel safe. Adults have high expectations of all pupils and provide opportunities for them to succeed. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and behaviour are very good. There are clear rules, rewards and sanctions that are consistently applied. The positive rules are consistently reinforced so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them in terms of behaviour around the school and representing the school on visits. Movement about the school is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming to visitors and their respect for and pride in the school buildings is evident. They use equipment purposefully and collaborate well when working or playing together. Pupils' behaviour is equally good at lunch and playtimes, when they play together well, with no signs of unruly or oppressive incidents. The children in the nursery class settle happily into school and quickly learn essential routines and expectations of behaviour. They respond positively in work and play activities.
9. Staff set a very good example to the pupils and, as a result, pupils follow this example by showing respect for each other and for everyone who works in the school. Pupils are ready to listen to adults and are confident to suggest ideas. Older pupils help younger ones, and there is a 'Buddy Scheme' with Year 6 pupils mentoring their younger colleagues and ensuring that they settle quickly into school. The older pupils play with the younger ones in the infant playground.
10. Most pupils are eager to accept responsibilities. Many take part in day-to-day routines by helping, for example, to take equipment out and tidy it away and even the youngest children in the foundation class show independence by selecting activities, whether in lessons or at play. As they progress further through the school opportunities are given for looking after the play equipment used at lunchtime. They have good opportunities to become house captains, library monitors and to help run the school tuck shop. Even the youngest pupils take responsibility for choosing their own lunch and handling their own money to pay for it. Through the very effective way in which the school council runs, the school pays much attention to listening to and acting upon the ideas of the pupils.
11. The school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. Spiritual development is promoted very well in different subject areas, in particular when pupils show emotional engagement in listening to music, playing, singing and dancing. An example of this was a ¹'circle time' during which music and dance were used to convey how it must have felt to be apart from one's family as an evacuee. The daily assembly gives good opportunities for spiritual awareness where reflection is encouraged on thought-provoking

¹ Pupils sitting together with staff in a circle and taking turns to express their views and ideas.

issues. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and teachers take care to explain why some behaviour is unacceptable and show they value good behaviour. Social development is encouraged by the expectation that pupils will take responsibility for a variety of tasks within the classroom and around the school. A thoughtful initiative to promote social development is that pupils always send thank you letters after visits. The personal, social and health education lessons and circle time sessions encourage pupils to understand that people have different needs, views, cultures and beliefs. Through a good range of trips made and visitors to the school, pupils are provided with very good opportunities to appreciate different cultures. Also, lessons, particularly in history, geography, art and religious education, provide pupils with a strong awareness of multicultural traditions.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	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.

- The rate of attendance in the academic year 2002-2003 was broadly in line with the national average. Pupils understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and respond well. There is a prompt start to the school day, with relevant activities while registration takes place, ensuring a smooth start to learning. Procedures for monitoring attendance and encouraging parents to send their children to school regularly and on time are good. Teachers keep track of the reasons for pupils' absence.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the previous academic school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of education is good. Good teaching, strong curriculum enrichment and very good pastoral care and excellent links with parents and the community ensure that pupils progress well with their learning. The school has developed good systems for checking pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Much very good teaching is seen in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work is well planned and prepared.
- Teachers show a confident approach towards using ICT.
- Teaching assistants are very effective.
- Staff are good at encouraging pupils to succeed.
- Strategies to provide an extra boost to pupils' learning are successful.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support to help them learn.
- In Years 3 to 6 teachers sometimes miss chances in lessons to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills further.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for problem solving in mathematics.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	12 (32%)	15 (39%)	11 (29%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. Teachers plan interesting work for pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and are usually keen to make their best efforts. This was noted, for example, in the Foundation Stage where the rich range of activities provided in the nursery and the two reception classes fully engaged the children. In one very good nursery lesson seen, five different activities were fully underway with the children working intensively throughout the session on tasks such as modelling with play dough, building wheeled models with construction kits, investigating floating and sinking objects and learning to deal with numbers through a magnetic fishing game. Also, in a very good Year 1/2 science investigation, pupils were given a wide range of opportunities to sort different materials by their properties. The interesting range of materials and skilful presentation of the work meant that pupils worked very determinedly to complete the task. Lessons are also made interesting by the inclusion of items that appeal to pupils. For instance, using soft toys in a reception literacy lesson – with 'Harry the Hedgehog' and 'Gilly the giggling guinea pig' – helped pupils become fully involved with identifying different sounds in words. Also, the topical inclusion of newspaper headlines about Wayne Rooney drew the fullest possible attention of pupils in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson.
14. Pupils learn well in all of their ICT lessons because teachers use the facilities in a relaxed and confident way. Computer projectors and computer hardware in the ICT suite are all used well to support work in literacy and numeracy and to give chances for pupils to research and explore in a wide range of areas. For example, teachers gave crisp and clear instructions that set pupils off quickly solving problems in spreadsheets in Years 5 and 6 and with using spell-check facilities and numeracy development programs in Years 3 and 4.
15. Staff have good relationships with the pupils. Pupils are therefore keen to work hard and do their best. As a result, there is a purposeful and happy atmosphere in all lessons. The good relationships also help pupils to develop a confident approach. The staff's consistent approach to recognising and rewarding pupils' achievements – both in the classroom and during assemblies – helps to promote an ethos in which pupils are happy in their learning and are motivated to spur themselves on to greater efforts.
16. The school has specifically invested in providing a good level of teaching assistants across the school – a strategy that is fully supported and carefully monitored by the governors. The strategy is working very well. In many lessons seen, teaching assistants and other adult support helpers added much value to pupils' learning through giving intensive extra one-to-one support or through working with a small group to provide extra guidance. Their work is especially poignant in supporting the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and often makes the difference in enabling these pupils to fully cover and understand the tasks provided. For example, this kind of support provided during a Year 1 literacy session enabled seven special educational needs pupils and three higher attaining Foundation Stage children to cover the same areas as their classmates and to meet the expected levels for Year 1 age group pupils.
17. Special educational needs pupils are very well taught across the school, not only because of the kind of intensive support mentioned above, but also because teachers are careful to

provide tasks that match the needs of these pupils precisely. Pupils also benefit by very effective extra support during sessions when they are withdrawn from classes. In one such session seen for Year 4 pupils, the very clear guidance and strong encouragement they were given lifted pupils' confidence and made them work in a motivated way.

18. Similarly, the school achieves much success in boosting the performance of higher attaining pupils by giving them extra tuition in withdrawal sessions. In one session seen with Year 5 pupils, the teacher showed a very skilful approach towards drawing out pupils' ideas during discussion and getting them to think in depth. This kind of intervention has made a strong impact on improving pupils' performances and helped the school increase the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
19. A feature of the teaching in the very good lessons seen in the Foundation Stage and infant classes is the way that teachers interact strongly with the pupils and give them chances to express themselves and develop their vocabulary. However, this approach is not consistently applied across the school and in some lessons for the oldest pupils, teachers tend to dominate discussions and, on these occasions, pupils become quite passive and sometimes struggle to maintain their concentration.
20. The school tracks the progress of pupils very carefully in English and mathematics and uses all assessment information well to inform future planning and curriculum development. Results of tests are carefully scrutinised to detect any weaknesses in pupils' performances. In most other subjects, teachers make appropriate ongoing records of pupils' progress. In all subjects, work is generally marked well to help pupils improve and pupils are given a good understanding of what they have to do to improve their performances.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is very good and has strengthened since the previous inspection. It meets all statutory requirements. The opportunities provided for enrichment of the curriculum through clubs, visits and special events are very good. The school's accommodation and resources to support learning are good. There is an adequate number of teachers and a very good number of teaching assistants.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for learning in all subjects are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Opportunities for enrichment activities are very good.
- Best use is made of the accommodation.
- Special arrangements to support pupils' learning needs are very effective.

Commentary

21. The curriculum provides a very broad range of worthwhile activities that meets the needs of pupils very well. Curriculum planning often identifies good links between different areas of the curriculum and this ensures that coverage in all subjects is very good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and satisfactorily implements the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are carefully planned into the curriculum and activities to improve pupils' self-esteem and raise aspirations are particularly successful. Provision for higher attaining pupils and those who are particularly able is very good. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of pupils in Year 6 achieving the higher levels of attainment. There are some particularly good displays around the school celebrating pupils' work in nearly all curriculum areas - particularly in the creative arts.
22. Very good provision for the Foundation Stage provides the children with a rich range of experiences, and the well organised approach by the staff in this part of the school ensures

that maximum gains are made from the consistent way in which the curriculum is applied in all three classes involved.

23. The school is very good at ensuring that its curricular provision is as inclusive as possible. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support and make good progress. They have good quality individual plans that have targets appropriate to their current needs and their progress is carefully tracked as they move through the school.
24. The school provides a rich and varied programme of after school and lunchtime clubs that extends experiences for all pupils. Music is particularly strong, with opportunities to sing, play individual instruments and learn drum skills in the 'Samba' band. Visits by local experts are promoting very high achievement in art, music and sport. High quality artwork by pupils who attend the art club is on display in the school. During the inspection music, gardening and reading clubs were well attended and the pupils participated enthusiastically. There are many opportunities for groups of pupils to display work outside of school or perform in the local community.
25. The school's good range of resources is organised well. The school library is spacious and well stocked with good quality books. This is successfully promoting reading in the school and pupils use it confidently and regularly. Overall, the accommodation is good. The very good outside area is used well to support learning across the curriculum. The inside of the school is well kept and is a stimulating learning environment for pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage have a very good outside play area that they use well. The one limiting feature is the size of the classrooms for older pupils, which have restricted space for the numbers of pupils. There is an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers and a very good number of teaching assistants who are deployed very effectively to support pupils' learning.
26. There are a number of examples of curricular innovation that are supporting pupils' learning very well. Flexible grouping arrangements across the year groups enable pupils to work with others of similar ability. A good example of this is reception children joining Year 1 pupils for literacy and numeracy activities as soon as they are ready. The frequent use of outside experts is promoting high quality individual skills, particularly in music and art. The special arrangement to boost pupils' self-esteem through the 'Bishops Forum' and the 'Pyramid Trust Club' is encouraging pupils to have higher aspirations. The arrangements for higher attaining pupils and others who need skills boosting are particularly effective.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is very good. The school cares very well for its pupils' health and safety. The way the school involves pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is also very good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very inclusive.
- The school has very effective pastoral systems.
- The school's accommodation is very well looked after and maintained in an attractive condition.
- The school has very good induction arrangements.
- Pupils are involved well in some school decisions and there is an effective school council.
- Good provision is made to provide extra support for groups of pupils where appropriate.

Commentary

27. The school is very inclusive, with many very good features in the way pupils' well-being, general care and safety are promoted. A particularly good example of the school's strongly inclusive approach is the way in which 'looked after' children are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

28. The school's strong pastoral care is evident through the good systems to check academic progress and individual pupils' personal development. Teaching assistants make useful contributions to the teachers' records. Annual reports of pupils' progress provide a good picture of each child and their individual achievements. They also incorporate targets for improvement in the following year. The ethos of the school is conducive to very good behaviour. Bullying and oppressive behaviour are not a problem. On the rare occasions when isolated incidents occur, they are very well handled. The very good relationships between staff and children enable pupils to build trusting relationships with one or more members of staff.
29. Health and safety is a priority for the school. Thorough systems are in place to ensure that child protection procedures are fully catered for and all staff have appropriate 'first aid' qualifications.
30. The school building, classrooms and grounds are very well cared for and swift and effective attention is given to any necessary repairs. Litter and graffiti are non-existent due to the care of their environment by the pupils and the vigilance of the caretaker and his team. The welcoming displays, especially in the entrance lobby, help to ensure that pupils take a pride in their school and treat it with respect.
31. There are very good systems to ensure that new pupils make a good start when they join the school. For example, sessions such as the 'Toddler Group' and 'Learning Together Club' all successfully help the children become familiar with the building, staff and other pupils. Very good induction procedures are also in place for any pupils entering the school in other school years.
32. Pupils' views are sought on a wide range of issues and their views are discussed by staff. For instance, pupils in Years 2 to 6 are involved in the school council and are effective in making sure that pupils' opinions are discussed by staff. As a result, ideas from pupils have been instrumental in the purchase of more outdoor play equipment, new fencing and the decoration of the toilets.
33. Various initiatives are in place to boost pupils' self-esteem and widen their experiences. An example of this is the Pyramid Club which takes place after school for selected Year 3 pupils. Self-esteem is boosted through, for example, cooking and team games and positive reinforcement. Benefits show in the confidence of the pupils, improvement in school work and in their attitudes to school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The overall excellent provision in this area is a strength of the school. The school works very well in partnership with parents, other schools and the community. The school has excellent links with the local community. There are very positive links with other schools. Overall, this represents a good improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Communications between parents and the school are very good and parents think highly of the school.
- Excellent links with other schools.
- Excellent links with parents.
- Outstanding links with the local community.

Commentary

34. Very good links are established with parents at an early stage. For example, there many occasions planned to enable young children to become familiar with the school and on these

occasions, support for parents and carers is established to help them develop the confidence to become fully involved in helping their children learn.

35. Parents' views, as expressed both before and during the inspection and in response to questionnaires, indicate that they are very pleased with the school. The quality of information provided for parents through reports, weekly newsletters and other leaflets is very good. Parents also appreciate the useful information about the school and its activities provided on the school website, in the very attractive prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to Parents - all of which are attractively presented. There is a comprehensive sharing of information and the school is justifiably proud of its relationship with parents and carers. Curriculum information evenings are well attended and the school involves itself in a very good range of innovative initiatives to continually strengthen the partnership with parents.

Example of outstanding practice

Family literacy sessions take place that provide high quality enhancement to parents' involvement with the school.

During the weekly sessions that have been run, pupils have had extra tuition with a teacher and teaching assistant while their parents spent time working with an adult tutor on improving their own skills to enable them to support their children's learning better. Then the pupils and parents work together. The 24 weeks' involvement of parents in this course marks a major commitment on their part. The course culminated in a presentation in the form of a puppet show and certificates were awarded to parents and their children. Discussions with staff and parents involved indicated that the work was extremely effective in helping to build relationships and in helping parents to support their children's learning.

36. The school makes very good efforts to consult parents and takes full account of their views. There is a flourishing Parent Teachers' Association that raises substantial amounts of money for school projects.
37. Excellent links are established with other local schools. For example, exchange visits with local secondary schools for both teachers and pupils ensure a smooth transition of the pupils into Year 7. Also the links established with schools ensure that a very full programme of joint staff training is available. There is a great number of inter school activities that strongly enhance pupils' learning.
38. The perspective of pupils is broadened by focused visits to the local environment, for example, sketching the harbour area and visiting the local churches. The school plays an active part in the life of the local community through the contribution it makes to celebrations and events. Pupils participate in the Basket Fair, Harvest of the Sea and concerts for Age Concern. The much acclaimed school Samba Band has played both locally and in Truro and Camborne. The very wide range of visitors who contribute to the school either through providing extra skills training in areas such as artwork, through talking to pupils about topics being studied or through supporting teachers and pupils in the classrooms makes an outstanding contribution to enhancing pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. Governors carry out their roles very effectively and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership by the headteacher has enabled the school to improve at a good pace.
- Staff and governors work together as a highly enthusiastic and committed team.
- Co-ordinators and staff with key responsibilities carry out their roles well.

Commentary

39. The headteacher has an outstanding clarity of vision in terms of guiding the educational direction of the school. This vision is expressed clearly in the school's development plan with a range of initiatives that precisely identify the elements of the school's performance where improvements are needed to help drive up standards further. On appointment three years ago, the headteacher worked closely with the staff and governors to identify the main areas for improvement, and as a result, all members of the school community feel themselves to be a part of the school's mission statement that features the commitment to empower '... all individuals to reach their full potential ...'. The successful annual training weekends that the headteacher has organised have been instrumental in helping to promote the strong enthusiasm and commitment that are now apparent among staff and governors. On these occasions, all of the staff and governors stay at a hotel and, as well as involving themselves in training, they audit areas of the school's provision together and look at what improvements should be encapsulated in future development planning. Using this approach, the headteacher has led the school forward in implementing many positive changes, which include:
- getting all of the staff to work together as a cohesive team to ensure that standards continue to improve
 - improving school systems for planning lessons and getting staff to plan together
 - enabling the staff to produce a wide ranging and rich curriculum with a good emphasis on creativity
 - improving systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs
 - improving links with parents and both the local and wider community.
40. The headteacher has created an ethos in the school whereby all staff and pupils feel fully included and valued for their achievements and efforts.
41. The deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team work closely together, meeting regularly with the headteacher to review developments. They provide full and effective support for the headteacher. Through their monitoring activities, subject co-ordinators gain a clear overview of the quality of provision across the school and work hard to develop new initiatives.
42. Governors have a clear understanding of the day-to-day work of the school and are very well informed and involved. Through regular visits and briefings they receive, they have a good overview and a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Many of them provide direct assistance by coming in to school and working alongside staff. For example, one governor with a professional background in electronics has come in to school to provide some teaching to pupils in relation to his area of expertise. The chair of governors in particular is very strongly supportive of the headteacher and staff and liaises very closely with them. Governors maintain a clear view of the finances and ensure that the very best use is made of the budget available. Through careful management they take care to steer funds into areas where pupils will benefit the most. For example, working closely with the headteacher they have responded to the need to do all they can to improve standards by maintaining a good level of support staffing across the school – a strategy that is now clearly showing a positive impact. They are careful to monitor the results of such spending and in this way they ensure that the best value is obtained from all resources. The school's 2002/03 balance surplus was slightly higher than would normally be expected, but funds are nonetheless clearly 'earmarked' for future expenditure.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	610,556
Total expenditure	594,569
Expenditure per pupil*	2,210

**(based on numbers on roll of 269 in January 2002)*

Balance from previous year	44,142
Balance carried forward to the next	60,129

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

Provision for children in the nursery and two reception classes is very good overall. Teaching is good, with much very good teaching in evidence, and it ensures that most children make good progress and achieve well. Provision for children with special educational needs is very good with staff showing a skilful approach towards identifying, at an early stage, any difficulties that children encounter and ensuring that they have the proper support to help them learn properly. Very effective leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are based upon the staff working together as a highly effective team so that all aspects of provision are closely monitored and continually refined and improved. The very good planning of the curriculum is a strength. The good accommodation and resources are well used to enhance the children's learning. There are very good induction procedures in place and excellent links are established with parents when their children start school. Children enter the school with well below average standards especially in speech, language and social development. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, most children reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision and the quality of teaching and learning in personal, social and emotion development are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have good relationships with adults and each other.
- Their attitudes to school and learning are good.
- They confidently play in large or small groups with a range of activities.
- Children are well behaved and polite.

Commentary

43. Children come into school with poorly developed social skills. Good and sometimes very good teaching helps them progress and achieve well so that they reach the expected level in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. They quickly settle into routines such as registration and times when they have to get ready for a new activity. Staff are patient and calm and take every opportunity to encourage children to adopt good habits and behaviour. They very carefully explain the importance of taking turns and sharing so that pupils gain a full understanding. Some good use was seen of role-play activities encouraging social interaction. Children socialise happily together and enjoy sharing a wide range of stimulating activities. On their way to assembly children were seen to open the many doors and help each other along the way, showing how they have all gained a basic social awareness of the need to respect and help each other. Good systems, such as the opportunities for children to work with older pupils in the school, strongly enhance their social development.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children are provided with stimulating activities ensuring good progress and achievement.
- Very good and effective use of teaching assistants.
- Detailed lesson planning and good assessment procedures.

Commentary

44. On admission to nursery, many children have poor communication, language and literacy skills and every opportunity is taken to promote speaking and listening. Activities are well planned and good questioning encourages children to communicate and helps them to increase their vocabulary. For example, in the 'Beach Shop', nursery children happily bought and sold items with the good support in discussion from their teaching assistant. During focused water play the teaching assistant skilfully questioned children so that they talked about their experiences and developed their vocabulary about things that float and sink.
45. In reception, children share books together, listen to stories, and visit the school library each week. A few children read fluently and confidently. Others are identifying key words. They link letter sounds to words, as was seen in a very good lesson about the sea. In another lesson, children used their phonic frames to write three and four letter words that were carefully sounded for them. They then successfully wrote poems about bubbles. By the end of reception a few children are working beyond the early learning goals, most achieve them and a few are still working towards them.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is good and occasionally very good. Staff are especially good at giving pupils opportunities to talk about their ideas and develop their vocabulary. Activities and planning meet the needs of individual children well. Planning both in nursery and reception is detailed and thorough. In the reception classes, children are taught in ability groups for literacy and opportunities are provided for some higher attaining nursery children to work with these groups at times. Staff are very good at using the close working partnerships between the classes to enhance children's learning in this way. Comprehensive assessment procedures ensure children are suitably challenged.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children make satisfactory progress and achieve well.
- Children are keen to learn and make good contributions during lessons.
- There are many good opportunities to practise number skills through well planned activities.

Commentary

47. Lots of displays and activities in the nursery and reception classes enrich children's experiences in learning about numbers. Good teaching ensures that most children achieve well and reach the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Farm animals and sock number lines assist their counting and in one session seen, a study of snails, ladybirds and spiders provided opportunities to count legs and observe symmetry. There are many good opportunities given to the children to articulate their mathematical thinking. Children in the reception classes succeed in adding simple numbers together during 'fishing for numbers' activity. Teaching assistants give good support to lower attaining children. Higher attaining children work with numbers to 30 and exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. In work seen, lower attaining children counted to five and numbers are still reversed, but all make good progress. With appropriate help and guidance, higher attaining children name two-dimensional shapes and talk about their properties. In a floating and sinking lesson, good concepts of lightness and heaviness resulted in some accurate predictions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many and wide ranging opportunities are provided to expand children's understanding.
- Good teaching ensures that pupils have opportunities to develop the skills to work independently.

Commentary

48. Past work and photographic evidence clearly show the exciting activities the children have experienced. In the nursery, children recently developed and planted their own garden with contributions given from a local garden centre. A retired vicar and governor of the school performed a Christening and the children chose the 'baby's' parents, Godparents and baby's name. They made vegetable soup, flew kites, made houses with wood, sand and cement and looked after tortoises. Reception children walked to a local farm, visited the nearby naval air base to see the helicopters and recently studied the life cycle of the frog in the school pond. During the inspection pupils discussed fish, fishmongers, fishermen and the weather. A fresh plaice and flounder had been provided and children were keen to ask and answer questions. Children seen using various computer programs demonstrated good mouse control. The well organised teaching and rich diversity of activities in this area of learning ensures that pupils reach the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage. Staff are particularly good at using the activities to encourage the children to talk and broaden their vocabulary and understanding. They also show a skilful approach towards supporting and guiding children, but withdrawing at the right time to enable them to develop the confidence to work independently.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Good quality outdoor equipment and an inspiring outdoor area provide pupils with good learning experiences.

Commentary

49. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils have plenty of chances to develop their physical skills. As a result, most children are on course to reach the expected level in this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. In the nursery, children play confidently with play dough using rolling pins and cutting tools. They manipulate small beads to thread them, use larger construction pieces and they use scissors well. In sessions seen in the outdoor area, nursery children rode trikes and bikes and used push along toys with confidence. They also have access to outdoor climbing frames in an attractive garden. Reception and nursery children enjoyed dancing and progressed well in expressing themselves imaginatively - using scarves to represent the sea. In another good lesson, reception children learned the rudiments of basketball and their skill and techniques developed to a satisfactory level as a result of good teaching.
50. There was too little evidence collected during the inspection to make a judgement on the provision in **creative development**. Nevertheless, nursery and reception children showed very sound fine motor skills, using a brush and paint wash over freshly caught fish to produce some very attractive prints of their scales. Photographic evidence shows earlier printing using fruit, vegetables and leaves to print. Younger children are familiar with brushes and used large ones to 'paint' with water in the outdoor area. Children become confident in using a range of media. And this area reinforces their personal and social development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 are improving.
- Overall pupils' achievement is good.
- The school has recognised rightly that a whole-school strategy for the development of speaking and listening skills needs to be developed.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of how they can improve.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Pupils enjoy reading.

Commentary

51. Pupils come into the school with well below average standards. Over the previous four years, standards as reflected by national tests in reading in Year 2 have been consistently above average with well above average results being achieved in 2001 and 2003. In writing, there has been a very sharp improvement in standards; below average results in 2000 have risen to very high results in 2003. In 2003, the proportion of pupils writing at the higher levels is twice the national average. Current standards in Year 2 are average in writing, with reading being slightly stronger but still broadly average. This particular group of pupils has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards of writing in Year 1 are above average. Consistently good quality teaching is promoting good achievement in both reading and writing.
52. In Year 6, standards over the past four years have been broadly in line with national trends, with below average results in 2001 and 2003. In 2003, the overall results were depressed because there were very few pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment. Since then, the school has supported the higher attaining and particularly able pupils in Year 6 well. Current standards in Year 6 are average in writing and above average in reading. Overall standards are average. The school has tracked the pupils' progress from Year 2 and this shows that they have made satisfactory progress over the four years. In writing, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is above average. The samples of work over the past year indicate the progress and achievement to be stronger for higher attaining pupils and some with special educational needs. Higher standards that have been achieved at Years 3 and 4 are now working through the school. In Years 3 and 4, standards are above average, reflecting the sharp improvements made in Year 2 recently. Overall, pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory.
53. Across the school, there is a significant variation in the standard of speaking and listening. In Years 2 and 6, standards are below average whilst in Year 3 they are above average. The school has recognised the need to develop further strategies to promote good quality opportunities for speaking and listening, such as through drama. In the teaching observed, opportunities were sometimes missed to develop these skills through shared talking. In addition to this, teachers sometimes give pupils insufficient time to respond to questions or answer the questions posed themselves. As a result of this, more reluctant speakers in some classes rarely contribute during discussions or give short factual responses. This is more noticeable in Years 5 and 6. In direct contrast to this, teaching in Years 1 and 3 provided good opportunities for speaking and listening. For example, Year 3 pupils gave oral accounts of a football match as sports reporters. Many contributions captured the style of presentation, with pupils working very effectively together.

54. The quality of teaching is consistently good in Years 1 and 2. Across Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory. Where teaching is best, the planning is sharply focused and a good range of different activities promote and consolidate learning well. For example in Year 1, pupils recalled work on alliteration and simile and gave examples such as 'kicking kangaroos' and 'as blue as the sea'. Ideas developed in the first part of the lesson were used during their writing. Nearly all pupils produced sentences using some interesting words on their own. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have very good attitudes to learning; boys and girls work well together. Where teaching is less effective, the planning does not consistently meet the needs of all pupils. For example, after an effective whole-class exercise to punctuate some writing, which developed understanding well, a group of pupils was asked to copy out the passage. Pupils set about this task with little enthusiasm; time was not well used. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teaching assistants.
55. A strength of the provision is in the use of 'writing toolkits' – these provide pupils with information that should be included in writing. In addition to this, the pupils have 'marking ladders' which help them to identify strengths and weaknesses in their work. There are some very good examples of pupils assessing their own work across the school. Marking by teachers is usually good, but this is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 because it sometimes provides insufficient direction for improvement.
56. The subject is well led. Strategies used to support higher attaining pupils have been particularly effective. The co-ordinator has a large amount of data drawn from test results and this is used well to target areas to be learned. Management of the subject is good. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection, and, as a result, standards are rising.
57. The library is well resourced and very well laid out. Pupils use it confidently. A reading club for junior pupils, that is very well attended, enhances pupils' reading. Pupils have very good attitudes to reading and many younger children can name favourite authors. Boys have responded well to the introduction of 'boy friendly' books.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. There are good opportunities for extended writing across other curriculum areas such as religious education, history and science. This is enabling pupils to write in a range of different and contrasting styles. ICT is used well to edit and present work, teachers are using interactive whiteboards well to develop these skills. The use of language across the curriculum remains an area for development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is working hard to raise standards of older pupils.
- Teaching is good overall.
- There are not always enough problem solving activities provided.

Commentary

59. Pupils achieve well overall. There has been good improvement in recent times. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain the expected levels despite the fact that a substantial proportion of them have special educational needs. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain average standards. A significant number of them now attain above average levels as a result of the very good booster teaching that has been provided for them. This marks a particular improvement in

standards recorded over the last few years – which were depressed by the lack of pupils reaching the upper levels. Good strategies are now in place and improving standards are coming through the school.

60. Teaching was good overall, with some very good lessons seen. Teaching assistants are a very good support to lower attaining pupils throughout the school, enabling them to achieve well. Pupils are taught in ability groups throughout the school and this enhances their progress and enables teachers to match work precisely to their needs. In Year 1 and Year 2 classes, good use was made of the computer and overhead projector to model activities and tasks. Teachers explain tasks clearly so that all pupils know what to do and progress well with the activities provided. Teachers and teaching assistants provide much good encouragement that helps individuals develop a confident approach to mathematics. Lessons generally run at a good pace and provide challenging and interesting tasks that make pupils think hard. Pupils were taught the value of money and relationships between coins. In another lesson, pupils discussed when we would most need to know the time and then translated analogue to digital times. They accurately calculated the duration of certain television programmes. Most Year 2 pupils know how to add and subtract numbers to 20 and above, they measure properly using weight and capacity, work with two and three digit numbers and understand simple fractions and reflective symmetry. By the end of Year 6, pupils have worked with coordinates and measured angles and the perimeter of the school field accurately. However, there is little evidence in their books of them carrying out much in the way of mathematical investigations or problem solving activities.
61. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A shadow co-ordinator and link governor ably support the mathematics co-ordinator. Standards are improving and performance data is being effectively monitored and evaluated to help identify any weaknesses and to inform any curriculum development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils use mathematics well as part of their work in geography and in science - where graphs, for instance, are sometimes used effectively to measure and present their work. Older pupils also have good opportunities to work with spreadsheets as part of their ICT work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well.
- Teaching is good, but sometimes does not involve older pupils in sufficient opportunities to discuss their ideas.
- The subjects is well managed.
- Teaching assistants provide strong support in lessons.
- Good links are established with governors.
- Although teachers carry out their own on-going assessment of pupils' performance, there is no consistently applied whole-school system for tracking progress.

Commentary

63. At Years 2 and 6, pupils reach the expected levels and a significant minority do better than this. This means that standards reflected by national test results are likely to be average this year. Standards have improved in Year 6 in particular – in previous years results were depressed because too few pupils reached the higher levels. Pupils cover a wide range of interesting work and generally have an in-depth knowledge of the areas that they cover so that overall they

progress and achieve well, building on their knowledge step by step. For example Year 2 pupils, currently studying the topic of materials, look at a wide range of different sorts of materials and pursue their ideas in good discussions so that they gain a clear sight into how they practically sort different materials by their properties such as 'hard', 'soft', 'stretchy', 'rough' and 'smooth'. In this way they develop a good understanding of using scientific vocabulary. Year 6 pupils show good recall of scientific facts that they have learned recently. For example, in a lesson about the properties of gases and liquids, one pupil offered the explanation '... liquids always take the shape of the container in which they are put ...'. These pupils show they have a sound knowledge in this area of science, understanding processes such as evaporation and the conditions that can induce or affect it.

64. Teachers generally prepare lessons well and try to make them as interesting as possible. This was noted in particular in the very good lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, where a wide range of resources and equipment were laid out ready to hand so that the lessons flowed smoothly from one section to the next and pupils could get on quickly with the activities provided. This resulted in all pupils working in a motivated, interested and confident way. The teaching assistants in these and other sessions also played a key role, often providing a good level of intensive support for groups and individuals to help maintain a good pace to the work. In one very good Year 1/2 session, working in this way, the teaching assistant ensured that pupils with special educational needs stayed fully focused and completed all of the areas of work covered by classmates. In lessons for older pupils, teachers covered a good range of learning in their lessons, but they tended to place too much emphasis on explaining and instructing and missed valuable opportunities to involve the pupils in discussions to draw out their ideas and learn to express their scientific understanding. The learning in these situations therefore became rather passive, with pupils struggling to maintain their concentration at times.
65. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator maintains a clear overview of the quality of provision and standards through her monitoring activities and through close liaison with colleagues. She carefully analyses the outcomes of test results and uses the information well to inform planning and curriculum development. For example, the information is used well to guide the work injected through booster groups in Years 5 and 6. The work in these groups has clearly aided the school in improving standards and, in particular, increasing the number of pupils attaining the higher levels this year in comparison with previous years. 'Link' governors have liaised closely with the co-ordinator and have visited lessons on a regular basis – in one case providing some useful extra teaching input. They have a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of work across the school.
66. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and the co-ordinator has recently worked to establish a whole-school approach. However, the systems have not yet been consistently adopted to enable staff to fully track the progress of pupils as they move through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils carry out a wide range of interesting tasks.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable input to support pupils' learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The school has a good range of facilities.
- The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to develop assessment systems further.

Commentary

67. Pupils gain good skills in the work that they do and achieve well. For example, Year 2 pupils use programs well to design pictures – using line and fill techniques, know how to handle data to produce graphs on the computer, know how to import pictures and label them and use word processing facilities competently to support their work in literacy lessons. Year 6 pupils are confident in making multimedia presentations with programs such as PowerPoint, know how to program control sequences, use spreadsheets efficiently and make good use of research facilities on the Internet to support their studies in different subjects.
68. Teachers show confident subject knowledge and make very effective use of the facilities available to develop pupils' learning in different subjects. For example, good use of computers was made during literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 3 and 4 with concepts and methods of using the programs being succinct and clear. Teachers make very good use of the projectors to demonstrate ideas, so that all pupils rapidly gain understanding of how to use menus and different facilities. For example, through clear demonstrations and explanations, Year 3 and 4 pupils quickly understood how to use different types of spell-checking during a literacy session.
69. Teaching assistants work very effectively alongside teachers and have received appropriate training so that they are confident in guiding pupils. During sessions observed in the computer suite, they provided individuals with much good assistance to help maintain the flow and momentum of the work under way. In particular, the ICT teaching assistant based in the ICT suite provides good backup and assistance for teachers and pupils, ensuring the smooth operation of all of the equipment and making sure the computers are ready at the beginning of each session.
70. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She maintains a clear overview of the quality of provision and liaises closely with colleagues to help them overcome any difficulties. She has ensured that all staff have appropriate training and that a clear action plan is established to show the future development of the subject. She has identified rightly the need to develop current assessment systems further so that the school has a clear method of tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school.
71. The school has been proactive in developing its ICT resources to the best level possible given the constraints of finances and has established a good range of equipment to enable pupils to have full access to using the technology.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Although still highlighted in the school development plan as an area for development, teachers are already making widespread use of ICT to support learning in areas such as literacy, numeracy, science and history and geography. Pupils have a good understanding of using the facilities for research through the Internet.

HUMANITIES

73. There were no opportunities to observe any history and geography lessons during the inspection. Comments are based upon pupils' work and discussions with the humanities co-ordinator and link governor. A secure judgement is not possible about provision and standards in these subjects. Pupils' work shows appropriate curriculum content.
74. By Year 2, in **geography**, pupils have gained suitable knowledge of local and national maps and routes, they compare features of different environments and follow the travels of Barnaby Bear. In Years 5 and 6, pupils carry out appropriate work studying rivers and maps of differing scales and measurements.

75. In **history**, pupils are given good opportunities to learn through studying their immediate locality. Years 1 and 2 pupils visit Truro museum to study old and new toys. The curriculum for history is well enlivened, with, for example, older pupils spending time at Helston Museum dressed as Victorian children and experiencing Victorian school life. An interesting display about the Battle of Marathon posed good questions for further research.
76. The subjects are well led by a conscientious humanities co-ordinator and the humanities link governor provides good support.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong links with local churches.
- A good range of artefacts to support learning.
- A knowledgeable co-ordinator.

Commentary

77. Overall the scrutiny of pupils' work and the small number of lessons seen indicate that pupils are generally well taught and achieve well in religious education. Work seen indicates the levels of attainment are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
78. Through visits, visitors and assemblies, pupils are very well supported in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding. Year 2 pupils know about worship in different world faiths and compare these to the traditions within the Christian faith. Older pupils develop and broaden their knowledge of world religions and, by Year 6, have a good understanding of Christian, Jewish, Sikh and Islamic faiths.
79. Teaching is good and good use is made of the many local Christian churches and denominations, and local clergy enhance this provision through their visits and discussions with the pupils. During the inspection, Year 1 and 2 visited the local church and extended their knowledge of Christian symbols, vestments and artefacts. In another lesson, pupils tried on vestments loaned by the local vicar and governor of the school.
80. The school is good at celebrating local Cornish culture that is linked to religious themes. For example, Year 3 and Year 4 pupils spent a day visiting and studying Truro Cathedral and have produced a beautiful wall hanging about local saints. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 celebrate St Piran's day in the village - performing Cornish dancing.
81. Good use is made of the wide range of artefacts available and this has been an improvement since the last inspection. These further enhance the pupils' learning, as seen in a lesson on the 'Rites of Passage' where pupils used Bibles and the Internet effectively to support their learning.
82. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator supports staff well, has improved the range of resources and is currently leading staff in a review of planning and recording procedures following the input of an advanced skills teacher in a recent staff meeting.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. **Music** is strongly featured in many school activities. In assembly, singing standards are high. It is regularly accompanied by the pupils playing a range of instruments such as flute, violin, brass, drums and keyboard. Their playing considerably enhances the overall performance;

these are memorable occasions that support pupils' spiritual development very well. They are well directed by the co-ordinator who makes a very strong contribution to the quality of the music in the school through the extra-curricular activities that she leads. The enthusiasm of the pupils is evident by the numbers of pupils who join in lunchtime and after school groups. The playing of the 'Samba Band' is a highlight of the school's provision. It provides a very good opportunity for pupils to develop their understanding of rhythm. In the lunchtime recorder and flute group, the pupils played individual parts well, listening to each other and observing the dynamics of the music. There is a strong link to the community and pupils perform regularly outside of school. Particularly able pupils are supported well.

84. In **physical education** there is a very good range of sporting activities to support the curriculum. Partnerships with other schools are effective and these are promoting good standards of attainment. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and has up-to-date skills. The outside area is a very good resource to support games. Orienteering is featured in the curriculum and pupils join in enthusiastically. The school promotes fitness through lunchtime clubs and school teams compete regularly with other schools.
85. **Art** is very well represented in displays throughout the school. The subject is supported well by visiting artists and there is a strong Cornish influence. The style of these artists is evident in the pupils' work, much of which is of good quality. A good example of this is the display of pastel work by pupils attending art club. The range of work through the school is good. Apart from individual paintings, there are examples of large murals, still-life drawings showing a good use of tone. The colourful banners in the hall and the rain forest display show a good link with design technology. ICT is used well to create different picture effects. The scheme of work for **design and technology** has good links with art. The design and technology co-ordinator has a good understanding of standards within the school because work across the school is regularly collected and assessed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about provision in **personal, social and health education and citizenship**. The provision in the personal and social elements is very good. The very good relationships between adults and pupils in the school ensure that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to discuss ideas, feelings and matters of importance to them. This is done through lessons where there is a particular focus on feelings, the school council or on an individual basis. All staff provide good role models and use praise and reward to reinforce positive behaviour. The planned programme to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of pupils is very effective. Health education is supported well by the school nurse and through aspects of physical education and science. The police and local lifeboat men visit the school to discuss safety, responsibility and support with drugs and alcohol education. There is a well established sex education programme.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
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	2
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	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	1

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

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