

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MELLION VA C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Mellion - Saltash

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 112030

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Palin

Lead inspector: Mrs Kay Cornish

Dates of inspection: 13 – 15 October 2003

Inspection number: 257863

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:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	45
School address:	St Mellion Saltash Cornwall
Postcode:	PL12 6RB
Telephone number:	01579 350567
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Lee
Date of previous inspection:	1 October 2001

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small, Church of England Voluntary Aided school of 45 pupils, aged 4 to 11 years, serves a village and area of mixed economic background. Very few pupils leave during their schooling. Most pupils are white and no pupils speak English as an additional language at home. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is above the national average. Two pupils have statements, which is well above the national average proportionately. Their needs are related to specific, moderate learning and physical difficulties. A distinctive feature of the school is the learning of French in Year 6. Although broad, the attainment of children on entry, over the most recent years, is at the nationally expected level.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21080	Kay Cornish	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Science, Art and design, Music, Physical education, English as an additional language
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector	
1967	Jennie Wilcock-Bates	Team inspector	English, Information and communication technology, Citizenship, Design and technology, Geography, History, Foundation Stage of Learning, Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Mellion is an effective school that provides a good and enriching quality of education, most appropriate for pupils' needs and giving due respect to the Christian ethos. Pupils' achievement over time is good as a result of good teaching. There is very good provision for the above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, resulting in their good progress. The good leadership and management have successfully led the school through a difficult period since the previous inspection of October 2001, when the school had a number of serious weaknesses. A long agenda of previous key issues has been rectified most competently. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good teaching ensures pupils' good achievement, at least average standards overall, and high standards in reading and swimming.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, ensuring that pupils receive their full entitlement and are fully included in all activities.
- The new headteacher has imaginative vision and gives strong, determined leadership, whilst receiving very good support from her senior teacher, staff and governors.
- Governors' very good understanding of the school has underpinned a rapid management of change and ensured a thriving school community overcoming the difficulties of the past.
- Due to the very good care and welfare of pupils, their interest in school life and relationships are very good.
- Very good links with parents and the community have reinstated their faith in the school's ability to provide an effective foundation for learning.
- There are insufficient opportunities at the Foundation Stage to enable young children to learn independently and creatively.
- The lack of a hall limits pupils' opportunities for dance, drama, gymnastics and creates difficulties for whole-school assembly and lunchtime eating arrangements.

The school has made good progress since its previous inspection. All aspects and pupils' achievement have improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

To protect the confidentiality of pupils, the table of National Curriculum results and their comparisons has been excluded because of very small numbers of children in each year group.

Achievement in all year groups is good. A higher proportion of pupils than normal has special educational needs, and these pupils achieve well, often reaching average standards in reading. Standards in all core subjects are average, with higher achieving pupils reaching above-average levels. Standards in religious education were inspected by the Section 23 inspector. No pupils spoke English as an additional language at home. There are high standards throughout in swimming and reading. In other subjects, about which there is sufficient evidence to make judgements, pupils' achievement is good. Since the time of the previous inspection, when standards and achievement at the Foundation Stage were unsatisfactory, improvement is now satisfactory. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall in each area of learning inspected. They enter school with skills that are at the nationally expected levels and are well on the way to reaching all the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Footnote: 'STANDARDS' are the levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils reach compared with pupils of the same age nationally. 'ACHIEVEMENT' is an assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to their capability. It is a judgement about whether pupils are doing as well as they can and are working to their capacity.

The school's nurturing of pupils' personal qualities is good. Pupils are very keen to come to school and their relationships with others are very good. They behave well and are willing to undertake work independently. The above-average rate of attendance is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The good quality of education has a strong impact on pupils' good achievement. Teaching and learning are good with some very good features. The curriculum is good overall, and satisfactory in the Reception year. It is enriched by a wide range of activities outside lessons, to include sport and music. There are very good inclusive opportunities to ensure that all pupils are focused on reaching their potential. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, with very good outdoor facilities, but the lack of a school hall limits the balance of the curriculum for physical education.

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good in all year groups. The school's involvement of pupils by seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good. The school has very good links with its parents, the local community and the local education authority. It has good, productive liaison with other schools and colleges, particularly for sport, science and French.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The good leadership of the headteacher is strong and determined. She has successfully created a closely-knit team of high quality staff to share her imaginative vision. All give very good support and good management through a difficult period. **Governors' very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school** has underpinned a positive, rapid management of change. All statutory responsibilities are met. These include a full range of recently updated policies such as those for race equality and equal opportunities. The school complies fully with a daily act of worship. The school has received very good support from the local education authority and consultants to bring about good improvements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The headteacher has been very successful in reinstating positive relationships with parents. Parents' views have been sought, valued and acted upon with a high degree of co-operation. Parents regard the school with very good respect and like its ethos. They particularly appreciate the new, professional leadership of the headteacher and governing body. They like the enthusiastic teachers and progress of the school since the previous inspection. Parents consider that the accommodation lacks sufficient space. Pupils like school, its friendliness and the staff. They enjoy interesting lessons, all the extra activities on offer and the Outdoor Classroom. Quote: *"There are no bullies, children are encouraged to tell adults." "It's easy to make friends when you start. Even though I'm new to the school, I think I've settled in very quickly already."*

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure a stronger focus at the Foundation Stage for independent learning in structured play situations.
- Continue with the initiative to increase the amount of pupils' study time on 'shape and space' in mathematics.
- With the help of the local education authority and the Diocesan Board, improve the accommodation to ensure that pupils' opportunities for dance, drama and gymnastics are increased, and that difficulties for assemblies, lunchtime arrangements and public meetings are lessened.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in all year groups is **good**. A higher proportion than average has special educational needs, and these pupils achieve well, often reaching average standards in reading. Standards in all the core subjects are average, with higher achieving pupils reaching above-average levels. There were no pupils with English as an additional language at the time of the inspection. Standards and achievement in religious education were inspected by the Section 23 inspector. Since the time of the previous inspection, pupils' achievement has improved, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in ICT, when provision and pupils' progress were unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 to 6 for all abilities and most subjects.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are high and well above the national average.
- There are high standards in swimming and very good achievement.
- Children at the Foundation Stage do not have enough opportunities for self-chosen activities and for choices within adult-initiated activities, resulting in lower achievement in their independent learning and personal development.
- Although achievement is satisfactory in the aspect of 'shape and space' in mathematics, it is less successful compared with other mathematical aspects.
- Pupils receive insufficient opportunities for dance and gymnastics due to the limitations of the accommodation and this lowers their achievement for these aspects of physical education.

Commentary

1. Children enter school with standards that are at the nationally expected levels, although there is a wide range of ability. Currently, children's achievement is at least satisfactory in each area of learning, due to effective teaching, management and organisation. However, children do not always have enough opportunity to use their physical, creative and imaginative skills, or to develop independence in their learning in order to make choices about what they can do. There is good achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world. Improvement in children's achievement for this age-range has been satisfactory since the previous inspection, when children made unsatisfactory progress and the recommended curriculum for the age-range was not implemented. The following table explains children's achievement in 2003 in relation to the early learning goals.

Area of Learning	Achievement
Personal, social and emotional development	Satisfactory
Communication, language and literacy	Satisfactory
Mathematical development	Insufficient evidence
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Physical development	Satisfactory
Creative development	Satisfactory

Footnote: 'STANDARDS' are the levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that pupils reach compared with pupils of the same age nationally. 'ACHIEVEMENT' is an assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to their capability. It is a judgement about whether pupils are doing as well as they can and are working to their capacity.

2. Due to the very small numbers of pupils in each year group in Key Stages 1 and 2 (less than eleven), the tables of standards in relation to the National Curriculum tests have been omitted. Comparisons with the previous report's judgements on standards and with the data of similar schools are unreliable and inappropriate because of fluctuations of ability within year groups which have very small numbers. Therefore, the comparisons have been omitted.
3. Standards in all subjects are at least satisfactory and meet national average and expected levels. Standards are well above average and expected levels in reading and swimming by the end of Year 6. Above average standards are reached in speaking, listening and reading in Years 1 and 2. Speaking and listening skills in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are above average. There are good strengths in the accuracy of pupils' calculations for number in mathematics. Pupils can predict, hypothesise, present information clearly and evaluate findings accurately in science by the end of Year 6.
4. Achievement is good throughout Years 1 to 6 and for all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs have very good provision, resulting in their good achievement, particularly in reading and swimming. Higher achieving pupils are challenged successfully, so that they often reach higher levels in their learning and knowledge of the National Curriculum.
5. Although pupils' achievement in the aspect of 'shape and space' in mathematics is satisfactory overall, it is less successful than other aspects of mathematics. This is due to prior insufficient coverage of the aspect during the previous year. The teachers have already identified the omission and have plans to provide extra opportunities in order for pupils to catch up. In addition, although pupils' achievement in physical education is good, and occasionally very good, pupils receive insufficient opportunities for dance and gymnastics due to the limitations of the accommodation and the lack of a hall on site. This lowers their achievement for these aspects of the physical education programme to barely satisfactory levels.
6. Good achievement is often due to good teaching of the core subjects, with very good expertise shown in reading and swimming. Teachers plan carefully to meet individual pupils' needs. Very good assessment procedures in English and mathematics help to track individual pupils' progress closely. The very good evaluation of the school's performance has provided valuable feedback for teachers to adapt lesson plans and helped to review patterns in performance before taking action. Good leadership and management has ensured that all staff work as a strong, cohesive team, challenging and encouraging pupils so that their good achievement is firmly established.
7. Pupils' skills in English, mathematics and ICT strongly support their learning of other subjects. For example, pupils' very good reading skills help them to research books about ancient Egypt and the Tudor period, and to recognise bias in different historical accounts of the same event. Pupils' clear presentation and logical mathematical recording help to explain their findings during scientific investigations. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 send e-mails to children in New Zealand to help them learn more about other cultures and geography. The Internet is used extensively for research in history, geography and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' **attitudes** are **very good**. Their **behaviour** is **good**. Pupils' **personal development**, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. **Attendance** and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they thoroughly enjoy school.
- The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour.
- Relationships are very good and there is mutual respect between adults and most pupils.

- Personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Commentary

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	45	0	0

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

- Pupils like their school and take an enthusiastic part in all that the school provides. They are keen to achieve as well as they can, and are normally interested by their work. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is very good from the Reception year to Year 6. They make the best of the good teaching. This is because the school nurtures positive attitudes and uses praise and encouragement to help pupils' develop their self-esteem and confidence. In the Reception year, the children attending part-time are happy because they are successfully helped to settle into the mixed class of pupils from Years 1 and 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs show the same interest in their work. A strong and positive ethos emphasises the school's expectations and values the contributions pupils make in lessons, assemblies and other activities.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and the other adults in the school work hard to include all the different groups of pupils in all aspects of school life. Class and school rules are explicit and reflect the teachers' high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and their learning. Behaviour is good. Pupils with special educational needs or challenging behaviour try hard to conform to the agreed standards of behaviour. At times, individual boys do not treat all the teachers with the same respect, however, they are not allowed to disrupt other pupils' learning. Staff work hard to consistently reinforce good behaviour in lessons, at lunchtime and in the playground.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They mature during their time in school as a result of effective provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The strong emphasis on the pupils' personal, social and emotional development in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 class makes them happy and confident to work with others and on their own. The school actively promotes a good understanding and appreciation of different beliefs within a culturally diverse society. The pupils develop a good sense of right and wrong and fairness as they apply the rules they have agreed. This helps them work and play happily in the school community.
- Teachers and other adults develop mutual respect with the pupils. They consistently reinforce personal skills in all aspects of school life. Adults act as very good role models by appreciating and valuing the contributions the pupils make. Pupils consider that teachers are generally fair and that their skills and talents are celebrated effectively. They are fully involved in discussions and evaluations of school practices. This helps them become responsible as they progress through the school each year. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 undertake responsibilities with care and enjoy leading the school in early morning exercise or helping younger children at lunchtime.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	School data	0.2
National data	5.3	National data	0.5

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

12. Attendance compares well with the previous inspection and is above national figures. Both authorised and unauthorised absences are below national averages. Most pupils come to school and into class on time, and the majority of lessons commence promptly. Unexplained absence is followed up before 09.30, by phone, on the first morning. Registers are well maintained and good use is made of the educational welfare officer. All parents are made well aware of their relevant responsibilities and most ensure the good attendance of their children.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The **good quality of education** has a strong impact on pupils' good achievement. **Teaching and learning are good** with some very good features. There is a good range of activities outside lessons. The **accommodation is satisfactory** overall but with **certain limitations**, mainly the lack of a hall. **Good learning resources**, the **high quality of care, guidance and support** given to pupils, and the **very good partnerships** with parents and the community, all combine to ensure that the quality of education provided is good overall.

Teaching and learning

Current teaching has a **strong impact** on pupils' good learning and achievement over time. The **quality of the teaching** during the inspection was **good**. No lessons showed overall unsatisfactory teaching and a proportion was very good. This is a positive picture and an improvement from the previous inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall with variability in year groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have worked very hard, and successfully, to create a new, cohesive teaching team since February 2003, when the new headteacher was permanently appointed.
- There are consistently good and occasionally very good features of teaching in each year group, which ensure pupils make good steady progress and have a good awareness of that progress and how to improve.
- There is very good encouragement and engagement of pupils to ensure their very good attitudes to school by the time they leave, and good learning overall.
- All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, which results in pupils' good co-operation and concentration.
- Teachers' planning for the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and for the assessment of them is very good.
- The quality of assessment of individuals is good, whilst the analysis of whole-school assessment data and action for improvement is very good.
- Promotion of good equality of opportunities ensures that most pupils have a well-rounded curriculum to enrich their experiences and fulfil their potential.
- Teachers at the Foundation Stage do not always plan sufficient opportunities for children to make independent choices or to develop their imagination in dance, role-play and the challenge of large apparatus.
- Although teachers recognise the need to provide opportunities for dance and gymnastics, the lack of appropriate accommodation constrains their planning for these aspects of the National Curriculum and pupils' learning and achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	8	2	0	0	0

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

13. Very good teaching was observed in each class, particularly for literacy, numeracy, science and swimming. Staff are very successful as a team in ensuring pupils' good learning and achievement. Teachers use a variety of approaches and methods to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. They ensure that there is sufficient time for the outcomes of lessons to be listened to in the feedback. This gives pupils insight into their own progress. There is good, honest dialogue between pupils and staff so that pupils are strongly aware of how they can improve. This is further supported through very good understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and the good use of teaching assistants to ensure these pupils achieve well. This is particularly noticeable in the teaching of fluent reading, with good comprehension.
14. The good management of behaviour has resulted in quiet concentration within lessons and the sensible responses of pupils during sessions of exciting challenges, as, for example, when investigating bodily responses to healthy warm-up activities in science. Teachers' good implementation of the National Curriculum has been successful through a lot of hard work, very good support from the local education authority's advisory service, and teachers' careful planning of the whole school's curriculum and daily lessons. The headteacher has taken the lead in motivating and influencing staff to work very closely as a team to provide a whole-school framework of the curriculum which is most appropriate for a small school's needs.
15. How teachers assess pupils' achievement in the core subjects is very thorough, and recorded precisely, so that when pupils show weaknesses in some of the national tests' answers, new targets and extra programmes of work are planned for them, either as a group or individually. In addition, the very good assessment of whole-school test data has ensured that the action for improvement is very good. An example of the latter is shown in the very good analysis of the National Curriculum mathematics' test results and the realisation of the need to focus more on extra opportunities for pupils to learn about 'shape and space'. Action taken to address this has been very good.
16. Although teaching at the Foundation Stage is overall satisfactory, and there has been good improvement through the provision of an attractive, safer play area outdoors for young children, there is an imbalance in the amount of opportunities children receive in order to use it. In addition, their independent choices within adult-led activities for the whole class are insufficient to develop fully the creativity and imagination of children at the Foundation Stage. Teachers recognise the need to provide opportunities for dance and gymnastics, but the limitations created due to the lack of a school hall and the lack of funds to transport pupils elsewhere for these sessions, have created a weakness in the balance of teaching physical education. There has been some teaching of dance and gymnastics, in the past, at other venues, but this has been irregular. The school has more than compensated by its very good teaching of swimming at a local pool, but the school now needs to address the imbalance to ensure more dance and gymnastics is taught.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good overall** and satisfactory in the Reception year. It enables pupils to achieve well and is enriched by a **good range of extra-curricular activities**. **Resources** are **good** in quality and quantity, but despite some improvements, the **accommodation** remains **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils are involved in a good range of activities outside lessons.
- Accommodation remains unsatisfactory.

Commentary

17. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and caters for the needs of the pupils. This has a significant impact on standards and pupils' achievement. All subjects are taught, and schemes of work for each subject ensure that lesson planning is effectively very good. This has significantly improved since the previous inspection, largely because of the purpose of leadership in monitoring and evaluating provision. This is particularly relevant of the curriculum in Years 1 to 6, where pupils are provided with a broad range of interesting activities. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although some elements of the creative and physical curriculum are not emphasised enough. Very effective links between subjects ensures that pupils successfully practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects such as science, history and geography. However, the physical education curriculum is limited because of the lack of a hall. As a result, gymnastics and dance have to be performed elsewhere.
18. All pupils have good quality of access to the curriculum. The school fully includes all groups of pupils, whatever their gender, level of attainment or social background in all its work. A very carefully devised long-term plan takes account of the full age range in each of the classes, thus ensuring that pupils receive their full entitlement within a two and four-year rolling programme of work. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching arrangements are suitably flexible to take account of pupils with special educational needs. The special needs co-ordinator, teachers and teaching assistants work together as a very effective team. Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are efficient and pupils' achievement is carefully tracked. Targets are set that ensure that the requirements of statements of need and well-constructed individual education plans are met. Teaching assistants are fully involved in the pupils' academic and personal development and provide very good support.
19. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are keenly involved in a good range of extra-curricular activities that enhance their academic and personal development. A good range of clubs and events are offered to the pupils. Parents play an effective part in supporting activities and use their artistic, physical skills and interests to good effect for the pupils. This is a strong improvement since the previous inspection. The school is now actively involved in a range of sporting events including competitive games with other local schools in netball and football. Cross-country running and using the local health club's swimming pool weekly, enhance pupils' physical skills. The school's emphasis on healthy living means that the short physical activities at the start of the morning and afternoon are popular events outside the classroom.
20. Resources are good and have improved in the past year. Children in the Reception year have a good range of interesting resources, although further equipment and wheeled toys are planned for to use in the outdoor play area. A good range of computers supports pupils' learning across the curriculum and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.
21. The lack of a hall badly restricts the curriculum. Pupils have nowhere to carry out physical exercise sessions indoors or an area in which to perform plays or participate in gymnastics. Consequently, time is wasted journeying to alternative facilities. However, classrooms, the spacious and well-kept playing field and the playground are very good and well used by the pupils. These facilities allow the remainder of the curriculum for the creative arts to be provided for satisfactorily. The children at the Foundation Stage have their own play area, which is safe and attractive.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' **care, welfare, health and safety** are **very good** at the foundation stage and in the main school. The provision of **support, advice and guidance** based on monitoring is **good** as is the involvement of pupils, through the school seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The procedures that ensure pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are a strength.
- The school's child protection procedures are a strength.
- The recently updated policies on race equality and equal opportunities are particularly clear.
- There are no identified, significant weaknesses.

Commentary

22. The headteacher is the named child protection person and one other member of staff is also trained. They have ensured that all members of staff receive training as part of their induction. The school utilises the local education authority's written policy guidelines and any relevant documentation is securely locked away. There is very good liaison with the social services and police protection team. Arrangements to support children in care or who are refugees or traveller children are very good.
23. The headteacher is also the named health and safety person and works closely with the trained governor. They have ensured an up to date, written policy and detailed risk assessments for all eventualities. All fire and portable electrical equipment is date-tested. Emergency, escape exercises are held every term and all escape routes are accessible and clearly marked. Accident and medicine procedures are thorough and efficient. The staff is trained in first aid. The school makes good use of outside professional help, such as the police and the school nurse. Meals are cooked, served and consumed in hygienic conditions and the school has its own Internet Safety Policy.
24. The school provides good support, advice and guidance. The special needs provision witnessed during several lessons is caring and detailed. In one science session, the special educational needs co-ordinator was observing and writing in her notebook, all of the responses of supported pupils whilst the class teacher taught. From pupils' returned questionnaires it is clear that pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school. It is heart warming to see how well the older pupils look after younger ones in a well-monitored but totally informal buddy system. The monitoring of personal development is good because teachers know the pupils very well. Details are carefully maintained on personal records of achievement and reported to parents annually. Induction arrangements for pupils are good, irrespective of which year group they join. The headteacher is a leading network practitioner for the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership and co-ordinates with nine local playgroups/nurseries in the area. Parents and children can meet with staff before the child joins school. In addition, they are invited to weekly 'learning together' sessions in Class One.
25. The school allows good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their advice. Apart from the OFSTED questionnaire, there are various others throughout the year. Every Friday there is a whole-school meeting and this is how the current pupils have evolved the present school rules and behaviour policy. It is from pupils' suggestions that the school has built into its curriculum a healthy exercise routine to music first thing in the morning, heart-line exercises and the use of 'Huff and Puff' physical education equipment.
26. Overall, the school looks after its pupils well. This maintains the same standard of care seen at the previous inspection and contributes significantly towards the success of the pupils' learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good links** with its **parents and the community** and **good links** with other **schools and colleges**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents are very good.
- The provision to parents of information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress is very good.
- The involvement of parents through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is very good.
- The school's procedures to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any concerns and complaints are very good.

- Links with the community are very good.
- There are no identified, significant weaknesses.

Commentary

27. This aspect was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. From talking to parents at the meeting, during the inspection and from views on returned questionnaires, it is clear that the school has improved its links with its parents immeasurably since the previous inspection. Now, links with parents and the community are very good. Specifically, parents state that their child likes school, is encouraged to become mature, is expected to work hard, treated fairly and not bullied. In addition, they state that behaviour is good, there is a good range of activities, homework is appropriate, and the school seeks the views of parents. The inspection agrees with all of these views and there were no negative ones.
28. The school supplies all parents with a useful, monthly newsletter, annual governors' report, prospectus and pupils' academic report. All of the latter three conform fully to statutory requirements. The report is clear for parents to understand, states what their child can do and gives realistic targets. The prospectus contains mini homework and behaviour policies. Parents Evenings/Afternoons are held termly. Parents are welcome to talk to staff, either by appointment or via the school's open door policy.
29. The parents were clear that the school is very good at taking their advice, and acting upon their views, be it as parent governors, individuals or as Parent/School Association members. The latter raises considerable funds from arranging social events and has liaised with the school to help finance the library and the outdoor classroom with its nature trail. The school has a very comprehensive and clear complaints and concerns procedure.
30. Parents give good support in school for reading, swimming, design and technology and trips out. At home, parents appreciate the home/school diaries and, where possible, help with reading, mathematics, topics and projects for homework. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are notified of and fully involved with the requirements of the child's statement. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed with pupils, parents and teaching assistants.
31. The local church arranges frequent assemblies whilst the children use the local health club's swimming pool. The children support various charities and the school is very, well used by the community. There are productive links with five local primary and two secondary schools. The latter provide work experience students whilst a neighbouring university sends teacher trainees. The mechanism for transfer of pupils to secondary education is caring and efficient.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are now **good**. The school has been through a difficult time since the previous inspection in October 2001, when the governance of the school was unsatisfactory due to serious weaknesses in the leadership of the headteacher. A new headteacher was appointed permanently in February 2003, following a temporary phase as acting headteacher. A long agenda of previous key issues has been successfully rectified.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is good and governors' very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school has underpinned a positive, rapid management of change.
- The good leadership of the headteacher is strong and determined. She has successfully created a close team of high-quality staff to share her vision through a difficult period of change.

- The effective management of the school has been achieved by subject leaders with a very clear understanding of how to develop and implement positive improvement for their subjects in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- The school's rigorous self-evaluation ensures good monitoring of performance to bring about good improvement of all the school's main functions.
- The headteacher has been very successful in reinstating relationships with parents in order to improve the quality of pupils' education.
- Following the previous report, the school has received very good support from the local education authority's consultants in order to improve curricular planning, assessment, promoting inclusion, leadership and management.
- Extra finances and resourcing have been provided by the local education authority, the Department for Education and Skills, and parents and the community.
- The lack of a school hall, due to its occupation by a class, limits the pupils' opportunities for dance, drama, gymnastics; it creates difficulties for assemblies, lunchtime eating arrangements and public meetings.

Commentary

32. The governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and in shaping its direction is very good. The governing body is good in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities and in promoting very good opportunities for the inclusion of all pupils. The school complies fully with Acts for Race Relations, Disability and Sexual Discrimination. There is shared, honourable intention for improvement. The school's image in the community has been raised significantly. The very good ethos of the school is strongly reinforced through good respect for individual differences and all-inclusive opportunities to ensure pupils are focused on their potential. Governors have been very supportive of the headteacher in the positive, rapid management of change since the previous inspection.
33. The new headteacher has imaginative vision and gives strong, determined leadership. She receives very good support from her senior teacher and staff, who have worked very hard as a close team in order to consolidate good initiatives. The long list of key issues of the previous report has been rectified successfully. Provision for special educational needs is very good. Staffing and resources are most effective in targeting the learning of a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register. The governor with an informed interest for special educational needs makes a very good contribution in monitoring provision to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement and are fully included in all activities.
34. The good delegation of managerial responsibilities to staff is clearly and well managed. Monitoring of teaching and learning is firmly established. The subject leaders have worked very hard to improve planning the curriculum for the whole school. New assessment procedures have helped to identify the subjects' strengths and weaknesses. The implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is of a high quality, helping to raise standards in reading to well above average, and to ensure pupils' good achievement in other areas.
35. The self-evaluation procedures implemented demonstrate the clear educational leadership provided by the headteacher. The school's improvement plan has clear priorities, long-term, in order to develop all aspects of the school's management. They are costed carefully with key personnel identified for the management of change according to an appropriate time-scale. The monitoring of performance data, reviewing patterns and taking action for improving literacy and numeracy achievement are very good. The continuing professional development of staff has been very good and has underpinned the rapid changes needed to move the school out of its 'serious weaknesses' category.
36. Expertise amongst governors to manage financial delegation is good. Expertise amongst governors for understanding local government financial systems is very good. A very efficient school administrator gives good support to help the school in its self-evaluation, financial management and the achievement of educational priorities. Governors and the headteacher

are aware of fluctuations of budget due to numbers on roll varying and they have produced workable contingency plans to protect staffing levels and good resourcing. An explanation is required for the table below, showing budget figures for 2002/2003 (NOR 46). A total commitment of £24,577 entered into the budget was not spent. This includes expenditure of £13,745 against post-Ofsted allowance. The large carry forward, therefore, includes the commitment, which is currently being spent. The governors intend to use the reserve to support spending in 2004/2005, whilst allowing costs to be reduced in a controlled way over a two-year period.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	153,548	Balance from previous year	46,518
Total expenditure	143,043	Balance carried forward to the next	57,025
Expenditure per pupil	3,110		

37. Relations between the school and parents at the time of the previous inspection were a weakness. The new headteacher has reinstated parents' trust and links with parents are now very good. As a result, the contribution parents make to pupils' learning is good. The seeking of parents' views is very good and parents consider their views are very much valued and acted upon.
38. To help the school in the management of change, following the previous report, the local education authority's consultants have given very good support and advice. As a result, planning the curriculum for the whole school with very good linking of themes and subjects has been achieved successfully. Likewise, help with analysing data from pupils' test results has enabled the highlighting of areas for development in subjects, as, for example, the insufficient coverage last year for the aspect of 'shape and space' in mathematics. Extra finances provided by the local education authority, the Department for Education and Skills, and parents and the community, have been used effectively to improve evaluation and provision in subjects and for extra additions, such as the Foundation Stage outdoor play area, a new library, staff room and outdoor classroom for environmental studies. There is good use of additional specialists in swimming and music to establish a good climate for learning. Parents and members of the community do much to enrich the pupils' experiences during and after school, and contribute positively to the quality of education on offer.
39. Barriers affecting the quality of education are: firstly, the lack of provision at the Foundation Stage for sufficient opportunities to enable young children to learn independently and creatively, and secondly, the lack of a school hall and other accommodation limits the pupils' opportunities for dance, drama and gymnastics and creates difficulties for assemblies, lunchtime eating arrangements and public meetings.
40. To conclude, the good leadership, management and governance contribute positively to the good quality of education for pupils and their good achievement. There has been good, rapid improvement in the past 18 months to provide an enriching climate where all pupils' needs are thoughtfully included in a good, comprehensive programme for learning. Value for money is good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception year is **satisfactory**, and there are strengths in the provision for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. This shows improvement from the previous inspection when provision and children's progress were unsatisfactory. At the time of the current inspection, the children had been in school for four weeks and three out of the four children were attending part-time. They start school full-time in the term in which they become five years old.

Children enter the school to join a class containing pupils from Years 1 and 2. Their standards on entry are at the nationally expected levels, although there are wide variations in ability each year. Currently, responsibility for teaching in the class is shared between the headteacher and a part-time teacher who work as an effective team with two teaching assistants. Teaching is satisfactory and has key strengths in the way very good relationships are developed and children are helped to settle into the routines of the classroom. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall in each area of learning, and they are managed well by the adults who work with them to ensure that their individual needs are met. Children are on line to reach the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. Management and organisation of the provision is satisfactory, and there are strengths in the broad range of activities that children undertake. However, they do not always have enough opportunity to use their physical, creative and imaginative skills, or independence in their learning to make choices about what they can do. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory, and a new outdoor play area is a popular addition to the provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident and happy because they are successfully helped to settle into a mixed Years 1 and 2 class.
- Children do not have enough opportunities for self-chosen activities and for choices within adult-initiated activities.
- Children behave very well and thoroughly enjoy their learning because praise and encouragement are used to good effect.
- Routines are well organised to help the children settle into the school.

Commentary

41. The part-time children are confident and happy in school. They work and play enthusiastically with each other and with older children in the class, and are happy to demonstrate their skills and achievements. In class discussions, they confidently talk about the sounds of the letters they have learned. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers and teaching assistants encourage children to talk about what they are doing and how they are feeling. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour. This encouragement ensures children's good behaviour and good listening responses. They achieve well in the early learning goals because teachers praise their efforts.
42. Personal and social development is generally well promoted in all areas of learning, and planning is good. However, at times work is planned too rigorously and this means that children do not have enough opportunity to initiate their own ideas through play. Resources are often chosen for them, which leaves limited opportunity for children to choose activities and equipment for themselves. Classroom routines are well organised. Throughout the term, the children attending part-time are introduced to new experiences to help them gain confidence.

For example, they now go swimming and have just started to stay for lunch before they go home. They thoroughly enjoy the brief physical activity that starts the day for the whole school. Adults provide good role models for the children, always treating each other and children with respect. This is a strong feature of the class, and older children in Years 1 and 2 are careful to support and encourage the younger members of the class. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are systematically taught the names of letters and the sounds they make, which helps their literacy skills.
- At times children have to sit too long in lessons listening to work directed at Years 1 and 2.
- Activities are carefully planned to help the children develop their speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Every opportunity is taken to develop the children's speaking and listening skills. Children achieve as expected in the early learning goals. Their language and communication skills are developing appropriately and most talk freely about their experiences. Teachers are particularly skilled at asking timely questions to help the children extend their range of vocabulary by explaining their ideas. Teaching assistants have good relationships with the children and help them talk about the work they are doing when reading and writing letters or working in other areas of the classroom.
44. The teacher is adapting the literacy strategy to meet the children's needs and involves the teaching assistant appropriately. However, the literacy lesson after swimming was less successful for the Reception age because the periods of time spent listening to the work on reading planned for the pupils in Year 1 and 2 was too long. Letter sounds and names are taught well and children enjoy practising the sounds and shapes of letters in writing. They can recognise the letters when listening to a story on the computer and take great delight in making the computer repeat the sound of the letter they had learnt. Children are helped to recognise and write their names and some of them recognise the letters that make up their names in the names of other children in the group. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

It was **not possible to make an overall judgement** of the provision due to insufficient evidence. The part-time children are able to count and recognise numbers up to 5. In the role-play area, designed as a juice bar, they recognised the price of different juices. Teachers use a range of good opportunities to encourage children to count. For example, the numbers on the attendance register are counted and lunch numbers calculated. Children are successfully taught the days of the week, colours and simple shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A broad range of experiences is planned that extend the children's learning about their bodies and the world around them.

- Teaching is good and children achieve well in science and ICT.
- Children thoroughly enjoy exploring the world around the classroom and are confidently learning how to use the computer.

Commentary

45. The teachers carefully build on the children's knowledge, helping them to learn more about the world they live in. Achievement is often good, particularly in science and ICT. Their natural curiosity is captured by activities related to developing an understanding of how their bodies work. Teaching was good because teachers ensured that time was given specifically to the children in the Reception year and work was very successfully planned to meet their needs. As a result, the children gain a good insight into how their heart acts as a pump and that they can feel the pulse in their necks. All the children understand that the pulse is their heart pumping blood around their body, and that it pumps harder as they move energetically. The strong emphasis and the physical activity that involves the whole school each morning provides a very good opportunity for the Reception children to apply what they had learned. One morning, they checked their pulse rate in their necks when they had finished their exercises without any reminders from the teacher.
46. Curriculum plans show that all the aspects of this area of learning are covered. This marks a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Children explore the past by examining artefacts and make local studies to find out about mini beasts and the seaside. These experiences are enhanced by visits and a range of practical investigations. When finding out about what makes their bodies healthy, the current children in the Reception year have the benefit of playing in the 'Juice Bar' and thoroughly enjoy devising recipes for juice. Another great enjoyment is exploring how computers can help them to learn. Children are confident at running programs and enjoy listening to stories and recognising shapes that make pictures move on the computer. Giggles of delight were the result of one session when children discovered that pressing certain keys made the computer repeat sounds in exciting ways.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in swimming because teaching is very good.
- Children thoroughly enjoy the physical exercise with older children first thing in the morning.
- The very good outdoor play area is not used enough.

Commentary

47. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and the provision for the children's physical development has improved since the previous inspection. Children's achievement is satisfactory. It is good in swimming. Very good teaching of swimming means that children are confident and happy in water. They enjoy playing in the water with others in the group, and this reduces their fear. The leadership and management of one swimming session were excellent, and enabled all children to be supported very effectively.
48. The new outdoor play area is an asset to the children in the Reception year, and this is a good improvement since the previous inspection. There is a satisfactory range of toys and equipment, but the borrowed wheeled toys are not always used in a challenging way. Appropriate plans are in place to extend the range of toys. As yet, the new area is not used regularly enough as an extension to the children's learning. Children enjoy playing with the equipment in the house, carrying and moving furniture safely as they re-arrange the area. They thoroughly enjoy following the sequence of movement during the physical exercise sessions each morning, concentrating hard to extend their bodies like the teachers and older children. Children manipulate small screws on construction apparatus and demonstrate increasing skill and control in use of brushes, pencils and crayons and the mouse on the computer. However, they do not have enough opportunity to challenge themselves by balancing and climbing on

larger apparatus because of constraints of the building. As a result, their gross motor skills in these aspects of physical education are underdeveloped.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

49. It was **not possible to make an overall judgement** about provision for the children's creative development on this inspection due to insufficient evidence. The work seen in painting was good and challenging activities extend the children's experiences. Children are generally encouraged to mix paint and make choices about the colours and size of brushes they should have to paint exciting and lively patterns and pictures. Sometimes too much is chosen for them. The role-play area is of good quality and promotes much discussion about who will be the manager and the shop assistant in the 'Juice Bar'. Children use connecting toys to create models and help each other to fix their models together. However, they do not always have enough opportunities to use their imagination in dance and role-play.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

The provision for English is **good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in reading is very good. It is good in writing throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs have very good support in English.
- Teaching is good and the curriculum is very well planned to enable pupils to develop their literacy skills effectively in other subjects.
- Assessment procedures are very good and test data is analysed efficiently.
- The leadership provides a good understanding of the priorities for development.

Commentary

50. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because work is carefully planned to meet their individual needs. The very small numbers in each year group and the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each class, mean that standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 vary from year to year. Therefore, a comparison of national test results with national and similar schools is unreliable, because of the very small numbers in each year at St Mellion School. The pupils' work, the results of the national tests at Year 6 in 2002 and 2003, and the school's very good assessment procedures indicate that achievement is good overall and very good in reading. Standards overall are satisfactory. This marks a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
51. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills. This results in good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, pupils are articulate and can develop ideas through discussion. The achievement of all groups of pupils in reading is very good throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils have achieved well from Reception and are developing a good range of strategies to help them read, such as the sounds letters make on their own and with other letters. One of the main reasons for this is that the skills of reading are systematically and effectively taught. Pupils apply these skills when they are reading story books and the stories they have written themselves. Good teaching systematically develops and extends pupils' literacy skills and their knowledge of books. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a great enthusiasm for reading for information and enjoyment. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very

well. They read accurately, with confidence, and can explain important features of the text they are reading and the impact that characters have on a story.

52. Achievement in writing is good because teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes in English lessons. Those pupils with special educational needs require more support for writing than reading. Praise and encouragement gives them the confidence to try different ideas. Teaching is good and pupils' work shows good development in their writing skills. By the end of Year 2, all the pupils have a good idea of how to construct a sentence. Their writing is clear and accurate. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils systematically develop their skills and extend their capabilities by covering a broad range of writing for different purposes. High attaining pupils achieve well to reach above average standards. Innovative starts to their imaginative writing capture the interest of the reader because pupils successfully apply their knowledge about adjectives and adverbs. Spelling for most becomes increasingly accurate, although some pupils with special educational needs have additional support to improve their spelling of more complex words. As pupils progress through the school, they develop a neat joined style of handwriting and presentation of work is good.
53. English is well led and managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides a good role model for other teachers. As a result, all teachers are committed to raising standards and improving achievement. Planning is very good throughout the school and the national literacy strategy has been effectively adapted to meet the needs of mixed year groups, and the wide variety of levels of attainment in each class. Teachers assess pupils' achievement very effectively, using the information to plan the next stages of learning, to set individual and school targets and track the progress that individuals and groups of pupils make. The provision for pupils with special educational needs in English is very good and the targets in individual education plans are used as a basis for pupils' learning. This helps them achieve very well. ICT is used effectively to enhance pupils' skills and a good range of books and materials support their learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Pupils are provided with a good range of activities in other subjects that helps them practise their language and literacy skills. Good examples of writing are to be found in history and geography, particularly in the projects undertaken during the last year. They express their views and listen sensibly to the views of others in science and history. Individual targets are clearly identified. Target cards in all year groups remind pupils to concentrate on improving their English skills in other areas of the curriculum.

French

Commentary

Pupils in Year 6 are taught French by a specialist teacher from the community college. It was not possible to observe teaching during the inspection. Lessons in the current Year 6 have just begun. This provision provides an effective link with the next stages of education and prepares the pupils for learning a modern foreign language. It makes a positive contribution to the pupils' cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**, ensuring pupils' **good achievement** throughout each year. Standards are at the national average levels, despite the fact that the school has higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Due to very small numbers in each age group, comparisons with the previous report's judgement on standards, or with the data for similar schools, are unreliable and inappropriate. Since the previous inspection, improvement in provision has been good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 there is good accuracy for calculating numbers in the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of the value of each digit in larger numbers.
- Pupils' achievement in interpreting data and plotting evidence with graphs is good.
- Pupils' measuring skills are accurate, as are their recognition and use of two and three-dimensional shapes.
- Although achievement is satisfactory in the aspect of 'shape and space', it is not as successful as that of other aspects and is of a lower standard.
- Good teaching ensures that the curriculum is now better balanced and enables good use of numeracy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

55. Progress of pupils' learning is consistent throughout the school. By Year 6, pupils calculate all four operations of thousands, hundreds, tens and units, using the four rules accurately. Pupils use a variety of methods for their calculations and explain what they have done and why. Higher attaining pupils use fractions, decimals and percentages to describe proportions correctly. Measuring skills meet the average national level and pupils describe correctly two and three-dimensional shapes, explaining the properties of triangles clearly. The measuring of angles with a protractor is quite skilful, as is the use of ICT to explore and match correctly different properties of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils' skills in ICT successfully support their understanding of mathematical shapes and common attributes. Presentation is logically ordered with clear methodology explained or recorded.
56. By Year 2, most pupils recognise numbers to 100. Pupils add and subtract to 20 and a minority record tens and units, adding on a single digit. There is good understanding of odd, even and doubling numbers. Pupils measure accurately in centimetres and have a secure understanding of measuring time. There is good understanding and achievement in telling the time, sequencing the days of the week, months and seasons of the year. Most pupils confidently tackle problem-solving.
57. The weaknesses in the aspect of shape and space are due largely to insufficient coverage of the aspect during a school year. The school has recognised this previous omission and current plans show sufficient targeting of the aspect in order to raise pupils' achievement to the level of other mathematical aspects.
58. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 it is very good. Pupils' learning reflected the good and very good teaching. Achievement is good due to very good curricular planning for mathematics, good support from the local education authority in how to target individual pupils through Springboard activities in preparation for the 2004 National tests. There are good assessments and tracking of pupils' strengths and needs. In the main, the balance of the curriculum is good.
59. Leadership in mathematics is good with a strong drive for improvement and clear direction. Staff have worked extremely hard in the past year to improve provision for mathematics, and have analysed, in depth, the pupils' answers to test questions, in order to support them further. The evaluation of the school's performance has been very good and systematic, providing valuable feedback for teachers to adapt lesson plans. Such factors have ensured that pupils with special educational needs, a high proportion, have received very good encouragement and precisely focused targets. Higher achieving pupils successfully reach higher levels due to carefully planned challenges for them.
60. The whole picture for mathematics is of a subject progressing very successfully since the time of the previous inspection. This is mainly due to improved leadership and management and a closer involvement with all staff in order to understand how very good monitoring of

performance data, reviewing patterns and taking action can ensure success and higher standards. Leadership, planning and assessing are now good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Pupils' skills in mathematics enable them to solve investigations in science effectively. Presentation of data and findings is logically ordered with clear methodology explained and recorded during scientific investigations. Pupils have good skills in compiling graphs when analysing data. This helps them to explain clearly their findings about geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**, ensuring pupils' **good achievement** throughout each year. Standards are at the national average levels, despite the fact that the school has higher numbers than average of pupils with special educational needs. Due to the very small numbers in each age and fluctuations in pupils' ability, comparisons with the previous report's judgements on standards, or with the data of similar schools, are unreliable and inappropriate. Since the previous inspection, improvement in provision has been good. The subject's previous key issue, namely a weakness in scientific investigation, has been made into a strength.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, pupils have good skills in order to plan investigation in science.
- Pupils can predict, hypothesise, present information clearly and evaluate findings accurately.
- Pupils have an accurate knowledge of all aspects of the science curriculum, which is at the national average level.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils reach balanced conclusions and have a satisfactory knowledge of a fair test.
- Pupils show appropriate knowledge of life processes and living things, meeting the requirements of national average levels.
- Pupils have good knowledge of materials and their properties.
- Pupils recognise and name a range of sources of light and sound.

Commentary

62. Pupils' achievement over time is good, particularly in rectifying a previous key issue linked to weak science investigations. Pupils' literacy skills enable clear recording of their own thoughts. By the end of Year 6, pupils write in their own words:
- what they want to find out;
 - what they think will happen;
 - what they need and how well they'll do the investigation;
 - how they will record the results; and
 - what they have found out.
63. Good numeracy skills are shown in order to record findings and calculate conclusions for science, as, for example, when plotting measurements to investigate what affects the size of a pencil's shadow. Pupils are asked if the distance between the torch and the pencil makes a difference. Pupils reach accurate conclusions from their results plotted on a line graph and its emerging pattern. Pupils' knowledge about the National Curriculum areas of study for science is secure and at the average level.
64. By the end of Year 2, pupils show clear understanding of the human body and its main organs, accurately recognising bodily responses after exertion. They correctly record their own responses in tabular format and are evidently developing their ideas about a 'fair test'. Young

pupils have good and above-average knowledge of materials and properties. They describe similarities and differences between materials precisely. They explain how some materials are changed by heating or cooling, bending or stretching. Pupils recognise and name correctly a range of sources of light and sound. They correctly compare speed, contrast sounds, and describe brightness of light.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A strength in teaching is in the very good impact which whole-school and lesson planning have on pupils' good achievement. There is very good use of adult support to ensure good scientific investigations and to promote very good equal opportunities for all pupils. As a result, pupils with special educational needs are fully catered for. Higher achieving pupils reach above average standards due to careful planning of their tasks. The breadth of curricular opportunities and balance between areas of the National Curriculum for science is very good, carefully thought through, with very good links to other subjects.
66. Leadership and management of science are very good. All staff work as a cohesive team, thinking carefully through their evaluations of lessons and pupils' learning, in order to plan further support and challenges. In addition, good teaching and leadership and management of literacy and numeracy, has ensured that pupils' skills support their analysis and recording effectively in science lessons. There has been imaginative development of an outdoor classroom in order to encourage and support pupils' learning of environmental science. There is very good monitoring of the whole school's performance data to review the patterns of pupils' achievement in order to take action. Since the previous inspection, leadership, management, planning and assessing in science are very good, showing very good improvement in the overall quality of provision for science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good because pupils are becoming competent at a rapid rate.
- ICT is used very well to support learning in other subjects.
- Teachers' developing good competencies and confidence are having a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Further work is now required to reinforce all the competencies of modelling and control firmly within the programme of work.

Commentary

67. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. This is mainly because the new programme of work and teachers' confidence and improved skills and knowledge are beginning to have a positive impact on standards and the rate at which pupils' acquire skills and knowledge. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. They can locate and manage programs and record answers to questions, although valuable time was lost in one lesson when computers kept switching themselves off. Teaching was good in one art lesson and the teacher helped the pupils gain access to a website about different tartans. Pupils' learning was good because they could use the site to find out which tartans they would like to use in their paintings.
68. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, and at an early period of the school year, standards are just below but close to those expected for the age group. These pupils have not had as much time as others working through the new rigorous programme of work as other year groups. Their achievement is rapid as they are confidently developing new skills and competencies. Effective keyboard skills mean that most pupils type proficiently and they manage text to enhance titles and improve the presentation of their work.

Collections of past work indicate that pupils import pictures into text and make patterns and borders to enhance their work. They clearly enjoyed making a programmable toy move around the playground. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are ready to explore the effect of changing variables in simulations in order to predict the outcomes of their different decisions. In addition, they are ready to load procedures for transmission in order to control events.

69. The improved provision of computers in each classroom has had a positive impact on teaching and learning. The difficulties of the past related to the unreliability of the machines have largely been overcome. This means that pupils can locate programs and save and print their work. The digital camera is used to support pupils' learning and record school events. The ICT co-ordinator is managing change at an appropriate rate for teachers to maintain their confidence. She provides a good role model for other teachers by using her skills and knowledge effectively to develop schemes of work, examples of tasks and collections of pupils' work. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when standards and provision in ICT were unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. From the Reception year to Year 6, teachers plan very effective tasks that enable pupils to extend their ICT skills in subjects such as English, science and geography. ICT is used most effectively as a tool for learning across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 send e-mails to children in New Zealand and this supports their learning about the geography and culture of that country. Throughout the school, word processing skills are developed systematically to support the presentation of topics in history and geography, stories and poems. Displays of work show how pictorial representation of investigations enhances pupils' studies, as, for example, when data from the measurement of the flow of a river has been used to make pie charts. The Internet is used extensively for research in history, geography and science.

HUMANITIES

It is **not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching in history and geography** because only one history lesson was observed. Geography is not currently being taught because it is not the focus of work within the planning cycle. **Religious education has been inspected under Section 23** because the school is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school.

History

Commentary

71. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about overall provision in history but pupils' recorded work analysed was often good. In Years 1 and 2, work is planned appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils' work shows that the achievement of pupils of different levels of attainment is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and often good in Years 3 to 6. The long-term rolling programme shows that pupils are covering all elements of history. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing a sound understanding of the passage of time. They recognise how equipment and toys change over the years. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are covering a broad range of work. They are very interested in the periods of history they study. Their study of ancient Egypt and the Tudor period captured their interest and this resulted in good work. Only one lesson in the Years 3 to 6 class was observed during the inspection and teaching was good. Pupils' interest in the life of Boudica was captured. They were able to recognise bias in the historical accounts of the time from Roman writings. Pupils consider that history is interesting and enjoyable. They are developing a good understanding of how events in Roman and Tudor times affect life in the British Isles today. Pupils' work shows that improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Geography

Commentary

72. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about the provision in geography because no lessons were planned to take place during the inspection. Previous work shows that achievement of pupils of different levels of attainment is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and often good in Years 3 to 6. The school has made significant improvements to the geography curriculum since the previous inspection and the weaknesses identified have been successfully addressed. The subject meets requirements and the curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. It meets the needs of pupils in each year group and is skilfully planned to meet the needs of the wide-ranging levels of attainment in each class. Good links are made between history and geography and there are good examples in pupils' work of the successful application of literacy and numeracy skills. ICT is used as a tool to support learning in geography and pupils use the Internet to research information and have e-mailed children in a school in New Zealand. Pupils' work in geography enhances their cultural development.

Religious Education

Religious education was inspected under Section 23 because the school is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school. Statutory requirements are fully met.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was **not enough evidence to report and judge fully on any of these subjects individually**. However, lessons were observed in swimming and one lesson observed in music. Short sessions in physical activities for all were observed at the beginning of the school day and during a session called 'Heartline'. Samples of pupils' work on display were analysed in art and design and from an art portfolio. No lessons were seen in design and technology. Documents and the school's planning were analysed and discussions took place with subject leaders.

Art and Design

Commentary

73. In each year group, pupils' achievement in art and design is good. There are strengths in fine-line drawings with good awareness of design. Pupils' close observational drawings are successfully representational. Silk paintings show how pupils apply observations of mini-beasts onto silk, using good control and a broad range of techniques. Good design detail in Years 4 and 5 has led to successful large three-dimensional models linked to ancient Egypt. From Reception upwards, there is an imaginative interpretation of finger puppets. A broad curriculum for art and design, linked creatively to other subjects, has provided valuable experiences for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. Samples of work reflect the higher achievement of talented pupils receiving good challenges.
74. The management of visitors to the school and visits out related to art and design has been good and has ensured that art is successful in improving perceptions of the natural and artificially made world. The subject has contributed strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Art and design is valued throughout the school as an enlightening activity to communicate ideas and emotions in a visual form.

Design and Technology

Commentary

75. Provision in design and technology is at least satisfactory. A sample of pupils' collage of glazed tiles shows good achievement. Little evidence of finished products was available to inspectors because work had been rightly taken home by pupils, following completion. The examination of teachers' planning and pupils' projections, designs and evaluations show good coverage of the National Curriculum and good development of pupils' skills throughout each year group.

Music

Commentary

76. Management of the subject is good. Good provision ensures a broad range of experiences for a majority of pupils to realise good achievement. Musical expertise is bought in for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The range of extra lessons includes guitars, violins, French horn and recorders. A third of pupils each year take up the offer of extra instrumental tuition. The school has taken part in Callington's Music Festival and the school has participated in a charity gala for the South West Hospice. Such good enrichment has alerted pupils to their own potential and enhanced their spiritual, social and cultural development.
77. During the inspection, observations of pupils performing successfully together using tuned and untuned percussion, demonstrated that pupils' achievement is good. Older pupils sustain a good rhythm to the accompaniment of the keyboard, manage a rest beat successfully, and correctly recognise crotchet and minim notation on a chart. Singing during collective worship is confident with clear entry to each phrase, correct pitch and acceptable duration of notes.

Physical Education

Commentary

78. Teaching and learning in swimming is very good and pupils achieve high standards. All pupils receive very demanding challenges. By the time pupils leave school, all strongly swim several lengths of a 25 metre pool in a variety of strokes. This is largely due to the excellent leadership and management of swimming, the regular weekly sessions each term throughout the school year, and the excellent facilities of a hired pool within a local health club. Pupils learn in small groups with teachers who are expert in teaching swimming.
79. Very good outdoor facilities at the school are most conducive to a full range of team games, sports and athletics. Evidence points to a good balance of outdoor physical development in addition to extra facilities on Outward Bound courses during residential visits. The good opportunities strongly encourage pupils' good social development. The school has made a very good analysis of the time deployed for pupils for each aspect of physical development, namely, athletics, team games, football, netball, tag rugby, cross-country, rounders, swimming, gymnastics and dance.
80. The school's lack of a hall limits full provision for gymnastics and dance. During the most recent two school years, the school has used Callington College's gymnasium for a six-week block and the college's dance studio for a three-week block. The limitations for gymnastics and dance at the school have created an imbalance in the overall provision for physical education, a provision which would likely have been very good if sufficient dance and gymnastics were available within the school's own accommodation.
81. The leadership and management of physical education overall is good, apart from insufficient planned opportunities for dance and gymnastics. This lack of sufficient provision is unsatisfactory and linked closely to the limitations of the school's accommodation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

There was **not enough evidence to report on this area individually** because no lessons took place during the inspection.

Commentary

82. A new and satisfactory curriculum is implemented that enables the personal, social and health and citizenship to be developed in individual lessons and as part of other subjects such as history, geography and science. Teachers are sensibly developing a scheme of work throughout the current term that is likely to meet the needs of pupils in the two mixed age classes. Lessons are well established in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, lessons are due to start this term in addition to the personal and social education programme that forms part of religious education lessons. Whole-school meetings each week enable pupils to discuss important issues about the school in relation to citizenship.
83. The school has successfully introduced a healthy exercise programme for all, beginning with exercise to music immediately before school opens, and resulting in eager pupils running into the playground each morning so that they are in time to participate in the activities. These activities have been the focus of a local teachers' training college's research programme on healthy living. Healthy eating, the benefits of drinking water, drugs awareness and good provision for education in relationships, sexual development and the ensuring of healthy bodies, are positive features of personal and social education. Visitors are used to good effect to enhance the provision. Assemblies seen during the inspection also made a satisfactory contribution to this aspect.

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	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	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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