

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ALVERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Penzance

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111806

Headteacher: Mrs J Kirman

Lead inspector: Mr M S Burghart

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266305

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 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	287 plus 41 part time children in the maintained nursery unit
School address:	Toltuff Crescent Penzance Cornwall
Postcode:	TR18 4QD
Telephone number:	01736 364087
Fax number:	01736 364087
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Hudson
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a large primary school with its own maintained nursery sharing a large site with a private nursery at the centre of a housing estate in an area of Penzance recognised as needing support in terms of deprivation. Of the 287 pupils on roll and the 41 who attend nursery part time a high proportion (nearly a third) have special educational needs. Eight pupils have formal statements of special needs which is above average. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. No pupil requires extra help as a result having English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than in reception and Year 6 is about average as is the turnover of staff. The head has been in post for two years and she is the third head since the last inspection. The school was recognised as an Investor in People in 2002, a Healthy School in 2000 and as having extra proficiency in the early years in 2003. It is currently awaiting confirmation of being adjudged as Dyslexia Friendly. The main school is organised in eleven classes. Some of these contain mixed age groups as a result of the school's intake number, determined by the local education authority as being 45. Reception children presently in one class will be split into two classes some with the youngest Year 1 pupils when another group of nursery children move up.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Art and design, Information and communication technology, Personal, social and health education.
9644	Mr M Whitaker	Lay inspector	
24342	Mrs D Franklin	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, English.
22578	Mr D G Jones	Team inspector	Science, Design and technology, Physical education, Music, Special educational needs.
32296	Mr W James	Team inspector	Geography, History, Religious education.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This continues to be a good school which takes very good care of its pupils and helps them, whatever their ability, to achieve well. The school has a very good ethos. As a result of very good strategic planning the school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children make a very good start in the nursery.
- Provision for special educational needs (SEN) is very good.
- The school takes very good care of pupils.
- The school is very well managed and effectively led.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very well to support other subjects.
- Enrichment of the curriculum, particularly in music provision, is very good.
- Standards in investigative mathematics and science could be higher.
- Design and technology has too low a profile.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1999 with notable success in how the governors and the head (new two years ago) work together to manage the school. Planning, both in strategic and curriculum terms, is much improved with evaluation and assessment used more effectively. Accommodation and resources are much better with new facilities for information and communication technology, a newly built very good nursery, and new windows throughout. Although standards might appear to have declined pupils' good achievement has been sustained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	C	C
Science	B	D	D	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

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

The table would appear to show that standards are lower than in 1999. What it cannot show is the vastly increased profile of special educational needs from 15 per cent to 33 per cent (and in the Year 6 tested in 2004 40 per cent). Inspectors are confident that pupils do not underachieve. Indeed as is evident from current work pupils are achieving well, and in many cases very well, to be close to national averages by the time they leave. This shows good value added from below average starting points at the beginning of nursery. Higher attaining pupils reach standards appropriate to their ability. To the school's credit standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 in all subjects except for the investigational aspects of mathematics and science where they are below average, and in art, physical education, personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and singing, where standards are good. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage

and most reach all expected learning goals except for those in communication, language and literacy, where low starting points mean that even good achievement cannot help children catch up. Pupils' personal development is very good with strengths in moral and social elements. Pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good. Behaviour, where a significant proportion of pupils have targets for improvement, is judged as good. Attendance is improved to satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a good, relevant curriculum which is well taught. This has positive effects on pupils' learning and achievement. Considerable emphasis on raising pupils' self esteem is successful in continuing the push to raise standards. Teaching was very good or better in nearly a third of lessons with over three-quarters good or better. Obvious strengths are in nursery, Years 3 to 6, and English and maths teaching across the school. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to the quality of education provided and support for special educational needs is very good. Extracurricular opportunities and enrichment through visits and visitors are very good. Mixed age classes are well taught. Although a small minority of parents disagree inspectors find links with parents, the community and other schools are good. Resources and accommodation are good. ICT is used very effectively to support other subjects. Music provision is good and makes a strong contribution to the school's ethos. However, design and technology has too low a profile, and the library is underdeveloped.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is very well managed and effectively led. The head, in a good partnership with the governors, leads staff as an effective team and has used contributions from all concerned in a very good improvement plan. This gives the school clear educational direction. The strategic management of the school, linking finance to priorities, is very good, benefiting from the high quality work of the school secretary. The school leadership team and subject co-ordinators play a good part in managing the school. Management of assessment and of behaviour are strengths. Governors support the school effectively. Their governance is good. The school is now very good at self evaluation and there is a determination to continue to improve.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Most parents are pleased with the school, especially the quality of teaching and levels of care. A minority expressed concerns over staff absence due to courses, approachability, and communications. Inspectors find that information available for parents is very good, particularly in newsletters and three written reports a year. The school continues to seek ways of improving communication and its already good public image. Attendance at courses enhances the quality of education provided and those teachers covering for staff on training are usually well known to the school. Pupils like the school especially extracurricular opportunities and the very successful School Parliament.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**



The school is committed to raising standards. The most important things it should do to improve are to:

- Raise standards and pupils' achievement in the investigative and experimental aspects of mathematics and science.
- Improve the profile of design and technology.
- Further develop library provision.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

Pupils' achievement is good.

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to achieve the expected early learning goals by the end of their reception year, in all areas except communication skills, which are below expectations. By Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in English, mathematics and science is average.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are achieving well.
- There are weakness in using and applying mathematics across the school, and in scientific enquiry in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in art, singing, physical education and personal, social, health and citizenship education are better than expected by the end of Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. In the Foundation Stage children are set to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning except communication skills. Many children start their education with skills below those expected for their age and many with communication skills that are well below expectations. Children make good progress, particularly in the nursery where teaching is often very good, and all achieve well. Early identification of children with speech and language difficulties enables these children to have focused support, particularly in the reception class where they regularly work in small groups with a trained support assistant. This supports their learning very well.

2. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and at the end of Year 2 attainment in English, mathematics and science is average. Many pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening skills and attainment is average by the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment meets the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, weaknesses have been identified in using and applying mathematics across the school, and in scientific enquiry in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' achievement is not as good in these areas of mathematics and science and is below that expected.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (18.8)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.7 (13.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.3 (15.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.1 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.9 (27.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.0 (27.9)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 49 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Test results in 2004 were similar to those found from inspection evidence. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was average when compared with both national and similar schools. The trends in the school's average National Curriculum points for all three subjects were above the national trend. Pupils in Year 6 attained average results in English and mathematics but below average in science. Results were average when compared with similar schools but the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for these subjects was below the national trend. Standards are not as good as at the time of the last inspection. This is because at that time the school had a particularly good group of pupils in Year 6, many of whom were high achievers. Currently the trend is very different and in both 2004 and in the current Year 6, there is a high proportion of pupils who have been identified as having learning and behavioural difficulties. These pupils have been carefully tracked throughout their time in school and appropriate support provided for them. Consequently they are often achieving very well even though many do not achieve the expected National Curriculum levels of attainment by the end of Year 6.

4. Pupils' attainment in art, singing, physical education and personal, social, health and citizenship education is better than expected by the time pupils leave the school. Planning for these subjects is a particular strength and the very good range of extracurricular sporting and musical activities supports standards very well. Standards in other subjects meet the national expectations by the end of Year 6 and attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Cross-curricular links between subjects are developing well and making good use of curriculum time. This is having a positive impact on raising standards. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in design and technology. However, inspection evidence indicates that the subject has too low a profile in the school, which is having a negative impact on the standards being achieved. The improved resources in ICT and their use are having positive impacts on raising standards in many areas of the curriculum.

5. Pupils with special needs achieve well across the whole school. In Years 2 and 6, for example, a good many reach the expected levels for English, mathematics and science when they take the National Curriculum tests. Those that do, because of good teaching, often achieve very well.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to the wide range of opportunities offered by the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, as are relationships at all levels. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attitudes to their lessons and to the wide range of activities and responsibilities on offer are very good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Relationships at all levels are very good and contribute significantly to pupils' positive attitudes and personal development.
- Pupils behave well throughout the school.

## **Commentary**

6. Throughout the school there is a buzz of purposeful activity. Pupils of all ages show very good, positive attitudes to school. In lessons they are enthusiastic and keen to contribute. They respond very well to lively and imaginative teaching; they are very well motivated and they enjoy their learning. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides. Nearly two thirds of all pupils take part in an extracurricular activity, the choir, for example has 120 members. The youngest children in the nursery and reception class settle well to school. They are happy and relaxed and feel secure in a supportive environment.

7. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Spiritual development is good. Pupils show appropriate respect to other beliefs such as Judaism, Islam and Sikhism, about which they learn in religious education lessons - a copy of the Koran, for example, is displayed respectfully in a classroom. Pupils display compassion and empathy in their charity fundraising activities and they are made aware of the spirituality in the natural world surrounding them. Social and moral development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to think through the consequences of their actions, for example in circle time sessions devoted to friendship. The school is an orderly, co-operative and very inclusive community in which pupils respect each other. Social development is very well promoted through a wide range of pupil-led activities such as the School Parliament, bully busters, Fab Fives and Super Sixes. Pupils are given a number of personal development opportunities such as residential visits, drama productions and competitive sport. Cultural development is very good, especially with regard to pupils' own heritage. Pupils take part in traditional activities - the feast of St John for example - and they are made well aware of their county's history, with pupils studying the lives of Cornish saints and the history of tin mining. Pupils work with local artists, there is a well supported choir, orchestra and a drama club. Visits from African groups, work on Aboriginal art and weekly French classes confront pupils with the culture of other societies.

8. Pupils with special needs show at least good attitudes to their work and often very good attitudes and behaviour in their small group situations. Here, relationships with the teaching staff and assistants are very good.

9. Relationships are very good at all levels. Pupils work well in pairs and groups and support each other well in stressful circumstances (such as speaking in front of the whole school). Staff respect pupils and value all contributions so that pupils feel safe in trying answers they are not sure of. The quality of relationships between pupils with special needs and the staff (teachers and teaching assistants) who support them, is especially good and contributes significantly to raising the self esteem of those pupils.

***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	287	2	0

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

10. Behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly and polite towards visitors. They move about the school in an orderly fashion and treat school property with respect. In lessons, they respond well to teachers' high expectations, consistent standards and skilful classroom management. The school has a very clear stance on bullying and pupils are involved, through bully busters, in dealing with any instances that arise. No instances of harassment towards any group of pupils were observed during the inspection. Whilst instances of bullying do occur, neither pupils nor parents regard them as a significant issue. There have been two fixed-period exclusions over the preceding twelve months.

#### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance is improved to satisfactory. Authorised absence, this year at 5.6 per cent is now broadly in line with the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average. A small minority of pupils are persistently late; the school has effective procedures for dealing with the matter. Some families take holidays in term time; this is, in part, due to the fact that a number of parents are engaged in seasonal employment.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education well matched to pupils' needs.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching is good and frequently very good and this has positive effects on pupils' learning.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and support are very good in the nursery.
- Literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to teaching and learning.
- Mixed age and ability classes are well taught.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very effectively taught.
- A small minority of lessons lack pace and challenge.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	14 (27%)	29 (56%)	8 (15%)	0	0	0

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

12. All teachers were seen teaching a variety of subjects by different inspectors. Nearly all had at least one good lesson and many better than this. Seven teachers had very good lessons and one (nursery ICT) excellent. A commendable six members of staff had no lessons worse than good. The eight satisfactory lessons were spread across five teachers. The strong profile of teaching described in the previous report has been sustained and in aspects such as planning and assessment improved.

13. This positive profile is judged as being responsible for pupils' good learning and achievement. In the case of pupils with SEN pupils frequently achieve very well because of the input of teachers and support staff. Teaching assistants in particular make a very strong contribution to learning from the early morning brain gym activity sessions to very good withdrawal sessions designed both to promote self esteem and to teach targeted skills. All staff including those in the office and the caretaker set pupils an excellent example in their commitment, work rate and consideration for others. As a result pupils respond very well, the quality of relationships is very good and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them. The teaching of pupils with special needs is always good and often very good. It is more often very good in small group or in one to one situations. This was noted, for example, in a one to one session where a pupil with speech and language difficulties was receiving extra support. The pupil was getting very good support from a learning support assistant, who had planned her work well, knew the details of the pupil's problems and was able to address these accurately in her teaching. As a result very good progress was made in the lesson.

14. Highlights in teaching are in:

- The Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) where all lessons were good or better;
- Literacy and numeracy, where staff work closely to national strategies and do well to develop pupils' basic skills as tools to support other areas of the curriculum;
- Teachers' use of ICT (especially new interactive whiteboards, digital cameras and the Internet) to teach other subjects;
- Good questioning which leads pupils to reason before answering in sentence form;
- Good use of assessment and tracking of pupils' performance in order to set targets for individuals and change planning where necessary. This includes good marking, especially in English work, which shows pupils how to make improvements as well as rewarding them for effort and success.

15. Teaching was notably, but not exclusively, strong for Years 3 to 6. Pupils in mixed age classes are well supported with a two year rolling programme which ensures that they do not repeat material unnecessarily. Parents who expressed concerns over the mixed key stage Years 2 and 3 class can be reassured that pupils from Year 2 will have covered all aspects required to face national tests for seven year olds as well as having benefited from early work on Key Stage 2. For example pupils were seen to achieve well and make good progress in a good design and technology lesson evaluating sandwich fillings, performing as well, and in some cases better than, Year 3 colleagues. There were very good examples

of teaching in some Years 1 and 2 lessons: for example in literacy which is securely rooted in very effective planning and assessment throughout.

16. Areas for further development are in increasing the pace and challenge of some sessions especially for pupils in Year 1 to ensure that they make as much progress as they can.

17. A major success of teaching and support is the consistent management of behaviour. Expectations are high and the school's systems for rewards and sanctions are used very effectively. Classes are well managed and there were few instances of less than acceptable behaviour during the inspection, although a significant minority of pupils have individual education plans with targets concerning response and behaviour.

18. The quality of teaching is considerably enhanced as a result of monitoring and support from the head, members of the leadership team, and some subject co-ordinators. Expertise is effectively shared and as a part of professional development, areas for improvement are targeted and resourced. This is an improvement since the last inspection and a strong element of the school's very good strategic management.

## **The curriculum**

Provision in the curriculum is good with some very good features.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is good.
- ICT is used very effectively across the school.
- Provision for SEN pupils is very good.
- Music is an obvious strength of the school.
- The use of assessment as a focus for achievement is good.
- The curriculum offered to children under five years of age is good.
- The using and applying aspects of both mathematics and science require improvement.
- There is a need to improve the school's accommodation, with respect to the school's library.
- Provision for design and technology is currently underdeveloped and requires improvement.

## **Commentary**

19. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is good with some very good features. Provision for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is a strong feature throughout the school and basic skills are taught well. In addition, opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the curriculum are very good and a key feature. Teachers make very good cross curricular links and ICT is planned for, and used effectively to support learning. There were many examples throughout the inspection when ICT was used in a variety of curriculum areas. As a consequence, pupils were confident, enthusiastic and made good progress during lessons.

20. The curriculum is well planned and well delivered and as a result pupils are motivated to achieve and are stimulated during most lessons. The use of assessment to inform future

planning and target individual attainment is good and has a positive effect on the overall achievement of pupils. As a result the curriculum is dynamic and teachers plan with consistency to meet the individual needs of different ability groups within classes. Curriculum opportunities for children under five years of age are good and fully support children's transition into the National Curriculum. Opportunities are well planned and children are given a variety of appropriate experiences to develop basic skills with an emphasis on practical learning activities.

21. Provision for SEN pupils is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of pupils' needs and the effective use of learning support assistants has a significant impact on the pupils' progress and learning. This leads to an inclusive curriculum where all pupils are valued and have equal access to learning. Pupils with special needs have good access to the full curriculum. Their one to one or small group sessions, when taken outside the class, are arranged so as to ensure that vital class lessons are not missed. There is good quality assessment in all areas of special needs work. Class teachers and their assistants make regular notes on progress and often discuss progress after lessons. In this way they can prepare ahead for the next stage of learning. As a result pupils make good progress in their learning.

22. Provision for curriculum enrichment is very good. This includes an impressive array of extracurricular activities, where two thirds of pupils attend one or more of the school clubs. There is a good range of activities for both older pupils and younger children, and the school environment is well utilised as is pupils' understanding of their Cornish heritage. The curriculum is well enhanced by a variety of visitors and special events that support pupils' academic and social progress and wellbeing.

23. Evidence from the inspection illustrates that homework is satisfactory, pupils understand what is expected of them and tasks appropriately support learning. In addition the school provides the teaching of a modern foreign language with French being taught to all year groups. No French teaching was observed during the inspection. Music is a real strength in the school and its provision is good. As a result many children learn musical instruments, are involved in the school choir, and participate in the subject at a level above the national expectation.

24. The school makes good use of its accommodation but it does recognise the current library is insufficient in both size and quality. Resources to support the curriculum are good and used effectively.

25. There are insufficient opportunities for children to problem solve in both mathematics and science. The using and applying element of both subjects is currently inadequate and opportunities to utilise important skills are missed as a consequence. This area for improvement is recognised by the school as a focus for future improvement in the drive to improve standards.

26. The current provision for design and technology has too low a profile in time allocation and this has negative effects on pupils' learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**



The school provides a very good standard of physical and emotional care for pupils. Very good support is provided, based on a thorough knowledge of pupils' personal and academic development. Pupils' influence on the life of the school is considerable.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's procedures for ensuring pupils' health and welfare are very good; the promotion of healthy living is especially so.
- Very good relationships ensure that pupils are very well supported personally and academically. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils are very good.
- Pupils play a very significant part in the day-to-day running of the school and in the management of their own learning.

### **Commentary**

27. The school takes very good care of its pupils. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. A member of the administration staff supports her in this role. The previous inspection report commented that not all staff were aware of the procedures to be followed. This is no longer the case. All staff, including support staff and mealtime supervisors, are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern. There are very good, comprehensive procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety. The school has a health and safety manager who, together with a governor and the caretaker, regularly inspects the premises. The school has a small pond that is inside a fence and overlooked by a number of buildings, but the gate to it is not locked. The school has taken advice and is satisfied that the pond does not present a hazard. All the necessary procedures for attending to pupils' medical needs are in place. Risk assessments are undertaken by either the health and safety manager or the teacher responsible for the activity in question. The school places considerable emphasis upon healthy living. Pupils of all ages are taught about diet and exercise (there is a healthy living display in every classroom) and the school has a Healthy School award. It has recently gained an Activemark award, in recognition of its promotion of the benefits of physical activity. Pupils are encouraged to have bottles of water with them at all times.

28. Support is of a very high order. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and very encouraging - more than once, teachers were heard to say that it is 'all right not to be sure'. Considerable effort is put into improving the self esteem of less able pupils and those with behaviour problems, by presenting small group lessons as social occasions; tables are laid with crockery and there is fruit to eat. All staff are involved in pupil care; the school secretary has a table in her office for those pupils who need 'time out' from their classrooms. Academic support is based on a thorough knowledge of the child's academic development derived from good assessment records in all subjects. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaires, 95 per cent of pupils said that there was an adult in school to whom they could go if in need.

29. Induction arrangements are very good. Before children start in the nursery they are visited at home. Parents are welcome to stay and settle children when they arrive - the atmosphere in the nursery is warm, relaxed and friendly. The transition from nursery to

reception is virtually seamless - nursery children visit the reception class (and vice versa) and share activities. Similar arrangements are in place with the private nursery on the same site.

30. Pupils' involvement in the life of the school is very good. Questionnaires are used to establish pupils' views on aspects of school life and these views are taken into account in the school improvement plan. Pupils are involved in discussing their own targets and self assessment is frequently used, especially in literacy. Year 6 pupils are trained in conflict resolution and, alongside representatives from all age groups, act as bully busters by helping to deal with disputes and unpleasantness. Older pupils have a number of duties in the school including answering the office telephone in the lunch hour and sharing reading books with younger children. The School Parliament is a significant factor in pupils' involvement.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school sees parents, other schools and the community as important partners. Information for parents is very good. Good links with parents and the community contribute to children's wide range of learning experiences

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides parents with very good quality information about their children's progress and school events.
- Good links between school and home encourage parental partnership in the life of the school.
- Good community links enrich pupils' experiences and celebrate local heritage.

### **Commentary**

31. In the pre-inspection Ofsted questionnaire, 15 per cent of respondents were unable to agree that they were kept well informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence does not support this view. Parents have a formal consultation meeting with staff in the autumn and spring terms, and a written progress report each term. Those in the autumn and spring terms are interim reports, addressing the child's progress against targets. Reports are couched in objective terms and evaluate the child's behaviour, effort and attainment. Class teachers send termly newsletters itemising the topics children will be studying. Information for parents of children in the nursery, and reception class, is especially good. Once a term parents come in to see the class at work and join in the activities. Reports are illustrated with pictures of children carrying out various tasks. The atmosphere in the classes is warm and welcoming; parents are free to stay to settle their children or exchange a few words with staff.

32. The school maintains good links with parents. Parental views are sought annually by a questionnaire, whose results help to inform the school development plan. There are termly parent forum meetings; these give parents the opportunity to raise general issues

regarding school procedures and practices. Parents are encouraged to work voluntarily in school and a number do so. Parents are welcome to attend school events, such as Christmas drama productions, sports events and services. Parents are kept in touch with school matters by weekly newsletters and a website. There is an active 'Friends' association that organises social and fundraising events. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home by supporting homework, home reading and the school's ethos - an impressively large number of children wear their school uniform, including tracksuits for swimming.

33. Community links are effective and productive. The school is at the centre of its community and is used by various community groups. It tries to be a good neighbour; the 'Walking Bus' was introduced in part to alleviate traffic congestion outside the school. Pupils take part in a number of local activities, such as the annual Mazey Day parade (to celebrate St John's day at the end of June). The school's considerable choir entertains shoppers at Christmas. There are links with various churches and chapels; representatives from three churches minister visit to conduct assemblies regularly. Good use is made of the locality to add flesh to the bones of classroom learning: for example pupils visited Godolphin House (a nearby historic house), they made recordings of the sounds of Penzance, and drew inspiration from the sand patterns on the beach at St Ives for an exercise in ceramics. The School Parliament (following a grant from British Telecom) travelled to London to see the Westminster Parliament in action. Good links with other schools contribute to the very good range of enrichment activities. The school, together with other primary schools and the area's secondary schools, is part of the Penwith Learning Community. The schools combine for staff development and for activities such as an arts week.

34. Parents, who have children with special needs, are kept well informed about the progress they make. They receive a termly report and are able to come into school and discuss problems with the special needs co-ordinator or class teacher at any time. Those parents with pupils who have statements or who receive significant support in school, very often attend the review meetings, at which time they are often given activities in order to support their children at home.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school is effectively led and very well managed. Governors give good support and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is a very effective manager.
- The deputy head and key subject co-ordinators are effective in their roles.
- The school monitors its performance very well and takes effective action for improvement.
- Through effective recruitment, the school has been able to build staff teams which work very well together.
- Inclusivity is at the heart of the school's work.
- Governors support the work of the school well.

### **Commentary**

35. At the last inspection a key issue was for the school to resolve the serious differences that existed between some governors, together with a few staff, and a previous headteacher. This has been overcome to the satisfaction of all concerned.

36. The leadership of the headteacher is good and her management of the school is very good. Her leadership shows a drive for improvement, with staff sharing her common purpose in achieving the school's goals. Key to this success is the very good school improvement plan and its strategic planning for school development. This document has been thoroughly debated by staff, who contribute to it, and use it as a guide for development. A minor weakness is the time that some subjects have to wait before becoming a focus for action. For example, design and technology will have waited at least six years to become a focus. As a result, provision has not been maintained at the same level as other subjects.

37. The leadership of key staff is good. The deputy head is a strong teacher and leads by example. Several subject co-ordinators, including those in English, mathematics, special needs and ICT, set high standards for the development of their subjects and have had good opportunities to effect change and improvement through monitoring teaching and learning. Other co-ordinators, who are either new to their posts or who have not had opportunities for this type of monitoring, are handling their roles satisfactorily, but need some support and more opportunities to monitor more closely.

38. There is a very high commitment to providing equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. To achieve this, the school has devoted a great deal of funds, personnel and time to creating a very effective system of support for pupils who have special needs. This has not only allowed these pupils to achieve well, and sometimes very well, but has made the task of class teachers somewhat easier. Behaviour is consistently well managed throughout the school with positive effects on standards.

39. The management of support for those pupils who have special needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator liaises well with her support staff, the headteacher and the special needs governor, who herself is very active in support of this area of school life. The school's received budget is enhanced by funds the school itself makes available. In this way the level and standard of support for a large number of pupils is always good and often very good.

40. The staff work well in teams. There are opportunities for them to plan together so that pupils of the same age, but in different classes, receive the same standard of both teaching and learning.

41. Staff performance management works very well in the school for both teachers and their assistants. It is closely linked with their own personal development, yet supports the school's own areas for development.

42. Governors take an active and supportive role in the life of the school. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and many of them visit the school regularly. Special mention should be made of the senior school secretary. She provides a very welcoming first point of contact with the school. She provides governors with very clear

financial information and advice, and is a very well informed governor serving on two committees. The governance of the school is good.

43. The school approaches its financial management very well and in turn this supports the school well in making important decisions when faced with budget restrictions or falling rolls. As a result the school gives good value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	866486	Balance from previous year	18000
Total expenditure	839946	Balance carried forward to the next	26540
Expenditure per pupil	2492		

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, with particular strengths in the nursery. From year to year there are variations in children's level of attainment on entry into education, although overall it is below average. Children are on line to achieve the early learning goals for pupils entering Year 1 in all areas of learning except communication skills, which are below average.

The quality of teaching is good and is having a positive impact on learning. All children are achieving well, although achievement in the nursery is often very good because of very good teaching. Strengths in teaching in the nursery include very good relationships with lots of praise used effectively to raise children's self esteem, a calm purposeful atmosphere created and a range of exciting activities planned for the children when they are asked to 'get busy'. The teacher is confident to pick up on children's ideas and comments and uses these very effectively as teaching points. In both the nursery and reception class adults have high expectations of behaviour and engage the children very well. Adults are used very effectively to support children's learning.

Very good use is made of the interactive whiteboard in the nursery, a facility not yet available in the reception class, to support children's learning and to help children review what they have done that day. Photographs are used effectively to enable parents and carers to see what their child has been doing in nursery. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are very good and used very well in planning and to track individual progress. The photographs and comments in reports are very good and give parents a clear and concise indication of how their child is progressing. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good.
- Children settle quickly into routines.

#### **Commentary**

44. All children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Most are expected to achieve the early learning goals by Year 1. Children, in the nursery and reception, form very good relationships with adults around them and are happy to share equipment. They quickly understand what is acceptable behaviour and have a good awareness of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Good teaching of personal, social and emotional skills and use of praise to reinforce expected behaviour enable children to play harmoniously with their classmates and to respond well to adults' instructions. In both classes children are showing a keen interest in their own and other cultures through work on light. Currently they are looking at the festival of Hanukah.

45. In the nursery children quickly settle into the daily routines and respond extremely well to the teacher's request to 'get busy' by moving quickly and quietly to the various activities set out for them. They are developing confidence, managing personal hygiene, and need minimal support when changing for physical development sessions.

46. In reception children take turns and are able to choose their own activities. They confidently share their thoughts about the qualities of the 'special person' of the week. Children describe what makes them happy or sad and consider the golden rules as part of their consideration for others.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and all children are achieving well.

### **Commentary**

47. Many children start their education with communication and language skills that are well below those expected for their age. They make very good progress in the nursery and good progress in reception so that by Year 1 many children achieve the early learning goals except in speaking skills, which are still below average. Teaching is well focused on children's needs, and in reception the teaching of basic skills such as letter sounds and letter formation, support learning well.

48. In nursery children listen carefully to stories and enjoy sharing books with friends. They have good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills in role play areas, such as talking on the telephone and making marks on paper to write messages.

49. Children in reception can sequence stories in pictures and listen to stories with increasing attention. They recall the main events and know where to find the title and the name of the author. More capable children are beginning to read keywords. Most are using familiar letters to communicate meaning in writing and more able children are beginning to write a simple sentence. They write their shopping lists for vegetables to make soup. Writing skills are satisfactory and children are set to achieve the early learning goals by Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many children attain the early learning goals by Year 1.
- The quality of teaching is good.

### **Commentary**

50. In the nursery children are beginning to use mathematical language appropriately. They describe candles using language 'big', 'small', 'tall' and 'short' correctly. Photographic evidence shows a good range of activities are provided for the children involving numbers such as sorting shapes and using numbers in play.

51. In reception children count reliably to ten and use mathematical language appropriately. Many can sort shapes and describe and compare the size of objects. They use games and apparatus well to understand the terms 'greater and less than'. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children are expected to achieve the early learning goals.

52. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan interesting activities to meet the needs of young children. Adults are well deployed and all adults question well to support children's learning.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers provide a wide range of interesting activities that children enjoy.
- Children are confident to use ICT to support their learning.

### **Commentary**

53. Good teaching and organisation give children plenty of opportunities to develop well in this area of learning. In both the nursery and reception children use the dark area effectively to investigate what objects provide the best light. In nursery children know that they use lights to see in the dark and in reception children compare lights from different sources. In reception children describe the flames from lighted candles appropriately and know that the candle wax is melting. Children recall their visit to the local church and some of the special features. In reception they use their ICT skills well to look at special features in a synagogue. Many children are expected to achieve the early learning goals by Year 1.

54. Children in the nursery are well able to use the mouse control to drag the clothes across the screen to dress the teddy. They are beginning to use the interactive whiteboard, with support, to read a story. They confidently show their parents and carers photographs of themselves taken with a digital camera and displayed on the whiteboard. In reception children use simple programs on the computer to support their learning in several areas. For example they satisfactorily used an art program to create pictures of fireworks.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- The outdoor area for reception children is not as well developed as in the nursery.

## **Commentary**

55. By the end of reception most children move around the classroom and large spaces with confidence, showing good awareness of space. They have appropriate understanding of safety. Children handle tools such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils with increasing control. In the nursery very good teaching of ball skills enabled children to achieve control of large and small balls well. Many are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

56. Children have many opportunities to use the outdoor areas for physical development, although no sessions were observed in the nursery during the inspection. However, the space outside for children in reception is currently too small for them to use apparatus and wheeled vehicles properly. Children only have the small paths on which to ride their bikes. The Foundation Stage leader has already identified this weakness.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Commentary**

57. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching or standards in this area of learning, but work seen was good. Work on display covered a wide range of media. Children in nursery create collages of natural objects and attractive pictures using shiny paper. In reception children make patterns using printing and weaving techniques and use a range of materials well to decorate fish for a 'Harvest of the Sea' display.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching, throughout the school, is enabling all pupils to achieve well.
- The school's focus on writing is having a positive impact on raising attainment.
- Assessment procedures are very good, particularly opportunities for pupil self-assessment.
- The school's library is barely adequate.

### **Commentary**

58. All pupils, particularly those who find learning or conforming difficult, are achieving well. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in English is average. This is similar to test results over the last two years but not as good as at the time of the last inspection. At that time a higher proportion of pupils than normal were attaining above average standards. At the time of this inspection approximately forty per cent of pupils in Year 6 have been identified with learning or behavioural difficulties and, although many of these

pupils are achieving very well, they are unlikely to attain the expected National Curriculum levels by the end of the year. Attainment on entry into education has changed from average to overall below average.

59. Pupils' attainments in speaking and listening are average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Many children start school with below average communication skills and make good progress throughout the school. Developing use of more varied and interesting vocabulary is a key feature in most lessons and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Teachers use role play well in subjects such as history, which develops speaking and listening skills effectively. Small groups of pupils are withdrawn for focused speaking and listening sessions and this impacts well on their achievement.

60. By the end of Year 2 pupils read satisfactorily. Most enjoy reading and can talk reasonably well about their favourite books. They are beginning to use expression when reading aloud and read mainly accurately. Adults who support their children with reading at home appropriately use the home/school diary as a link with school. The school raised concerns about the reading skills of older boys and have been successful in encouraging boys to read more regularly. By the end of Year 6 attainment in reading is average overall. The high percentages of pupils with special educational needs are working hard to achieve their targets. The average and more capable readers are well able to discuss preferences, favourite authors and the wide range of reading material they use for research and enjoyment. Several boys talked enthusiastically about the use of ICT, the local library and newspapers for research and interest. They read passages from their novels fluently and with expression.

61. The school's focus on improving writing skills is having a positive impact on raising attainment. Although attainment is average at the end of Years 2 and 6, there is evidence that attainment generally throughout the school is improving. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their knowledge of the three main parts of a story to write their own extended story about a bear. They are beginning to use interesting vocabulary to make the story more exciting for the reader. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 identify the key features of newspaper articles and stories in preparation for writing their own article in a future lesson. They understand how emotive and persuasive language can be used.

62. A real strength in developing pupils' writing skills is the use of self-assessment criteria so that pupils from Year 1 begin to know what they need to do to achieve expected levels and what they need to do to improve their work. This develops from a simple 'I can do' tick sheet to more sophisticated criteria linked to the National Curriculum attainment targets. Pupils and teachers set individual targets based on the criteria. Overall assessment procedures are very good and are used very well to track pupils' progress and to identify strengths and areas to develop. Other strengths in the good quality of teaching include relationships, behaviour management and use of support staff in lessons.

63. English is well led and managed. The very recently appointed co-ordinator has worked hard in a very short time to become involved in monitoring samples of pupils' work, monitoring guided reading sessions and identifying strengths and areas to develop. Resources are good and the school makes good use of visitors to support the curriculum. The Performing Arts Group, an extra-curricular activity, makes a good contribution to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, the school library is barely adequate and its current location in the computer suite does not encourage pupils to use

the library for either research purposes or for pleasure. Several pupils think the library has been neglected and this was recently discussed at a meeting of the School Parliament. The improvement of library facilities has been identified on the school development plan.

## **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

64. Pupils use skills of language and literacy well in other subjects: for example writing reports in history and geography, and writing accounts in religious education. However, opportunities are missed in science to extend pupils' writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good and frequently better.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

65. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. On the face of it this is a decline since the last inspection in 1999. However, SEN levels in the school have increased from 15 per cent to 33 per cent and the school is judged to be doing well to get the overwhelming majority of pupils from below average when they first join the school to national expectations by the time they leave. The school can prove that it adds good value to pupils' mathematical development. Pupils, regardless of their ability, achieve well in maths and make good progress.

66. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy since the last report has had good impacts on pupils' appreciation and manipulation of numbers. Standards of mental arithmetic, accuracy and speed are improved through daily practice and regular work.

67. Pupils' attainment in numeracy is average. By the end of Year 2 most pupils can give reasons for their answers, recognise sequences, use standard and non standard measures and simple charts and graphs. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can check the reasonableness of their answers, and measure fairly accurately. Pupils' books show good progress over time.

68. Standards are satisfactory in data handling, shape, space and measures, but the school is aware that investigational maths is an area to develop. Standards for many pupils are still below expectations despite increased emphasis on this element. Such initiatives have not yet had time to make significant improvement.

69. Teaching is good overall with clear strengths in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Of the ten lessons seen three were very good, six were good and one was satisfactory. Strengths in teaching and organisation feature:

- Mixed age and ability classes well managed using a rolling programme of work.

- Higher attaining pupils well challenged with extension activities planned for: for example in a very good Year 6 lesson on time more able pupils investigated the use of time whilst others consolidated their learning of how to tell the time.
- Teaching assistants play a full part in lessons and very successfully help SEN pupils to achieve well.
- Good marking and target setting are used in conjunction with good assessment and analysis of data to show pupils how to make improvements and to report progress to parents.
- Good use of homework gives pupils extra practice and reinforces learning.
- Setting is well used to teach pupils in narrower ability ranges.
- Good use is made of ICT: for example in maths challenge programs and in producing spreadsheets of data which pupils interrogate.

70. Aspects which in a minority of lessons could be improved are improving pace and challenge, especially to promote strategies for problem solving.

71. Maths is very well led and managed by a leading teacher who has developed a very good scheme of work which complements the National Numeracy Strategy. He has monitored pupils' work, teachers' delivery and his analysis has produced improvements. He has ensured that assessment is good and that all teachers understand how to assess, record and interpret data to derive both targets both for pupils and for curriculum development. This has resulted in good teaching and pupils of all abilities achieving well. Good management of the budget means that the school is well resourced.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

72. Satisfactory use is made of maths skills in other subjects: for example measuring in science, art and design and technology; and scale and co-ordinates in mapwork in geography.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good overall.
- Pupils achieve well in science.
- Day to day assessment is good although pupils' standards are not regularly matched against those in the National Curriculum.
- Work in using and applying scientific knowledge to investigations is not as well developed as other areas of science.
- Whilst standards of work seen are in line with national expectations not enough pupils achieve the higher than average level.

## **Commentary**

73. Teacher assessment in 2004 put standards in science at the end of Year 2 in line with national expectations, with all pupils reaching the expected level. In Year 6 the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of the last academic year show that whilst 90 per

cent of pupils reached the expected level, only 25 per cent of the group achieved the higher level. As a result the overall score was only just in line with national averages. This year group had a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. As a result of good teaching many reached the nationally expected level, showing very good achievement. During this inspection, satisfactory standards were noted in both Year 2 and Year 6. These year groups have similar high levels of pupils with special needs. In one Year 6 class as many as 40 per cent of pupils were receiving extra support. In spite of this and as a result of consistently good teaching, many of these pupils were making very good progress in their learning and achieving very well.

74. When compared with standards at the last inspection, although they appear to have fallen slightly at Year 6, this can be explained by the much higher levels of special needs and the fact that the tests themselves have changed considerably over the last two years.

75. Of the four lessons seen, teaching was good in three and very good in the other. This consistently good quality teaching has had a positive effect on standards and pupils' achievement levels. Planning is of very good quality and teachers have good subject knowledge. They question pupils well and allow time for discussion. As a result pupils have good opportunities for speaking and listening. Not as evident are the opportunities for writing in different ways, making use of pupils' literacy skills. This is particularly noticeable when pupils are carrying out investigations. Although the school has discussed the use of different writing frames to be used for different age groups, they are not seen in enough use. At the same time, teachers do not show the same confidence when organising investigations. The co-ordinator is aware of this and hopes to have input into giving her colleagues help in this area of science.

76. In the very good lesson seen, the Years 3 and 4 teacher was very knowledgeable about the work in hand and made very good use of his good quality support staff to divide the class into groups and give very good support in this way. Support was particularly good for pupils with special needs. Here, good use was made of ICT with groups of pupils logging on to a dentistry program to support their understanding of the development of teeth.

77. The new National Curriculum tests for science place considerable emphasis on pupils being able to organise, carry out and explain their own investigations. Thus a lack of the school's emphasis on this part of science does tend to disadvantage pupils, especially those who might have reached the higher level in the tests.

78. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post and has made a good start in gathering information about the subject in the school. She has already seen that whilst day to day assessments are being made well by teachers, there are no annual tests to highlight the levels achieved by pupils in relation to the National Curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is much improved and is now **good** with very good features.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school is well resourced and there is a good ICT suite.
- New interactive whiteboards in most classes are used very effectively to support other subjects.
- Teaching, and support from teaching assistants, are good.

## **Commentary**

79. The school has very successfully improved provision since the last inspection. A good new suite and resources introduced in 2002 (with regular updates since) have had, and continue to have, positive effects in pupils' learning.

80. Standards are consistent with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. As these expectations are more rigorous than when the school was last inspected this represents improvement although the judgement is apparently the same.

81. All pupils are fully included in all ICT activities and all were seen to respond and behave well. To the school's credit most of the high proportion of those with SEN are reaching levels expected of their age groups. This shows that achievement is good and for a significant minority very good. Potentially higher attaining pupils are frequently provided with work and opportunities to extend their skills and understanding: for example in a very good Year 5 lesson designing multimedia presentations on the Healthy Eating theme linked to PSHCE. Pupils shared the same starting point and learning objectives, but more able pupils very effectively managed to introduce sound and movement, and import pictures from the Internet.

82. Teaching observed was good and frequently better. Excellent teaching of very young children in the nursery results in them achieving very well. Children are able to control graphics modelling programs showing skills usually associated with level 1 of the National Curriculum. Achievement is very good.

83. Strengths in teaching in Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6 made very good use of the suite, challenged pupils at their own levels, and used learning objectives to set targets and gauge progress. As a result pupils were enthusiastic, worked well together, made good progress in their learning and achieved at least well.

84. Teaching assistants make valuable contributions to teaching and support of pupils especially those with SEN. They prompt, encourage and direct very effectively in ICT lessons in the suite and at work stations outside classes. This has very positive effects not only in the ICT suite, but on pupils' confidence and self esteem.

85. The recent introduction of interactive whiteboards in most classes (and the imminent completion of this programme of improvements in all rooms) has an excellent effect on learning across the whole curriculum. Staff and pupils show very healthy appreciation of the potential of such resources. The use made of ICT to support other subjects is very good. This includes taking advantage of the very good networked system to access the Internet and excellent use of digital and video cameras to record and illustrate work, as well as the more traditional word processing and maths programs.

86. Throughout the school very good use is made of ICT in presenting, planning, recording and analysing the results of assessment as well as in office procedures and the

school's good web site. This sets a very good example to pupils of the practical application of ICT in everyday life. This is further developed by pupils producing spreadsheets in maths and using the Internet for research in history and geography.

87. The subject is very well led and managed with very positive effects on planning, teaching and learning. There is an effective system to assess pupils' performance used in all classes. The co-ordinator supports colleagues and very effectively manages resources, making very good use of the budget to maintain good provision.

88. An area for yet further development even in this good profile is in finding an effective way to reduce the temperature of the ICT suite.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

89. As explained above ICT is used effectively to support other subjects. The introduction of interactive whiteboards and the networking of resources are highlights of improved provision. The school's commitment to making full use of technology is being very successfully pursued.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

Provision in geography and history is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in geography and history are in line with national expectations.
- Achievement by the end of Years 2 and 6 is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to geography and history are good.
- The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator.
- The monitoring of these subjects needs further development.

#### **Commentary**

90. Standards are in line with national expectations and displays around the school demonstrate the emphasis placed on these subjects.

91. Geography and history are planned making links wherever possible with other curriculum areas. Planning is satisfactory in both subjects and is based on government proposed schemes of work supplemented by additional materials. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and response during lessons is good.

92. In geography, teachers' knowledge is good and staff are confident both in their approach and delivery. Pupils' knowledge base and understanding of their local environment is very good and teachers utilise this to explore and develop geographical skills. Pupils are appropriately challenged and the effective use of support staff ensures that achievement is good overall. During the course of the inspection it was only possible to observe the teaching of geography once. However, the evidence provided and the work

samples suggest that teaching is at least satisfactory. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

93. In history teachers provide well thought out activities that develop the historical skills required to aid pupils' progress. Role play and the use of ICT are features of the planning and these were used well in a lesson that was observed. Pupils' standards are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well overall. During the inspection only two lessons of history were observed but evidence provided by the headteacher, the co-ordinator's file, and the pupils' outcomes, would suggest that teaching is at least satisfactory. Pupils' understanding and knowledge are developed with a commitment to active learning which relies on good use of resources and artefacts.

94. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subjects and has clear ideas on development and direction. She is a good role model for other members of staff and has provided training for her colleagues.

95. Procedures for assessment in both geography and history are good. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. This has improved pupils' achievement and influenced their ability to make future progress.

96. Resources are good in both subject areas with a variety of artefacts and reference books. Both subjects are due to be reviewed in the near future where the effective monitoring of the respective subjects will be a key factor in their continued success.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' knowledge of different faiths is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good.
- The monitoring of the subject requires further development.

### **Commentary**

97. Standards and achievement meet the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Work sampling and an interview with the co-ordinator confirm that pupils are making progress in their knowledge and understanding of religious education.

98. Pupils have a developing understanding of Christian faiths and a good awareness of other major religions. They are able to identify different faiths and can determine similarities and differences in terms of symbolism and belief. In this way Year 6 pupils were able to design a 'Trinity Symbol' characterised by the interrelationship between Father, Son



and Holy Spirit. By way of contrast they could identify and discuss the different religious practices in Hinduism and Sikhism. Pupils' attitudes towards religion are good and these are reflected in acts of worship and assemblies. Teachers provide good role models and reinforce basic beliefs in the way they act and interact with pupils. However, pupils do require more opportunity for reflective thought so that they can fully digest and respond appropriately to the issues that are being discussed.

99. Planning is satisfactory and ensures that statutory elements are met. The school successfully encourages pupils to show respect for themselves and others. During the inspection only two RE lessons were observed but standards seen in books and displays together with evidence provided by the co-ordinator would suggest that teaching is satisfactory.

100. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the subject and has very good subject knowledge. Resources are good and are well used to support RE. In order for her to have a clear picture of standards throughout the school further monitoring has been identified as an area of development for the future. More concrete assessment procedures to record what pupils know, understand and can do need to be developed.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **ART**

Provision in art is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' work is clearly valued by staff and very well displayed throughout the school.
- The subject is well led and managed and this has helped to maintain good standards since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

101. Although it was not possible to see sufficient art to judge teaching and learning in lessons, evidence from work on display and school records leads to the conclusion that these are good and that standards continue to be above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.

102. There are copious examples of pupils' work from all year groups most notably, but not exclusively, in two dimensions. There is clear progress across the school in observational drawing and painting where line, tone and colour are used very effectively. Self portraits by Years 1 and 2 and Tudor portraits by Years 3 and 4 are examples which are better than expected. There are some very good examples of how these skills are extended in Years 5 and 6 still life studies and in caricatures.

103. School records and photographic evidence confirm that making opportunities are provided: for example Years 1 and 2 making puppets and plates of food to illustrate healthy eating; Years 3 and 4 scrolls of Anne Boleyn's dying speech; and Years 5 and 6 contributions to larger than life models paraded on Mazey Day. Such craft work is of good

quality. It suggests pupils are well taught and are able to make good use of skills already learnt.

104. Theme weeks, which are a feature of the curriculum, provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work with local artists. Pupils are taught to appreciate styles and experiment for themselves. ICT is used effectively as a tool to help pupils explore shape and colour.

105. Art is well led and managed by the co-ordinator who makes the best of what was already in place and has introduced new initiatives to keep the subject going forward. There is a good system to support teachers in assessing pupils' work and this is used to demonstrate that all required elements are covered and that pupils are making progress. Although art will not be a main focus of the school improvement plan until 2006 – 7 the co-ordinator has a good action plan to ensure improvement and that resources are maintained. In an exciting development the school has been awarded a £5000 grant to help encourage both community and multicultural art projects.

106. Art makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development, and is used well to support other subjects.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)**

Provision in design and technology is **unsatisfactory** because the subject has too low a profile.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Some individual topics are presented well and pupils gain in knowledge and understanding.
- Overall, work in design and technology is unsatisfactory and does not allow pupils to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way.
- The subject has a low profile across the school and will not have been a focus in school for six years.
- Standards of work are not assessed against the levels of the National Curriculum.
- The co-ordination of the subject is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

107. As the subject has not been a focus in school for at least three years and is not likely to be a focus for a further three years, standards in the subject have slipped, as has the status of the subject in the school. At the last inspection design and technology was said to meet national expectations, although no lessons were seen.

108. There was little evidence of work in the subject on display in the school and only one lesson available to be seen. Whilst standards in this lesson were satisfactory, the co-ordinator agrees that standards overall are not as good as they should be. The budget for the subject is too small to keep pace with the materials needed for pupils across the school, and there is no systematic development of skills within the subject. The topics used are taken from the national guidance, but the development of designing, making and evaluating have not been set out in any step by step way.

109. In the lesson seen, a Years 2 and 3 class, pupils were tasting and testing sandwiches. They were required to make judgements on texture, smell and appearance, and were guided well by the teacher's good questioning. The recording of evaluations varied a great deal depending upon pupils' literacy skills and the support they were receiving from class assistants.

110. In lessons, notes show that pupils' understanding is often assessed against the learning objectives of the lesson. Whilst this gives teachers a good measure of how effective teaching and learning is, it does not give an indication of whether the work completed is at a level of the National Curriculum equivalent to the age of the pupil.

111. The co-ordinator has been absent for some time and is now only slowly coming to grips with the subject. She has not had any training in her co-ordination role, has not had opportunities to monitor work in classes and has only a very small portfolio of completed work.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject are both good.
- Teaching of physical education is at least good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work in all aspects of the subject.
- Good links are made with the community through sport.

### **Commentary**

112. At the last inspection standards in the subject were noted as being above national expectations. These high standards have been maintained since that time. During this inspection lessons in gymnastics and dance were observed as being above those expected for pupils in this age group, with pupils, including those with special needs, achieving well. This is achieved as a result of good teaching, good co-ordination of the subject, and the very positive attitudes of pupils.

113. In the lessons seen, teachers were knowledgeable about the subject matter and very enthusiastic in their teaching. Time was given for practice, with teachers giving both helpful advice and encouragement. As a result, pupils worked well together, behaved very well and achieved well.

114. Although swimming was not seen, standards are high, as assessments show. Hardly any pupils reach the end of their time at the school without being able to swim. At the same time they have opportunities to take part in swimming competitions. The school is actively looking to extend its swimming time to the younger pupils, thus giving even more pupils access to this area of the physical education programme.

115. Extracurricular club activities are very well provided with a great many pupils taking part in a wide range of sports. There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their social skills when playing competitive fixtures against other local schools.

116. The subject co-ordinator works hard to promote the subject in the school and in the community at large. In relation to the latter, she organised a health and fitness week, in which local community coaches joined with staff and pupils to promote healthy living. She now has in mind the further promotion of pupils' cultural development through dance activities with a multicultural flavour.

117. Whilst the school has good resources both in terms of its accommodation, and fixed and small apparatus, the co-ordinator, supported by the staff, makes very good use of them all. As a result, pupils have good access to a wide range of facilities in order to raise their levels of skill, understanding and knowledge. Digital and video cameras are used effectively to help pupils evaluate their own performance in PE.

## **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Specialist teaching is consistently good, especially in singing lessons.
- Very good use is made of peripatetic music specialists.
- Pupils have good opportunities for performance.
- The subject is well led by the part time specialist.
- There is no accommodation dedicated to music.

### **Commentary**

118. At the last inspection, in 1999, standards were noted as being above those expected for this age group of pupils. The same is the case now. In the areas of music seen during the inspection, standards were above those expected nationally.

119. Pupils sing in assemblies with great enthusiasm, knowing many songs by heart and singing in tune well. At the first assembly of the week the school's chamber orchestra played while pupils entered and left the hall. The orchestra is a mixture of adults and pupils and a high level of skill is noted by all musicians. In support of pupils' learning to play instruments, a wide range of professional teachers visit the school each week to give lessons. Currently pupils have the opportunity to learn to play woodwind, percussion, violin, guitar, cello, piano and brass instruments. Almost one in five pupils takes up this opportunity and as a result, their knowledge and understanding of music in general improves.

120. A part time music specialist teaches all classes. This ensures that teaching is consistent across the school. She has boundless enthusiasm and can motivate pupils very well. The result is that both boys and girls really enjoy their music, take part willingly and achieve well. Her very good subject knowledge and ability to accompany pupils while teaching, supports learning well. In the lessons seen, she taught new songs to pupils, revised previously learned songs and helped pupils put their own accompaniment to the songs, making good use of available resources. A current weakness in the subject is the lack of a dedicated music room. Whilst the staffroom is adequate, it is difficult to store

instruments, space is limited and it takes away the opportunity for other teachers to use the room.

121. Pupils have good opportunities for performance. In a lesson seen, pupils practised accompanying their singing, then came together to perform their finished items to their classmates. The school choir, which meets during lesson time, has some one hundred and twenty members. They all take part with great enthusiasm and were seen practising for the Christmas productions. The quality of singing, both in groups and individually, is high. At an after school practice songs were accompanied by pupils and adults.

122. Although the co-ordinator only works part time, she manages the subject well and ensures that all pupils get a wide diet of musical activities.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (PSHCE)**

Provision in personal, social, health and citizenship education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The School Parliament makes an excellent contribution to pupils' awareness of citizenship.
- PSHCE supports pupils' personal development effectively.

### **Commentary**

123. There is effective planning and delivery of a programme to promote pupils' personal development. Circle time and PSHCE sessions form part of each class' timetable and considerable emphasis is put on listening to, and appreciating, other people's points of view. Pupils show tolerance and consideration and respond very well to provision which is securely rooted in the aims of the school.

124. The scheme of work presents good support for staff and ensures that required elements such as sex education and drugs and alcohol misuse are covered appropriately. Good use is made of visitors such as the school nurse to bring expertise into the school.

125. The effect of PSHCE provision is that pupils get on well together, appreciate how what they can do can affect others, understand relevant health issues (this is a Healthy School), and are beginning to see the contribution they can make to the community.

126. A highlight of newly established planning to promote citizenship is the School Parliament which all Years 3 to 6 pupils attend to observe their MP representatives debate issues of school development. This has a marked impact on not only personal development but speaking, listening and reasoning skills.

127. Good records are kept of how well pupils participate and make progress in terms of personal development. Information from this is used well as part of reports to parents.

#### **Example of outstanding practice**

##### **The School Parliament is a significant factor in pupils' involvement in running the school.**

A 'government' of Year 6 pupils is elected, with pupils, under a Prime Minister, having 'ministerial portfolios' such as arts and music, sports, health and environment. The 'ministers' meet regularly during the term and have a variety of duties in the school. A 'leader of the opposition' challenges proposals and the whole is presided over by a 'speaker'. Parliaments are termly, and selected motions are proposed from the floor, discussed and voted upon. In Parliament, voting is carried out from a 'heads bowed' attitude, so that voters are not influenced by the way that their friends - or the stronger characters in the school - vote. Wherever practicable Parliament's proposals are acted upon. The whole exercise is an impressive display of responsibility and mature debate. Adults take no part in the proceedings (although staff are in attendance) and the sense of occasion is palpable.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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