

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GERMOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Germoe, Penzance

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111813

Headteacher: Mr Ian Fellows

Lead inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2005

Inspection number: 266865

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	62
School address:	Germoe Community Primary School Germoe Lane Germoe PENZANCE Cornwall
Postcode:	TR20 9QY
Telephone number:	01736 763310
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Georgina Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	4 <sup>th</sup> May 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Germoe School is situated in the small village of Germoe, between Penzance and Helston in Cornwall. The school serves a rural area of several villages, with most pupils coming from the villages of Germoe and Breage. With 62 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 11, the school is much smaller than most primary schools. The school does not have a nursery, but acts as host to the local playgroup which uses the school's hall each morning. Because of demographic changes, the number of pupils on roll has fallen significantly since the last inspection, and the school is under-subscribed. The socio-economic background of the pupils varies widely, but is below average overall. National statistics show that the socio-economic circumstances of the school's catchment area are well below average, although only an average proportion of pupils take their entitlement to free school meals. There is a high level of unemployment in the area and many parents are only employed in seasonal work. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnic origin and have English as their first language. A very high proportion of pupils either join or leave the school during the school year, many of these because their parents live in short-term temporary accommodation. A quarter of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. Five pupils receive help from outside specialists for moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Two of these pupils have a statement of special educational need. Children are admitted into the reception class in the September or January of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, according to parental choice. The attainment of children when they start school varies widely, but is below average overall. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and some new members of staff have been appointed, and one classroom has been converted into an information and communication technology suite and library. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2003 for improvement in its national test results. The school has achieved 'Healthy School Status'.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28899	Mr G R Sims	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage curriculum English as an additional language
19693	Mrs S Hall	Lay inspector	
32595	Mrs G Williams	Team inspector	English Science Religious education History Geography Personal, social and health education Special educational needs

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**Germoe Community Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory education** and offers satisfactory value for money. Pupils' achievement, the overall quality of the teaching and the school's leadership and management are all satisfactory.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics.
- The school provides a very good standard of care for its pupils.
- The quality of relationships and family atmosphere of the school are very good.
- Although there is some good and very good teaching, teachers do not always provide enough challenge or have high enough expectations of what pupils should be achieving.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and makes good provision for physical education and music.
- Some subjects of the curriculum, such as information and communication technology, history, geography and design and technology, are not taught in sufficient depth.
- Not enough emphasis is given to developing key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- There is a good sense of teamwork amongst the committed and hardworking staff, but the school is not rigorous enough in the way it evaluates its own performance.
- The school has developed a good partnership with parents and the local community.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has made progress in dealing with the key issues mentioned in the previous report, although more still needs to be done to improve the quality of the teaching and the organisation of the curriculum. Good progress has been made in developing the school's partnership with parents and providing for pupils' personal, social and health education. Standards in English and mathematics have improved.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Overall, **pupils of all capabilities achieve satisfactorily throughout the school** and reach average standards by the end of Year 6.

The attainment of children when they join the school varies considerably, but is below average overall. Children make satisfactory progress during their reception year, achieving many of the goals expected for children of their age. However, standards are still below those expected in aspects of their personal development and in communication, language and literacy.

Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved more than in most schools since the last inspection, although the national test results in 2004 were below average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics, reflecting the undue influence which a few pupils can have on the overall results of small schools. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and achieving average standards. Progress is less secure, although generally satisfactory, in other subjects of the curriculum.

Between the last inspection and 2003, the school's results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 improved much more than in most schools, resulting in a School Achievement Award in 2003. The results in 2004, which were well below the national average, were affected by the fact that two pupils, a third of the very small year group, joined the school just three months before the national tests. Inspection findings indicate that, overall, standards are average in English, mathematics, science and religious education, and below average in information and communication technology. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics, physical education and music, but unsatisfactory progress in information and communication technology,

geography, history and design and technology, because insufficient emphasis is given to these subjects. The quality of pupils' presentation and their spelling are weak throughout the school.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* = lowest 5 per cent of schools. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. Because of the very small number of pupils in each year group, care should be taken when interpreting these results.*

**Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.** Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school, but pupils up to, and including, Year 4 do not always show sufficient interest or behave well enough in some lessons. In contrast, the behaviour of all pupils around the school is very good, and relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are very good. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 display a good degree of confidence and maturity, largely as a result of the good opportunities for them to carry out a range of responsibilities around the school.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education.**

In individual lessons, the quality of the teaching ranges from very good to poor. **The overall quality of the teaching and pupils' learning is satisfactory.** In the best lessons, teachers engage pupils' attention well and use effective methods to help pupils learn. In other lessons, they do not always provide pupils with sufficient challenge or have high enough expectations of what pupils should be achieving. When marking pupils' work, the teachers rarely give pupils a clear enough indication of what they have done well and what they need to improve.

Whilst there has been good improvement in the school's provision for English and mathematics, and there is good provision for physical education and music and a good range of extra-curricular activities, the overall quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Not enough attention is given to some subjects, such as history, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through other subjects and to relate work in one subject to what is being covered in another. Overall, the school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory, but the accommodation and resources for children in the reception year group are unsatisfactory and limit children's progress in some areas of learning.

The school takes very good care of its pupils, has very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, and has good systems for seeking, valuing and acting on the views of the pupils. It provides them with satisfactory support, advice and guidance, but is not rigorous enough in monitoring pupils' academic progress. The school has developed good links with parents and benefits from much parental support, particularly through the efforts of the parents' association. There are good links with other schools and the local community.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.** The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. This has brought improvements in various areas of the school's work since the last inspection and has established good teamwork amongst the school's committed staff. Governance is satisfactory, and governors have recently become more proactive and involved in the running of the school. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils all of its major statutory responsibilities, but its annual report does not meet requirements. Staff manage their subject responsibilities satisfactorily, but neither subject leaders nor the headteacher have been

sufficiently active in developing the curriculum. The school is not rigorous enough in the evaluation of its own performance.

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

The views expressed by the 24 parents who attended the parents' meeting before the inspection were very positive. Responses to the parents' questionnaire largely endorsed these views. Parents particularly like the family atmosphere of the school and the fact that their children are happy at the school. Pupils' views of the school are also generally positive, and some pupils are particularly appreciative of the way the school has helped them to develop. Whilst they particularly enjoy the additional activities which the school provides, many pupils indicate that their lessons are not always interesting enough.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise teachers' expectations, particularly with regard to: the level of challenge they provide; the quality and quantity of work they accept; the standard of behaviour they tolerate; the opportunities they provide for pupils to work independently; the pace at which they conduct lessons; and the rigour with which they mark pupils' work.
- Provide a broader and more challenging curriculum, paying particular attention to: the depth of curricular coverage in all subjects, but particularly in art and design, design and technology, geography and history; the development of cross-curricular work; and the development of key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- Improve standards in information and communication technology and the range of opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to promote learning in other subjects.
- Develop more rigorous self-evaluation of the school's work.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all of the required information.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Standards are below expectations at the end of the Foundation Stage and broadly average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all capabilities achieve satisfactorily throughout the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards fluctuate from year to year, reflecting the abilities of the small number of pupils in each year group, the overall trend in the school's results at the end of Years 2 and 6 is one of improvement.
- During their time at the school, pupils make good progress in mathematics and English, although the standard of spelling is weak.
- Pupils make good progress in music and physical education.
- Progress is unsatisfactory and standards are below average in information and communication technology.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in geography, history and design and technology, because insufficient time is devoted to these subjects.

#### Commentary<sup>1</sup>

1. The attainment of children when they start their primary education at Germoe varies widely, but is below average overall. A large proportion of pupils either join or leave the school part-way through their primary education. In the last academic year, for example, a quarter of the school's population joined and a further quarter left at times other than the normal times for joining or leaving the school. Two pupils, constituting a third of the whole year group, joined Year 6 shortly before the national tests took place. The attainment of many of the school's transient pupils is well below average when they join the school.
2. Children in their reception year are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teaching arrangements for these pupils and the accommodation and resources for them are far from ideal and restrict children's progress in some areas of learning. The staff try hard to overcome these barriers and, as a result, children make satisfactory progress overall during their reception year. Overall, standards are still below those expected by the end of the reception year. Children achieve many of the early learning goals for their personal, social and emotional development, particularly in terms of their confidence and relationships with others, but do not have enough opportunity to select and use activities and resources independently and find it hard to maintain concentration and attention when working together as a year group. The children converse well and enjoy stories, but more formal writing and reading skills are below those expected. Children's gross motor skills<sup>2</sup> are developed well, but some children have still not developed sufficient control with their fine motor skills.
3. Although the school's results fluctuate from year to year, reflecting the nature of the school's intake and the small number of pupils in each year group, the results at the end of Year 2 have improved more than in most schools in writing and mathematics over the last four

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<sup>1</sup> The tables of standards achieved in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 which are normally published in inspection reports are omitted from this report because there were fewer than 10 pupils in the two relevant year groups.

<sup>2</sup> **Motor skills** – A motor skill is an action that involves the movement of muscles in the body. Gross motor skills are larger movements involving the arm, leg, or feet muscles or the entire body; crawling, running, and jumping are gross motor skills. Fine motor skills are those smaller actions like picking things up between the thumb and finger or the control of a pencil, paintbrush or scissors.

years. Even though they were well below the national average and the average for similar schools in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing, the school's national test results in writing and mathematics in 2004 were significantly better than those achieved in the year after the school's last inspection. The most recent results reflect the varying and somewhat polarised levels of ability in many year groups. Just under a half of the pupils attained above the expected level for pupils of their age, whilst the remaining, and larger, proportion of pupils attained below the expected level, with no pupils occupying the middle ground. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science and that standards in the current Year 2 are, on balance, average.

4. As at the end of Year 2, results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated considerably but, between the last inspection and 2003, the overall trend has been one of greater improvement than in most schools. In 2003, the school received a School Achievement Award in recognition of the improvement in its results. In 2004, the school's results were adversely affected by the fact that a third of the very small year group only joined the school three months before the tests took place. The results were below the national average in English, well below average in mathematics and in the bottom five per cent of schools in science. When compared with similar schools on the basis of pupils' prior attainment at the end of Year 2, the results were above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. The results of those who had spent most of their primary education at Germoe compared much more favourably with the national picture, being average in mathematics and science and above average in English. The school sets itself realistic targets which contain an appropriate level of challenge although, as in 2004, its success in meeting its targets is often affected by the high mobility rate, a factor beyond the school's control.
5. Inspection findings indicate that, overall, standards in the current Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science but, as in other year groups, there is a much greater polarisation of ability than is found in most schools. When taking their attainment when they joined the school into consideration, pupils achieve well in English and mathematics, although teachers do not make enough use of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through work undertaken in other subjects. Pupils' spelling is often inaccurate. Pupils' achievement in science is only satisfactory because their progress is limited by lack of opportunity to develop higher-order investigative skills and too much recording of work on worksheets.
6. Pupils' attainment and progress in other subjects varies considerably throughout the school, generally reflecting the emphasis which the school gives to a subject. In music, which is taught by a visiting specialist teacher, and in physical education, in which pupils generally receive the government's recommended allocation of two hours physical activity a week, the pupils make good progress. In contrast, progress in geography, history and design and technology is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 5 and 6, because very little time is allocated to these subjects and there is very little depth to the work undertaken. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected, and progress in this key subject is unsatisfactory. There has been insufficient improvement in this subject since the last inspection. The school has experienced significant problems with its resources in the past. Although these have been largely resolved, insufficient time is spent teaching basic skills and there is very little use or development of skills in information and communication technology through other subjects. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when the planning and teaching of religious education were highlighted as a key issue for the school to deal with.
7. The school devotes significant energies to ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to succeed. Some pupils with particular educational difficulties make good progress. Despite the attention given to them, others make only slow progress. With these large variations in progress, the overall achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Appropriate targets, set by the special needs coordinator in liaison with the class teachers, are reviewed termly and adjusted accordingly. In 2004, boys achieved higher results than girls at the end of both Years 2 and 6. In 2003, the situation was the reverse. The numbers

of pupils in each year group are too small to ascertain any discernible trends. Nothing of concern was noted during the inspection to suggest that one group is more favoured than another.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. Their attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships, including racial harmony, are very good and pupils' behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is very good.
- Staff encourage pupils to feel part of the school community and there are good opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to take responsibility.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 behave well in class and are generally enthusiastic about their work, but younger pupils do not always show sufficient interest or behave well enough in lessons.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about living in a multi-cultural society.
- The good procedures to promote good attendance have led to recent and significant improvements in attendance rates.

### **Commentary**

8. The provision for pupils' social development is good. There is a strong feeling of community amongst staff, pupils, governors and parents. Parents value the 'family' atmosphere, which is particularly evident at breaks and lunchtimes, and many pupils feel that the school is a friendly place. Older pupils are given good opportunities to become involved in the life of the school, for example, helping in the dining hall and taking responsibility for play equipment. Those who have been trained as 'buddies' take their duties very seriously and support pupils who have no one to play with. Members of the school council are keen to enhance the premises and devise new activities. Pupils of differing ages and cultures play well together and share play equipment sensibly. The good range of after-school clubs and residential visits also develop pupils' social skills and ability to work as a team.
9. Behaviour in the playground and the dining hall is very good. There have been no exclusions and pupils say that there is no bullying. Overall, the provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory, but there are inconsistencies in the way staff expect pupils to behave in lessons. Older pupils respond well to their teachers' expectations of good behaviour and hard work. They listen carefully, are keen to answer questions and work with sustained concentration. Their good attitudes and behaviour help them to achieve well. However, children in reception and pupils in Years 1 to 4 do not always show the same interest in their work. Overall, their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. When the teacher is talking, some pupils quickly lose concentration and start to fidget, and a few younger boys often fool about. A few pupils shout out instead of putting up their hands to answer a question. Pupils often take time to settle to their work, and some lack the confidence to 'have a go', for example at spelling, and wait for adults to help them.
10. The opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Teachers value pupils' ideas and successfully promote pupils' feelings of self-worth. In assemblies, staff lead the pupils in prayer, but there are some missed opportunities for pupils to reflect on life and its meaning. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is developed effectively through the curriculum, for example, by taking part in the village feast celebrations and visiting local theatres and art museums. In religious education lessons, pupils gain valuable insights into other world faiths. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to consider the issues which face young people living in a multi-cultural society.
11. Attendance rates for the last school year dipped to well below those found in similar schools. Since then, the school has worked hard and, so far, has successfully increased levels of attendance for the current year by three per cent. Staff have achieved this by rewarding good

attendance, making contact with families on the first day of an unexplained absence and working closely with the educational welfare officer when absence is a cause for concern. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time, and lessons begin promptly.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	7.8	School data:	0.7
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.*

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The overall quality of the teaching and pupils’ learning is satisfactory. The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory, but the school provides a good variety of activities outside the normal curriculum. The staff provide a very good level of care for the pupils. The school’s links with parents, the local community and other schools are good.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, as are the school’s procedures for assessment.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Although the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, some good teaching occurs in every class.
- Teachers do not always provide enough challenge or have high enough expectations of what pupils should be achieving.
- The school works hard to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- The marking of pupils’ work is not rigorous enough and does not provide pupils with clear enough indication as to what they need to do to improve.

**Commentary**

12. Since the last inspection, the quality of the teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 has improved significantly. Even though the quality of the teaching in the rest of the school is somewhat more variable than that found at the time of the last inspection, improvements in the school’s results over the last few years indicate a general improvement in the quality of learning. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of the teaching ranged from very good to poor. Overall, the quality of the teaching and pupils’ learning is satisfactory, although good, and at times very good, teaching occurs in each class. The quality of the teaching in mathematics and English is generally good. There are, however, some areas for improvement which, if tackled effectively, would enable pupils to make better progress.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	8	11	1	1	0

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

13. Almost half of the lessons observed during the inspection were good or better. In these lessons, the teachers engaged pupils’ attention well and used effective methods to help them learn. In a very good lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, the teacher captured the pupils’ interest through a well-chosen videoed extract of the author reading his own text, and

in a very good English lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher held pupils' attention through the skilful use of questioning. Another essential element in the good lessons is the way teachers ensure that all pupils are actively engaged, whether in practical investigation in a science lesson or practising skills with a partner in physical education. The planning of English and mathematics lessons is thorough, and there is very good expertise in the teaching of physical education and music. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good, and encouragement and praise from their teachers help to motivate the pupils. A very effective system is used in some lessons to help the teacher evaluate whether pupils have understood what is being taught. In a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, for example, half a dozen pupils showed an orange card, indicating that they did not fully understand, so the teacher spent more time with this small group, enabling them to learn.

14. There are times, however, when the teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the pupils could or should be achieving. The work provided is not always sufficiently challenging for the more able or older pupils. There is a tendency, for example, for teachers to give the same task to all pupils in a year group regardless of their ability, and there is too much use of unchallenging worksheets, particularly in Years 1 and 2, which limit what pupils are able to achieve. Time is not always used as effectively as it could be. In some lessons, pupils are kept on the carpet for too long, leaving insufficient time for them to finish their individual tasks. In other lessons, pupils are allowed to work at their own pace and take far too long over a piece of work. Teachers too readily accept work which is poorly presented or unfinished. In some lessons in Years 1 to 4, the teachers tolerate inappropriate behaviour from some pupils which affects the learning of others. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their own independent learning skills through, for example, designing their own investigations in science, being involved in longer-term projects or having a greater say in how to tackle a problem or present their work.
15. The school goes to considerable lengths to provide for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans, written and reviewed by the special needs co-ordinator, provide appropriate targets for these pupils who, for much of the time, are provided with effective support from teaching assistants.
16. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, although they are better in English and mathematics than in other subjects. Some of the teachers' assessments in English, however, are over-generous. Whilst teachers are conscientious in the marking of pupils' work, they are not rigorous enough in pointing out where pupils have made mistakes or giving them an indication of how they can improve their work. In some classes, teachers are unduly lavish in their praise, writing glowing comments for work which is, at best, mediocre and, at times, unacceptable. Unfinished, poorly presented or inadequate work is accepted too readily, and rarely are pupils asked to re-visit a piece of work in order to learn from their mistakes, make improvements or act on advice. This is in contrast to the verbal feedback given during the lessons, which is nearly always helpful.

## **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment beyond the formal curriculum are good. The overall range of learning resources and the quality of the school's accommodation are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Not enough time is spent teaching the humanities, art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology in Years 1 to 6.
- Teachers miss opportunities to link work in one subject with what is being taught in another.
- Key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not developed or consolidated sufficiently through the teaching of other subjects.
- There are good opportunities for learning outside the school day.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.

- Curricular provision for children in their reception year is adversely affected by unsatisfactory accommodation and resources.

## Commentary

17. Whilst the school provides a good range of extra-curricular enhancements, the formal curriculum is unsatisfactory. Insufficient time is spent on the teaching of art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology, especially in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils complete very little recorded work in these subjects and do not develop sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills in them. In contrast, curricular provision in English and mathematics is good, as it is in physical education, for which pupils receive the government's recommended allocation of two hours of physical activity per week. Provision for music, which is taught by a specialist teacher, is also good.
18. Although there are some developing cross-curricular links in Years 3 and 4, the teaching of individual subjects is still far too compartmentalised, and teachers miss opportunities to relate the teaching in one subject to what pupils are studying in another. Whilst key skills are taught effectively in English and mathematics, teachers do not give enough attention to planning how these key skills can be developed or reinforced through the teaching of other subjects. Insufficient time is spent teaching key skills in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6. When skills are taught, it is not always in an appropriate context, serving to enhance understanding in other areas of the curriculum as well as developing key information and communication technology skills.
19. The school tries hard to provide an appropriate curriculum for children in their reception year, but inadequate accommodation and an unsatisfactory range of resources make it difficult to provide the sort of curriculum which is appropriate for pupils of this age. There is, for example, no space for large indoor toys, sand and water, and no immediate access to an outdoor learning area with easy transition to and from the classroom. The fact that children in the reception year-group have to share a room with pupils in Years 1 and 2 also impedes opportunities for children to choose from a range of activities.
20. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including football, climbing, recorders, gardening, information and communication technology, pottery and summer sports. Pupils in Year 6 also have the opportunity to take part in the sports and French club offered by the Primary Pupil Partnership scheme at Helston Community College. All pupils have the opportunity for occasional visits to places of interest, such as the Minack Theatre, but, because of financial constraints, the range of visits is not as wide as that found in some schools. The Friends of Germoe School contribute significantly to the cost of the trips which take place, thereby enabling all pupils to participate. Events, such as music and drama days and visitors who occasionally share their skills with the pupils, provide important enhancements of the curriculum.
21. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Good use is made of circle time, and pupils welcome the opportunity to discuss issues which affect their lives. A sex and relationships policy has been drawn up and is now being implemented in the three classes. A biennial residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 further enhances pupils' personal development. The vicar from St Germoe visits the school regularly, and pupils' visits to the church make an important contribution to their studies in religious education and their understanding of local history.
22. The school gives high priority to its policy of inclusion, and almost all special educational needs support is given within the classroom. Teachers devise individual lesson plans with the special needs coordinator and include the pupils' targets when planning for their needs. The conscientious team of teaching assistants provide adequate support and make a significant contribution to ensuring equality of access and opportunity for pupils with special educational needs. However, during the inspection, there were indications that the inclusion of pupils exhibiting inappropriate behaviour, occasionally has a detrimental effect on the remaining pupils in the class.

23. Accommodation for the pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, although the temporary classrooms are very old and well past their original life-span. Resources are generally satisfactory, but there is a shortage of equipment for information and communication technology and a need to renew some of the resources for science and humanities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff show high levels of care and concern for pupils' well-being.
- Pupils do not always receive enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- Induction procedures for new pupils are good.
- Members of the school council are keen express their views.

### **Commentary**

24. This is an inclusive school and members of the school community show good levels of care and concern for each other. Parents value the way staff settle new children into school. Through close links with the pre-school group, which meets on the premises, the children quickly become familiar with school routines. The results of the pupils' questionnaire show that most pupils feel that they can turn to adults working in school if they are worried. Staff give very good support to pupils who have difficulties in their personal life. Teachers know the pupils well and celebrate pupils' achievements in assemblies and make valuable comments in the pupils' annual reports. Although teachers encourage pupils in their lessons, they do not generally give pupils enough day-to-day advice on what they need to do to improve their work.
25. Staff and governors endeavour to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and secure environment. Healthy living is successfully promoted, and almost the whole school community benefits from the 'Wake and Shake' exercise programme at the start of the school day whenever the weather is fine. Risk assessments are undertaken, and appropriate arrangements are in place for testing electrical equipment and for emergency evacuations. The headteacher co-ordinates child protection procedures and arrangements for looked-after children and carries out his duties effectively. The arrangements for first aid are good. Staff have received basic training in first aid, and good records are kept of accidents and when medication is given.
26. Teachers listen to pupils and value their comments, and there are some good opportunities for pupils to think about their personal goals. Members of the school council are eager to improve school life, but staff do not give all pupils enough opportunity to contribute their ideas.

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

The school's partnership with parents is good. The links with the community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school welcomes parents and helps them to support their children's learning.
- The school has established close links with the village.
- Valuable links with other schools improve teachers' knowledge and contribute to pupils' achievement.

### **Commentary**

27. The school works hard to reach out to parents and encourages them to become involved in the life of the school. Through the Family Learning programme, parents of the younger children and pupils receive good guidance about how to help their children with their learning, and there are good opportunities for families to work and learn together. Nearly all parents feel that teachers are very approachable and that they are able to discuss any concerns with them at the end of the school day. Parents are consulted through questionnaires and a governors' question box. The parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were positive, and parents had no significant concerns. Parents value the family atmosphere and feel part of the school community. The active Friends Association works hard to raise funds and organise social events. The group's meetings also provide a useful forum to discuss any concerns about the school with the headteacher. Parents provide valuable support in the classrooms and on visits.
28. Parents receive a good range of information from the school. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and contain useful information about how well the pupils are doing, but the information about how their children can improve their work is often too vague. Twice-yearly consultations give parents good opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff. Weekly newsletters provide parents with relevant and timely information about future events, and some teachers send parents information about what their children will be studying. The website could be a valuable means of communicating with parents and the community, but it has not been regularly updated. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are helpful documents. However, the latter does not contain all the required information.
29. The school's good links with the community enrich the curriculum and have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and academic achievement. Links with the village are particularly strong. For example, the celebrations for the feast day are based at the school, and the pupils have been involved in a local regeneration project. Through entertaining senior citizens, working with a poet and talking with local residents about their wartime experiences, pupils' experience and understanding is deepened.
30. The pre-school group meets in the school hall, and this helps children to become familiar with the premises and routines before they join the school. The school is an active member of the local schools partnership SKILL (South Kerrier Initiative for Linking Learning). Links with the two secondary schools and over twenty primary schools enable staff to meet with colleagues to share expertise and offer mutual support. Projects started in Year 6 are completed during induction into Year 7, and this helps pupils settle into their new schools.



## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership and management of the headteacher and of other key staff are satisfactory. Governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's leadership ensures good teamwork amongst the school's committed staff.
- The school shows good commitment to the concept of inclusion.
- Arrangements for physical education and for pupils with special educational needs are led and managed well.
- The school's evaluation of its own performance is not rigorous enough.
- The governing body is becoming more proactive and involved in the running of the school.

### **Commentary**

31. The school's leadership has changed since the last inspection, with the current headteacher taking up his post mid-way between this and the previous inspection. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership, a key strength of which is the way he has established good teamwork and a genuine sense of collaboration and cooperation amongst the school's committed and hard-working staff. His leadership has also led to various improvements, most significant of which has been the upward trend in the school's results in English and mathematics. There is good commitment to inclusion, ensuring that pupils who have learning disabilities or other disadvantages become fully integrated members of the school community and have the opportunity to make progress in their learning.
32. The leadership of other staff who assume responsibility for co-ordinating a range of subjects is satisfactory. In some cases, the co-ordinator's enthusiasm for their subject has a marked impact. In physical education, for example, initiatives such as the early morning 'Wake and Shake' aerobics session, the climbing wall and the lunchtime 'Huff Puff' activities make important contributions to keeping pupils healthy. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well by the special needs coordinator. Her half-day a week in school is used effectively in meeting with teachers and teaching assistants and writing individual education plans which are reviewed on a termly basis. Her expertise is also used well in meeting with representatives from outside agencies and accessing expertise and resources. She monitors pupils' progress carefully and keeps comprehensive records of each pupil who receives additional support.
33. The school's development plan contains an appropriate range of priorities for improvement and has been an effective tool in the past for raising standards in English and mathematics. Overall, however, the school's evaluation of its own performance is not rigorous enough. This is partly due to the fact that subject co-ordinators do not have enough opportunity to observe teaching within their subject areas. It is also due to the fact that scrutinies of pupils' work, which are conducted jointly by all staff, and the checking of how effectively curricular plans have been implemented are not incisive enough to identify key weaknesses. As a result, weaknesses in provision for some of the foundation subjects, such as art and design, design and technology, geography and history have not been clearly identified. Evidence suggests there is now stronger leadership in information and communication technology than before, but unsatisfactory leadership in the past has led to insufficient improvement in this area of the curriculum. In contrast, there has been significant improvement in the curricular arrangements for religious education.
34. Governance is satisfactory. In recent years, the governing body has been through a period of significant change, with a new chair and vice chair of governors taking up their responsibilities at the start of the current school year. The governing body is now much more aware of its responsibilities to hold the school to account for the standards it achieves and has instituted procedures to monitor what is happening in various subject areas in order to become better informed about the school's performance and needs. As a result, governors

are becoming more proactive and involved in the running of the school. They have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and are learning to identify where improvements need to be made. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils all of its major statutory responsibilities, but its annual report does not meet requirements. A number of individual governors are regular visitors to the school and provide a significant amount of voluntary support and help within the classroom.

35. The school employs the services of a bursar to ensure that the school's financial affairs are managed effectively. The school's secretary plays a key role in the day-to-day management and administration of the school and provides an important and efficient initial contact for parents and visitors.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	220,936
Total expenditure	220,442
Expenditure per pupil	3,736

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,349
Balance carried forward to the next	18,843

36. The school receives an above average income per pupil, which reflects the typical overheads involved in running a small school. Taking account of the quality of education provided, the leadership and management and the standards achieved by the pupils, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Inadequate accommodation and resources have an adverse effect on the curriculum provided and the children's progress.
- Induction procedures prior to joining the reception year are good.
- Relationships between staff and children are very good.
- Staff do not always have high enough expectations of what the children could or should be achieving.

### **Commentary**

37. Children are admitted into the reception class in the September or January of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, according to parental choice. The attainment of children when they start school varies widely, with some children already showing above average skills, but a greater proportion with below average skills, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. Overall, attainment on entry is below average.
38. The reduction in the number of pupils on roll has affected the provision for children in their reception year more than others, as they are now taught in the same class as pupils in Years 1 and 2. At the time of the last inspection, they were taught together with pupils in Year 1 only. This has altered the nature of the whole-class teaching and reduced the number of options available for reception-aged children. In some respects, therefore, provision for children in the Foundation Stage is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.
39. The accommodation and resources available for children in their reception year are unsatisfactory. There is no separate area in which these children can be taught on their own other than the information and communication technology suite, to which children are withdrawn most mornings for part of the literacy lesson. However, this room lacks any facilities or equipment for children in this age-group. Children are unable to use the hall in the mornings, as it is used by the community playgroup, and there is no secure outdoor area which is easily accessible from the classroom. With the classroom being used by pupils in Years 1 and 2, there is no space for facilities such as sand and water to be freely available, and there is not enough space for a variety of activities to be set out to help children develop the ability to choose and learn independently. These far from ideal circumstances have an inevitable impact on the curriculum, which is unsatisfactory, as it is not as broad and varied as that envisaged in national guidance for the Foundation Stage. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, however, are satisfactory, as the staff try hard to overcome the difficulties imposed by these working conditions and ensure that a distinctive curriculum is provided for the children as far as is possible.
40. There are some compensations for the children working in these conditions. Links with the playgroup which meets on the school's premises are very good and the induction arrangements for children before they start school are good. Relationships between the children and the staff are very good, as they are with older children in the school. As a result, the children settle very quickly into school and the daily routine. They enjoy being together with older pupils and have positive attitudes to school. The family atmosphere of the school means there is always a helping hand if needed.
41. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning and children's achievement are satisfactory. Although children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and achieve many of

the early learning goals, standards are, overall, below those expected by the end of the reception year. The children cope well with whole-class teaching sessions held together with pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teacher helps the children to maintain concentration during these sessions by directing questions specifically at the reception children and encouraging their participation in discussion. After the whole-class sessions, separate activities are generally provided for the reception children, often supervised by the teaching assistant who provides a familiar and reassuring presence for the children. However, for much of the time when working as a group, the children all complete the same task and not enough attention is given to the differing needs and abilities of the group. Expectations of what the children, particularly the more able, could be achieving are not always high enough, and some of the worksheet-based tasks they are given are very limiting. Whilst the adults engage the children well in conversation, they are not rigorous enough in extending the children's thinking or consolidating previous learning through the asking of pertinent questions. At times during the day, children are allowed to choose their activities, although the confines of the classroom result in a limited range of choices and children do not, therefore, have enough opportunity to develop independent learning skills.

42. Although children exceed some of the goals established for their **personal, social and emotional development**, overall standards are below those expected for children of their age by the end of the reception year. In many respects, they show a good degree of independence and outward confidence, born of their involvement with older pupils, and they relate well to adults and their peers. They pay attention, behave well and take turns when working with the whole class. However, when working together as a small year group they do not always show the same restraint. Some of the children have not learnt the importance of taking turns, sharing or listening to others, and many of them find it hard to maintain concentration. Adults supervising the children are, at times, too tolerant of the inappropriate responses of some children and are not rigorous enough in developing these key social skills.
43. Standards in **communication, language and literacy** are below those expected by the end of the reception year. Children enjoy listening to and retelling stories and join in enthusiastically when encouraged to do so. During the inspection, for example, children eagerly retold the story of the *'The Owl Babies'* using finger puppets. By the end of the reception year, children meet most of the goals relating to speaking and listening, although a few children find it hard to listen to others when working in a small group. Standards in the more formal aspects of reading and writing are below those expected because not enough emphasis is given to developing children's phonic<sup>3</sup> knowledge and not enough opportunities are provided for children to practise their emergent writing skills.
44. Standards in **mathematical development** are at the expected level by the end of the reception year. Most children achieve nearly all of the goals set for their age. They recognise numerals and count reliably up to 10 and enjoy working with mathematical activities. Children pick up more advanced concepts during the whole-class sessions which they spend at the start of mathematics lessons with pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, not enough account is taken of this when the reception children work together as a group as, most of the time, all of the children, regardless of ability, are given the same task to complete.
45. There was not enough opportunity during the inspection to observe much teaching for **knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development or creative development**. However, the book *The Owl Babies* was used well to extend children's knowledge and understanding of living things, as children were engaged in discussion about the habitats of owls and looked at reference books with the teacher to find out about owls' ability to hear. Creative activities were also linked well to the same theme as children drew pictures of owls and made their own nests with plasticine to form part of a colourful display

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<sup>3</sup> Phonics is a teaching programme aimed at developing an awareness of sounds in the spoken and written word. Pupils learn to read and pronounce words by linking the sounds they hear spoken with the letters, letter groups and syllables they see written.

about owls' nests. Children have good opportunities to develop musical skills during their lesson with pupils in Years 1 and 2 as the music teacher is very good at ensuring all of the reception children have the opportunity to perform and asks questions which are pitched at just the right level for each individual child. There are also good opportunities for children to develop their gross motor skills, not only in their physical education lessons, but also through their own use of the school's climbing equipment, their involvement in the 'Wake and Shake' session at the start of the day and through the playground games which are available to them, often with the encouragement of older pupils. Children exceed many of the goals expected for their age in this aspect of their physical development, but they do not show similar control of their fine motor skills, particularly when drawing, colouring and writing.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils make good progress in English.
- Standards have improved more than in most schools since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is not less than satisfactory and often very good.
- Spelling is weak throughout the school, although recent intervention in Years 5 and 6 has led to an improvement.
- Teachers' marking does not always take into account pupils' individual targets.
- Assessment data is used well to track pupils' progress and set targets.

#### **Commentary**

46. Pupils enter the school with lower than average skills in communication, language and literacy but, by the end of Year 6, standards in English are average. Over their time in the school, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls.
47. Standards at the end of Year 2 have improved more than in most schools since the last inspection, although the national test results in 2004 were below average in writing and well below average in reading. However, inspection findings show that standards achieved by the pupils in the current Year 2 are average.
48. The school's results at the end of Year 6 improved much more than in most schools from the last inspection until 2003, when standards were well above average. Although the results in 2004 were below the national average, they were above average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average.
49. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lessons, teachers are well planned, provide stimulating activities and encourage pupils to share their ideas. In one class, the very good use of the interactive whiteboard brought an added dimension to the lesson because the pupils were able to watch the author of *The Owl Babies* read his own story aloud. Work is well matched to the pupils' abilities. More challenging activities are set for the most able pupils to extend their learning, while pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants within the classroom.
50. Pupils are encouraged to write stories, and in Years 1 and 2 pupils wrote enthusiastically about a fantasy world. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have compiled booklets of their own myths and legends. However, in some cases the work produced is let down by poor presentation

and weak spelling. A weakness in spelling was identified by the English coordinator in Years 5 and 6 who, following the advice of the special needs coordinator, tested all the pupils with a diagnostic spelling test. Some of the pupils whose spelling was weakest are now following a spelling improvement programme which is proving to be effective.

51. Teachers mark work consistently and their comments are mostly positive, but they rarely refer to pupils' targets or suggest ways for pupils to improve their work. Poor presentation and untidy handwriting are not always picked up on, and teachers' assessments of some work are over-generous.
52. The subject coordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. She analyses data from the school's national test results and gives support to teaching staff by providing appropriate suggestions and resources for learning. Some scrutiny of pupils' work is done to ensure progress is being made throughout the school, but the coordinator has not had the opportunity to spend time alongside colleagues, observing them teach in the classroom.

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

53. Pupils' use of language and literacy in other subjects needs developing. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use their writing skills across the curriculum because recording in other subjects is often confined to completing worksheets. Teachers do not place enough emphasis on the technical terms which, although used correctly, are not displayed in the classroom where pupils could refer to them to ensure correct spelling. Pupils are beginning to develop research skills, using reference books in science, for example, in order to find out about different habitats.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have risen more than in most schools.
- Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should be achieving.
- The planning of mathematics across the curriculum is weak.

### **Commentary**

54. There has been good improvement in the school's provision in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards have improved throughout the school, and pupils are now making good progress in Years 5 and 6, compared with the unsatisfactory progress noted at the time of the last inspection. Overall, pupils achieve well, improving from below average standards on entry to the school to average standards by the end of Year 6. The improvements are due to better quality teaching in Years 5 and 6 and good leadership and management. As a result, staff have placed greater emphasis on teaching the subject and using different techniques to help pupils to understand new concepts. The curriculum is well planned, largely following a scheme for schools with pupils in mixed-age classes, but also ensuring that attention is given to rectifying weaknesses highlighted in analyses of test results.
55. Although they have fallen over the last two years, and were well below the national average in 2004, the school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved more than in most schools over the last four years. The latest results indicate a significant polarisation of ability, with just over 40 per cent of the pupils achieving above the expected level for their age, and over 50 per cent achieving below the expected level, with no pupils in the mid-range occupied by a significant proportion of the pupils in the rest of the country.

Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in the current Year 2 and that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress.

56. Until 2003, results at the end of Year 6 improved much more than in most schools. The results in 2004 were well below the national average, and below average when compared with similar schools, statistics skewed by the fact that a third of the year group joined the school only months before the tests took place. The small number of pupils who had spent most of their primary education at Germoe achieved well, attaining standards which were in line with the national average, and significantly better than those pertaining at the time of the last inspection. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average in the current Year 6, but that pupils have made good progress in recent years. The range of ability in this year group is wide, with a number of pupils achieving standards above those expected, whilst a similar proportion, mainly those who joined the school at a late stage, are still below the expected standard.
57. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The teachers are thorough in covering all aspects of the curriculum and consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding of important mathematical concepts. The work of pupils in Year 4, for example, shows significant improvement when compared with the standards the same pupils achieved at the end of Year 2. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils quickly gained confidence in learning a new method of multiplying two two-digit numbers. In this lesson, the teacher also used her time very effectively. After a clear and well-explained introductory session she asked pupils to indicate whether or not they had understood the new method. These pupils then started to practise examples on their own while the teacher gave further explanation to the six pupils who were still unsure. Teachers are beginning to make good use of the interactive whiteboards to help pupils to visualise new concepts, but they are not always discriminating enough in evaluating the merits of commercially produced materials. The evidence in pupils' books shows that they make good progress and achieve well in Years 3 to 6.
58. There are, however, still some weaknesses in the teaching, and teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should be achieving. In Class 1, where the teacher has to cope with three age groups, the work is not always challenging enough for pupils in Year 2 and the work is not sufficiently differentiated in accordance with pupils' abilities. Sometimes, the teacher places limits on how far the pupils can go, which prevents the more able pupils from making more rapid progress. In some lessons, teachers tolerate too much unacceptable behaviour, generally from a small number of individual pupils, which has an adverse effect on the progress of others in the class. In some classes, teachers are not rigorous enough when marking pupils' work. Poorly presented work is accepted without comment, incorrect spellings of mathematical vocabulary are left unchallenged, work of a mediocre standard is unduly praised and comments rarely help pupils to see how they can improve their work. However, despite these weaknesses, the picture in mathematics is much better than at the time of the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. The planned use and development of mathematical skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Whilst there is some use of data-handling in science, pupils' work shows that there is no development or application of mathematical skills in subjects such as geography and design and technology. Aspects of the curriculum for information and communication technology which deal with mathematical concepts are not linked in sufficiently well with the mathematics curriculum. As a result, pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to see how their mathematical skills can be applied in practical contexts.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is planned well on the basis of a two-year rolling programme.
- Pupils are given too many unchallenging worksheets on which to record their work.
- Good use is made of a booster class in Years 5 and 6 to raise standards in science.

### Commentary

60. The teacher's assessments indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were below average, although an above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher level 3. The national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were well below average in science; however, this was due to a very small cohort of pupils of which a third were new to the school. Analysis of pupils' work completed this year indicates that standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' progress in science is satisfactory.
61. In the lessons seen during the inspection the quality of teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the good lessons, teachers planned clear learning objectives for each session which were shared with the pupils. Explanations were very clear and teachers encouraged pupils to think and apply their learning. In one good lesson, pupils were asked to work out the sequence for a food chain based on the research they had done about different animals and their habitats.
62. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning. In Years 5 and 6, pupils decide whether they have understood the lesson and hold up either a green or a red card, which enables the teacher to identify those pupils who need her to spend additional time with them. Pupils with special educational needs are supported within the classroom with appropriately modified activities and support from a teaching assistant. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory, most of the lesson was spent together on the carpet, which meant that, although the range of activities provided for each age group was appropriately challenging, there was no time to finish and pupils became frustrated. Teachers assess pupils' understanding of each topic at the end of each unit and make good use of the quizzes in a commercial software program which are designed to help pupils consolidate their learning.
63. The curriculum is well planned, and each class follows an appropriate two-year rolling programme. Work seen in books reflects a broad coverage of the science curriculum but, since much of the work is recorded on worksheets, pupils are unable to record in any depth. This method of recording often prevents pupils from demonstrating a higher level of understanding than is targeted by the worksheet. In examples of work where pupils are encouraged to record using their own methods, such as in the investigation of air resistance by pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils explain in more depth and illustrate their findings with useful graphs and charts.
64. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory, and there has been satisfactory improvement in science since the last inspection. Until 2003, the school's results at the end of Year 6 had risen at a similar rate to those in other schools. Through analysis of test results, the coordinator has identified pupils who would benefit from extra opportunities to build up their confidence and knowledge of science and introduced a booster club for them. This venture has been successful in improving standards for those pupils who attend.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.
- The planning of the curriculum for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, and skills are not taught within the context of work being undertaken in other subjects.
- Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is adversely affected by inadequate resources.
- The appointment of a new co-ordinator and the acquisition of interactive whiteboards have brought some improvement to the subject.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

### Commentary

65. There has been insufficient improvement in information and communication technology since the last inspection, when standards at the end of Year 6 were highlighted as a key area for improvement. Standards are currently below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
66. The school has experienced significant problems with its resources in recent years, and this has impeded pupils' progress in acquiring new skills and their ability to make use of new technology. Although these problems have now been solved, the number of computers in the computer suite and available to pupils in the classroom is insufficient to allow all pupils to have regular and sustained access to information and communication technology. The school has yet to solve the problem of how to save and store pupils' work, which makes it difficult for pupils to retrieve work which they have started in a previous session. The current development plan for the subject addresses this particular problem.
67. The main reason for pupils' underachievement is inadequate planning of the curriculum. Whilst the long-term curriculum plan indicates adequate coverage of the main topics in the national scheme of work, evidence from pupils' books and discussion with pupils indicate that few of these topics are taught thoroughly and some are not taught at all. Basic skills are not taught sufficiently often within a context which relates to work pupils are undertaking in other subjects. Better opportunities are provided for pupils in Years 3 and 4 than in other classes but, even here, there is little evidence of widespread use of skills being applied in practical and meaningful contexts across the curriculum.
68. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, the lack of work indicates that the overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Pupils have insufficient opportunity to find things out using new technology or to exchange and share information through the use of a variety of computer programs and equipment such as digital cameras. In the few instances where pupils have started to use technology in an appropriate context, they have not had sufficient opportunity to develop their ideas or to review, modify and evaluate their work. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 say that they rarely use the computer suite, and this situation is unsatisfactory.
69. The lack of improvement in standards in information and communication technology since the last inspection indicates that the leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory. However, the situation has improved this year as a new co-ordinator has taken over responsibility and put together an action plan for the subject. The plan highlights appropriate actions which should help to raise standards, such as improving the confidence and ability of staff to use new technology and the acquisition of new software to enable staff to teach all aspects of the curriculum. However, the school has not yet undertaken a rigorous

analysis of the quality of teaching, the standard of pupils' work or the way technology is used throughout the school, and important weaknesses, such as the insufficient coverage of the curriculum and the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum, have not yet been fully identified by the school. The introduction of a computer club for pupils is a positive new initiative which is having some impact on raising standards.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum and the development of basic skills through the teaching of other subjects are unsatisfactory. The recent acquisition of interactive whiteboards for each classroom is helping to rectify the situation by enabling the teachers to use new technology when teaching the whole class. Some good examples were observed during the inspection, when the use of projector and whiteboard engaged pupils' attention and helped them to understand new concepts. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, were absorbed by a presentation of *The Owl Babies* read by the author. However, teachers have not had these resources for long enough to become familiar with the material at their disposal and are not yet sufficiently discriminating in their use. Occasionally, therefore, as in a mathematics lesson in Years 1 and 2, they use an unsuitable program when a more traditional method of teaching would have been quicker and more effective. The pupils' own use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning in other subjects is severely limited.

### HUMANITIES

71. This curriculum area comprises **religious education, geography and history**. Geography and history are taught in alternate half-terms in Years 1 to 4 and in alternate terms in Years 5 and 6. During the inspection, geography was being taught in Years 1 to 4 and history in Years 5 and 6. One lesson was observed in geography in Years 3 and 4, and one lesson in religious education in Years 1 and 2. Discussions were held with pupils and the coordinators of all three subjects. Not enough was seen of the work in the three subjects to make overall judgements on provision, teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
72. Pupils make satisfactory progress in **religious education**, which is an improvement from the last inspection where standards were below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 6. The coordinator ensures that the locally agreed syllabus is planned appropriately for each class. Artefacts are available to support each faith, and she monitors the assessments made by teachers at the end of each unit. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory understanding of the different faiths and can talk about the key events in Christian festivals. However, very little work is recorded in books. In the lesson that was seen during the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 made satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of Islam, as they looked at the Qur'an as an example of a special book and drew their own illuminated letters.
73. Curricular provision in **history** and **geography** is unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where very little of either subject is taught. Insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of these subjects, with the result that pupils have only very superficial understanding of the topics covered. Although there is some cross-curricular work in Years 3 and 4, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of geography and history through the teaching of other subjects. Pupils' achievement is constrained, particularly in Years 1 and 2, by the use of undemanding worksheets, and their books contain very few pieces of recorded work. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils produced only four or five pieces of insubstantial work on mountains over the course of a whole term. Where pupils have been encouraged to write in their own words and given sufficient time in which to do so, such as in isolated pieces of work on the Plague in Years 5 and 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards. In all three subjects in this curriculum area, the overall quality of pupils' work is spoilt by untidy handwriting, incorrectly spelt words and unfinished pieces of work.
74. In the one geography lesson observed in Years 3 and 4, pupils made satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of the local area around Germoe. Different groups of pupils made maps of their journeys to school, marking on places that they passed, prepared a

leaflet to attract tourists to Germoe, looked at the coastal area and pin-pointed tourist attractions and two pupils debated the pros and cons of a building a new tourist attraction in the area.

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

75. No direct teaching of **art and design** or **design and technology** was timetabled during the inspection and no past work was available for scrutiny. As a result, no judgement has been made about the overall provision or standards and achievement in these subjects. Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator for the two subjects, and through a scrutiny of displays and teachers' planning. In **music** and **physical education**, two lessons were observed in each subject and discussions were held with pupils and the co-ordinator for the two subjects.
76. The curriculum for both **art and design** and **design and technology** is unsatisfactory. Insufficient attention is given to the two subjects, and the school's long-term plans show that coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is very limited indeed, particularly in Years 5 and 6. For half of the two-year curriculum cycle, pupils in Years 5 and 6 study neither subject, and this is an unsatisfactory situation. There appears to be little systematic development of skills in either subject and very little opportunity for pupils to acquire an adequate depth of knowledge, understanding or skills. Pupils in Year 6 were, for example, unable to give any indication of what they had learnt in design and technology over the last year. That pupils enjoy their experiences in art and design is evident from the few displays around the school, such as the wax-resist pictures produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6, but their knowledge of how to use different materials and techniques and of the roles and purposes of artists, craftspeople and designers and the variety of genres, styles and traditions is severely limited. A short session for pupils to undertake art and craft activities has recently been introduced, but this alone does not rectify the shortcomings in the planned curriculum. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were learning the skills of macramé, most of the girls taking to the activity with alacrity, whilst many of the boys experienced frustration at not being as dextrous as their female classmates. A good new initiative, planned for the end of the summer term, is the introduction of an arts week, which should provide pupils with a wider range of experiences than has hitherto been present.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

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

- High-quality specialist teaching enables pupils to make good progress and achieve above average standards in music.

#### **Commentary**

77. There has been good improvement in the school's provision for music since the last inspection and pupils now make good progress and achieve standards which are above those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' weekly music lessons are taught by a subject specialist, who is also an advanced skills teacher. As a result, pupils receive high-quality teaching. In addition, pupils in Years 2 to 6 have a weekly singing practice, which enables them to achieve good standards in singing.
78. The two lessons observed during the inspection were well-paced and contained a good variety of activities which helped pupils to improve their understanding of musical terms and their performing skills. A particularly good feature of both lessons was the way in which the teacher challenged all pupils, helping them to overcome any reticence, ensuring all had the opportunity to perform and encouraging their efforts. Although firmly managed, the poor behaviour of a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 detracted from the overall progress in one lesson.
79. The subject is led and managed well, the overall procedures being overseen by one of the school's staff, and technical expertise provided by the visiting specialist teacher. Curricular

provision is good, ensuring pupils receive a broad range of opportunities to perform, compose, listen and appraise. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, which includes the learning of traditional Cornish songs and songs from other cultures. Pupils are encouraged to play musical instruments.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in games and swimming.
- The school uses the skills of a specialist teacher to good effect.
- The school supplements good curricular provision with a very good range of additional activities which help pupils to keep healthy.
- The good provision in physical education owes much to the enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership of the subject co-ordinator.
- The school's indoor facilities for physical education are very inadequate.

### **Commentary**

80. Despite very inadequate indoor facilities, the school has maintained, and in some aspects enhanced, the good provision for physical education noted at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils attain above average standards in games, and the school's records indicate that they also achieve high standards in swimming. Good progress is evident from one class to the next, and some of the oldest pupils demonstrate good ball and racket skills.
81. The quality of the teaching is good. Much of it is undertaken by one part-time member of staff, a specialist teacher of physical education. Pupils receive good instruction and pertinent help and advice during practice sessions which helps them to improve their skills. The great majority of pupils listen carefully, participate enthusiastically and try hard to put into practice the skills which have been well taught. As a result, they achieve well. A small number of boys, although physically capable, make little progress because they do not listen or follow instructions.
82. Curricular provision in physical education is good and makes a significant contribution to keeping pupils healthy. Pupils have two physical education lessons each week and, for much of the year, a swimming lesson in addition, although the time spent travelling to and from the swimming baths represents a considerable drain on curriculum time. Extra-curricular provision also contributes strongly to the development of pupils' physical education skills and general levels of fitness. When the weather permits, the whole school participates in a 'Wake and Shake' aerobics session at the beginning of the day. Playground games are well organised and help pupils to develop good ball skills. Older pupils organise 'Huff Puff' activities for younger pupils at lunchtime and, after school, a variety of sporting activities, including climbing, are available. For a very small school, the school achieves a good degree of success in competition with other schools. Almost all pupils have over two hours of physical activity per week, which is in line with the government's recommendations.
83. The subject is led and managed well. The conversion of one wall of the school building into a climbing wall and the amount and range of physical activity undertaken by the pupils owes much to the enthusiasm of the subject co-ordinator. The level of participation and activity is all the more commendable given far from ideal circumstances. The school's hard-surfaced areas are all sloping, making them awkward for many games activities and the school hall is far too small for more than a small number of pupils to engage in vigorous activity at any one time.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

84. The school provides a good range of opportunities to enhance pupils' personal, social and health education. During circle time, which was introduced by the headteacher as part of the Healthy Schools initiative, pupils are given opportunities to explore and discuss moral issues. One lesson was observed during the inspection where pupils in Years 1 and 2 discussed the power of positive messages. Pupils were asked to say something positive about each member of the group. Most pupils had something to say and all listened thoughtfully to each other's views. Since the last inspection, the sex and relationships and drugs policies have been updated and implemented. Pupils know they are part of a caring community where their views are valued. Pupils' views are taken into consideration through the work of the school council, which involves representative pupils from Years 1 to 6 and which meets regularly to discuss current issues. The council has a positive influence on school life and was, for example, involved in the updating of the sex and relationships and drugs policies.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
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	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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