

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Otterham Community Primary School**

Marshgate, Cornwall

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111935

Headteacher: Mr P. Lessels

Lead inspector: Mrs J. Ikin

Dates of inspection: 20 - 23 September 2004

Inspection number: 267443

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: 80

School address: Marshgate  
Camelford  
Cornwall  
Postcode: PL32 9YW

Telephone number: 01840 261344  
Fax number: 01840 261344

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr F. Routly

Date of previous inspection: 1 March 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Otterham Community Primary School is a small village primary school which caters for pupils aged from four to eleven years of age. It serves the villages of Otterham and Marshgate but also draws pupils from the wider area because of its good reputation. All the pupils are from white United Kingdom backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are broadly average. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but, overall, it is a little below average. The number of pupils who join the school after the usual time of admission is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is average. The number with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above average. Their needs include specific learning difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, autism and severe learning difficulties. The school has a 'Healthy Schools' award and a 'Schools Achievement' award. It is involved in a local 'Creative Partnership' initiative and an 'Art in the Community' scheme, as well as a 'Sports Partnership Initiative'.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3349	Mrs J. Ikin	Lead inspector	English Science Design and technology Art and design Geography The Foundation Stage
9334	Ms J. Mynett	Lay inspector	
23412	Mr A. Jeffs	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education History Religious education Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Ltd  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
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GL53 7JX

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. It provides a good standard of care and a good education for its pupils. It is well led and managed and most pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. The curriculum is good overall and the school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and all staff work as a highly committed team for the benefit of pupils.
- Pupils achieve very well in mathematics and well in reading, art and design, music and physical education, but do not achieve as much as they should in their writing, speaking skills and scientific enquiry.
- The school is highly committed to inclusion and provision for special educational needs is good.
- The school makes very good use of outside expertise to enrich the sports and arts curriculum.
- There are very strong links with parents, the community and other schools in the area.
- Assessment and target setting are not as precise as they should be and pupils are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their work.
- The accommodation constrains curriculum development in a number of areas.

The school was last inspected in 1999. Its improvement since then has been good. The curriculum and the quality of teaching have improved, high standards in mathematics have been sustained and more pupils now achieve the higher levels in science. National test results in English have not improved as much as they have in other schools. This can be partly explained by changes in the character of the school since the last inspection. More pupils now join the school in Years 3 to 6 and the school has a higher proportion of special educational needs pupils. Most of the issues raised in the last report have been addressed, although more remains to be done to improve standards of writing.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Similar schools are those with similar free school meals.

These results should be treated with caution since the numbers involved are small and fluctuate because of the varying proportions of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs who join the school each year.

The findings of the inspection are that pupils' **achievement** is **good** overall and standards are above average in mathematics and reading and above the expected levels in art and physical education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are average in science, although pupils' skills of scientific enquiry are not developed as well as they should be. Standards are in line with the expected levels in information and communication technology, design and technology and in religious education. Although standards in writing are broadly average in Year 2 pupils

do not achieve as much as they should and in Year 6 standards of writing are below average. In addition pupils' skills in speaking are not as high as they should be. Pupils achieve well in music and reach standards in line with those expected by Year 2 and Year 6. Children in the reception class achieve well and most reach the goals set for them by the end of the reception year. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are talented and gifted achieve well.

**Pupils' personal qualities**, including their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**, are **good**. Their attitudes to their work are good and they behave well. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The **quality of education** provided by the school is **good**.

**Teaching and learning** are **good** overall. Some very good teaching is evident in Years 3 and 4. Outstanding teaching occurs in art and very good teaching occurs in music and physical education. Visiting instructors and teachers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment is broadly satisfactory, although not as precise as it should be to guide planning, particularly in writing and science. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their work and not enough use is made of individual target setting to plan for progression. The curriculum is good overall. Where weaknesses occur, they are in guidance to support progression in speaking and listening and in scientific enquiry. There are very good links with the community and a good range of after school activities. The school provides a good standard of care for its pupils and links with parents are very good. Weaknesses in the accommodation constrain the curriculum in a number of areas, although the school does its best to overcome these difficulties.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The **leadership and management** and **governance** of the school are **good**.

The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is supported well by the senior teacher and governors and all staff work as a highly committed team for the benefit of pupils. Very good use is made of the subject expertise of individual teachers, outside agencies and support staff. There is a very strong commitment to inclusion. The new subject leaders are making important contributions to the school's improvement efforts and the school is well placed to make further improvements.

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

The great majority of parents hold the school in high regard. Pupils like the school and their teachers very much.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Improve standards and achievement in writing, scientific enquiry and speaking and listening.
- Improve the precision and consistency of assessment and target setting and involve pupils more in the evaluation of their own work.
- Pursue plans for improving the accommodation.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils achieve **well** throughout the school. Standards are above average in mathematics, reading, art and design and physical education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are average for writing in Year 2 but below average in Year 6. Standards in science are average throughout the school. Children in the reception class achieve well. Nearly all reach the goals set for children at the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is very good and in reading, music, art and design and physical education it is good.
- Few pupils attain at the higher levels in writing and standards are below average in Year 6.
- Pupils' skills in speaking are not as good as they should be.
- Pupils generally achieve satisfactorily in science but their skills of scientific enquiry are not as good as they should be.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Standards and achievement in information and communication technology and in design and technology have improved since the last inspection.

#### Commentary

##### Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.5 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.2 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.0 (18.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

##### Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (30.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.2 (29.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.2 (27.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The results of the 2003 national tests for pupils in Year 2 are above average for reading, average for writing and well above average for mathematics. The Year 6 results are above average for mathematics and below average for English and science. The Year 6



results are affected by the above average number of pupils who join the school in Years 3 to 6.

2. The findings of the inspection are that standards in mathematics have been sustained since the last inspection. Most pupils achieve very well in mathematics and standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in the use and application of number are a particular strength. Standards in English are average overall but writing standards are below average in Year 6. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in reading. Achievement in writing is satisfactory overall and boys are beginning to achieve as well as girls as a result of the work the school is doing to make writing more interesting to boys. However, few pupils achieve at the higher levels because they do not readily use the wide range of vocabulary that is needed to add interest and precision to their work. Pupils' skills as listeners are ahead of their skills as speakers because of similar weaknesses in their oral vocabulary.
3. Standards in science are average and more pupils achieve at the higher levels than at the time of the last inspection. However, throughout the school, pupils' achievements in their knowledge of scientific facts is ahead of their achievement in scientific enquiry and some pupils do not reach the higher levels in tests and assessments because of this.
4. Pupils achieve well in music, art and design and physical education, which is an improvement since the last inspection. They reach standards that are above those expected in art and design and physical education and in line with those expected for music. This is because of the very good use that the school makes of the expertise of skilled teachers and instructors. Very good opportunities for taking part in activities, including sport and the arts, at the end of the school day also contribute to achievement and standards.
5. The school has improved its provision for information and communication technology and this has made a significant contribution to the improved standards in the subjects. However, the computer suite is sited at the end of the Year 5/6 classroom and this limits its use by pupils in other year groups. The school does not have access to the Internet and this is a further barrier to the improvement of standards. A well set out scheme of work for design and technology, together with improved teacher expertise and good leadership and management, have contributed to improved standards.
6. Children with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points because of the good support they receive from skilled support assistants. Targets in individual education plans are carefully selected after thorough reviews of how pupils are getting on and these help them to experience success in their learning and to grow in confidence.
7. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well as a result of opportunities to work with gifted and talented pupils from other schools.

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

Pupils' personal development, their attitudes to the school and their behaviour are **good** overall. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and they behave well.
- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn.
- Opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development have improved since the last inspection.
- Relationships in the school are very good, but opportunities are missed for pupils to learn about their wider social responsibilities.
- The school's attendance rate is below average, mainly because many parents are employed in the seasonal industries which require family holidays to be taken in term time.

## **Commentary**

8. A strong set of values, which are modelled by staff and based on developing pupils' respect for themselves and others, enables all pupils to grow and flourish. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. The school strongly encourages pupils' awareness of the wonders of the world about them through visits to places in the locality. An appreciation of the environment in which they live is evident in much of their poetry, for example. In addition, there are very good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own feelings and the feelings of others in the course of their work in literacy, music, art and design and religious education.
9. Good promotion of the school's behaviour policy helps pupils to develop a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Staff set very good examples, showing high levels of concern and respect for the needs of all pupils and taking their views seriously. All pupils strive very hard to meet the high standards that the school sets and there have been no exclusions. Pupils develop very good relationships with each other and with all staff. When given opportunities for taking responsibility, for example when organising their own contributions to the local village fete, pupils do this very well. Pupils are consulted informally about decisions which affect them; however, there are no formalised systems for them to be involved in school decision making. This limits opportunities for them to learn about their wider social responsibilities.
10. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most respond very positively to the opportunities they are given to learn, both during lessons and at the end of the school day. They listen well to their teachers and work well together. Opportunities to play as a team when representing their school, or to work on collaborative tasks in subjects such as art, contribute very well to the development of pupils' social skills.
11. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to explore and learn about their own cultural heritage and the diversity of cultures represented in society. As a result, pupils appreciate and enjoy art, music and literature from a wide range of traditions and are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society.
12. Attendance levels are below the national average and lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. The main reason for this is that many families are employed in seasonal industries such as farming or tourism and so they take their children on family holidays in term time. The school monitors attendance effectively and encourages parents to ensure their children attend regularly. This has resulted in an improvement during the last academic year. Most parents bring their children to school punctually in the mornings and lessons start on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.8	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. There is rich provision of extra-curricular activities. The school provides very good standards of care. Links with parents and the community are very good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and there is very good use of outside agencies to strengthen subject expertise.
- All teachers make confident use of the National Numeracy Strategy and reading is well taught, but there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' spoken and written vocabulary.
- The teaching of science is good overall but there is not enough emphasis on scientific enquiry.
- Limitations in the accommodation reduce opportunities for independent use of the ICT suite and the library.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and all pupils are given the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- Assessment and target setting are not sufficiently precise and pupils are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their own work.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	4	16	5	0	0	0

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

13. Good teaching and learning occur throughout the school and there is very good teaching in Years 3 and 4. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well. All adults relate very well to the pupils and expect them to work hard. Opportunities to make learning interesting and to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence are an integral part of every lesson and, as a result, pupils are proud of their achievements, confident and eager to learn. Lesson planning in the reception class reflects a good understanding of the

curriculum for children of this age. Direct teaching and activities that are initiated by the children themselves are balanced well and are effective in engaging children's interest.

14. Teachers' very good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy enables them to make skilful use of questions to help pupils develop their ideas and to put right misconceptions. Reading is systematically taught and pupils have good opportunities to read and analyse good quality text in the course of literacy hour. However, there is not enough emphasis on helping pupils use their knowledge of how authors use language for effect in their own writing. Subject-specific vocabulary is appropriately planned for and taught. However, there is insufficient guidance to support planning for the systematic development of pupils' speaking skills and not enough emphasis on helping pupils to develop their general vocabulary in the course of lessons.
15. The very good subject knowledge of visiting and part-time teachers makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and achievement in music, art and design and physical education. Their enthusiasm is infectious and results in all pupils becoming fully involved in practical and enjoyable activities. In Year 5/6 music lessons the visiting teacher skilfully draws on pupils' own ideas as a basis for improvisation and involves all pupils in building up to performances of their own work. The part-time music teacher works effectively in classes throughout the school and in addition gives opportunities for learning the violin at the end of the school day. Some excellent teaching was seen in art and design where work of very high quality has resulted from opportunities for pupils to collaborate on exciting large scale projects involving the use of a wide range of media, tools and equipment. Physical education is taught well by teachers and very well by a visiting instructor. They provide clear explanations and demonstrations and very good coaching of specific skills which help pupils to control and perfect their movements. After-school clubs make a considerable contribution to standards and achievement.
16. Some good teaching of science was seen during the inspection. The school has recognised the need to provide a greater level of challenge for higher attainers and more are now achieving at the higher levels than was previously the case. However, pupils' work indicates that, whilst they learn scientific facts well, they do not increase their skills of scientific enquiry to a sufficient extent because of weaknesses in whole school planning which result in insufficient opportunities for pupils to ask their own scientific questions and to design their own tests.
17. The teaching of design and technology and of information and communication technology is now satisfactory, although weaknesses in the accommodation limit opportunities for the independent use of the computer suite to support learning. The school now has an interactive whiteboard although its use is limited to the Year 5/6 classroom because of difficulties in moving it around the site.
18. Assessment is satisfactory. It is used well to track pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and is sufficient in other subjects to indicate broadly what pupils have achieved. Comprehensive records of achievement of individual pupils are kept in Years 1 and 2 but they are not as rigorous in other parts of the school. Work is regularly marked, although the use of constructive written comments to help pupils know what they have to do to improve is not fully embedded and varies between classes. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and ongoing assessments, particularly in writing and science, lack the precision that is needed to support planning for pupils'

differing needs and abilities. Not enough use is made of individual target setting to plan for progression.

19. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. In all classes, teachers and classroom assistants work closely together to plan the support that these pupils need and to discuss their progress in each lesson. Assessment for these pupils is good. Individual education plans identify the next steps of learning and teachers review these each term with the special needs co-ordinator and with parents. Pupils who are talented and gifted have good opportunities to work with pupils from other local schools. Higher attaining pupils are given good opportunities to work with older pupils where they receive the challenge they need to make progress.

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

The lesson was taken by a specialist teacher who visits the school as part of its 'Creative Partnership' links. This two and a quarter hour lesson with Year 5/6 pupils unlocked their history topic in a very practical way as they explored the significance and meanings of Aztec codex symbols and their colour usage to produce huge colourful banners.

The teacher's natural enthusiasm caught pupils' imagination as she explained the project and they gathered excitedly in groups around their work on the class floor. Having been introduced to the technique of 'resist' painting, pupils were busily applying masking tape, cut out pictures, paint and 'gold leaf' in huddles on the floor. The intensity of concentration and degree of co-operation was outstanding as pupils had to 'forward think' to be able to picture what would happen if they covered one area of their work with the tape before adding the next layer of deeper colour. The teacher intervened extremely effectively to move learning on as each stage of the design and making process neared completion. She demonstrated to the delight of pupils what will eventually happen as the multi-coloured overlays are revealed when the different layers of tape are peeled off. The accompanying Aztec music contributed very effectively to the atmosphere of this almost magical two and a quarter hour session.

#### **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**, while enhancement through enrichment and extra-curricular activities is very good indeed. Staffing levels and resources are satisfactory, but the accommodation places constraints on many areas of the curriculum and school life.

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

- Very good use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy to promote achievement and standards.
- There is insufficient guidance to support teachers' planning for scientific enquiry and the development of speaking and listening.
- The school is a very inclusive one and pupils with special educational needs have the same broad curriculum and very good enrichment activities as their peers.
- Very good use is made of outside expertise, after-school clubs and enrichment activities to promote achievement and standards.
- The accommodation constrains curriculum development.

#### **Commentary**

20. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and most of the issues raised have been addressed. The ICT curriculum is fully covered and design and technology now has a scheme of work. This has contributed to improved standards in these subjects. Lack of Internet access and limitations in the accommodation are hampering further progress in ICT.

21. The school provides a well-planned, broad and balanced curriculum which meets pupils' needs in a very imaginative way. Schemes of work based on national guidance support learning in each subject and for religious education conform with the locally agreed syllabus. The National Numeracy Strategy is used very well throughout the school and, together with good teaching, is contributing to the above average standards that the school attains. Although good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy to promote standards and achievement in reading, it is not as effective in promoting achievement in writing and there are weaknesses in planning for progression in pupils' spoken language. Whilst there is clear planning for progression in scientific knowledge and facts, weaknesses occur in planning for progression in the skills of scientific enquiry and these are preventing some pupils from achieving at the higher levels in science.
22. Activities at the end of the school day are very good and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. There are very good opportunities for sport and pupils benefit from the opportunities to compete with other schools. A wide range of visits and visitors is used very well to enrich the curriculum and make learning interesting. A good example is the visit of circus performers to the school, which made a significant and interesting contribution to pupils' learning in physical education. A visit by African drummers widened pupils' experience of music and cultures other than their own. Provision for personal and social education is good and very good use is made of outside agencies, including visits to the 'Flashpoint Centre' in Bodmin where pupils learn how to respond to hazardous situations.
23. The headteacher's imaginative approach to both the curriculum and how it is supported makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement. His appointment of part-time staff, particularly in the areas of art and design, music and physical education, has ensured that pupils receive good, often very good or outstanding, levels of teaching in these subjects. In addition, the professional development of teaching assistants and the training provided for all staff mean that the school stays abreast of new developments and good practice is brought back into the school, enriching the pupils' experience even more.
24. Everyone involved in the school has a very strong commitment to inclusion and this is evident in the way that all pupils are accepted, challenged and supported. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy the small group and one-to-one work with support assistants which contribute well to their good progress. All school activities are open to them and they make good use of them.
25. As in the previous inspection, accommodation remains the one major weakness in the school's provision. Although the school does all that it can to compensate for the lack of a hall by making use of the village hall and Camelford leisure centre, there are inevitable restrictions in the development of pupils' gymnastics and dance skills at the higher levels. The library is required for group work and for interviews with visitors and parents and this constrains its use for independent study and research. The lack of water in the Year 5/6 classroom means that time is lost when pupils have to go to an outside building to refresh pallets and brushes. The ICT suite is at the end of the Year 5/6 classroom which limits its use by pupils in other classes. The small amount of space for administration, the lack of appropriate toilet facilities for staff and disabled pupils, together with the ever-present need to move classes for ICT, for lunches and school assemblies all detract from teaching time. The fact that these constraints are not allowed to affect pupils too greatly is a great tribute to the professionalism and commitment of the staff. Resources are

satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses in resources to promote learning through play for reception-aged children. These prevent children from developing their skills to even higher levels in imaginative and physical play and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

## Care, guidance and support

Systems to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare continue to be **good** and pupils are well supported during their time at school. Pupils have built trusting relationships with adults and feel it is a safe and happy school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a safe, caring and supportive environment where pupils can grow and flourish.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and identification of appropriate adult support enable them to make good progress.
- The good induction arrangements ensure pupils settle quickly into school.
- Opportunities to consult pupils formally and involve them in decision-making processes in the school are under-developed.

## Commentary

26. This is a friendly and caring school. Parents value the small family community where teachers and support staff provide a safe environment for pupils and the older pupils have a responsible attitude to the younger ones in their mixed-age classes. Their children always want to come to school and enjoy learning. Parents are very pleased with the standard of care and welfare in the school. This results in their children being well nurtured and supported, enabling them to develop into mature and confident individuals.
27. Arrangements for child protection and procedures relating to health and safety and security are well thought out, with appropriate risk assessments undertaken. The governors take their responsibility for health and safety issues conscientiously. The induction process into the school is well developed with good links being established with local pre-school playgroups. Foundation Stage children are carefully integrated into school through the sensitive and caring support of staff. The transition to secondary school is also well managed. This ensures that pupils' progression to the next stage of education is as smooth as possible.
28. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal and academic development and progress are effective. The new class teachers are beginning to get to know their classes well despite their short time in school. The good relationships between teachers and pupils enable them to give good support and guidance, although pupils are not always aware of how well they are doing or what they specifically need to do to improve. The school has good systems for offering support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs and involves the various outside agencies as necessary. The school has established good links with parents and involves them in discussions about their child's progress. Parents spoke very positively about the school and feel it treats pupils fairly.
29. Pupils are very happy and feel it is a very safe and secure school. Pupils are confident that there is a member of staff they can turn to if they have a problem or are unhappy.

Pupils spoke of having forged trusting relationships with adults and feel that their new teachers know them well. The school works hard to develop positive responses from pupils and values their contributions and ideas. Although there is time to discuss important issues within the personal, social and health education lessons, opportunities to consult pupils formally and involve them in decision-making processes in the school are under-developed.

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

Parents have very positive views about the school. The **very good** links with parents and with the local community continue to be one of the major strengths of the school. The links with partner institutions are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has developed a strong, supportive parent body and actively consults parents.
- Parents have very positive views about the school and hold it in high regard.
- The school has forged very good links with the local community and local churches that help enrich pupils' learning experience.
- The very strong links with neighbouring primary and secondary schools promote curriculum development and learning opportunities for pupils.

### **Commentary**

30. The school fosters very close links with parents, consulting with them frequently and keeping them fully informed about school events and the progress of their children. Parents expressed a high level of satisfaction about the work of the school and find the headteacher and staff highly approachable. The strong support is reflected in the fact that a large number of parents choose to travel long distances each day to bring their children to the school. They value the small school with its open and informal communications. Their children are happy and they feel the school community is like an 'extended family'. Parents particularly mentioned the good teaching and the fact that staff know and understand their children really well. They appreciate the wide range of opportunities provided which helps to 'turn out well rounded children'.
31. General information is good, with parents kept suitably updated on different school activities and events. However, opportunities to promote school success via a formal newsletter are missed. Consultation evenings, joint working parties and the 'open door' policy ensure the school is as accessible as possible. The school seeks to encourage home/school links by providing parents with opportunities to become involved in their children's education both at home and in school. Curriculum information is circulated each term so parents can see what is going on and help their children at home. Whilst many parents work, a small number are able to volunteer their help with school visits. Various different events such as plays, assemblies, church services and sports days are well attended by parents. The annual reports to parents are good. They are evaluative, detailing levels of achievement, and clearly indicate what the pupil knows and can do, as well as identifying targets for improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their child's progress and are involved in the review processes.
32. Links with the local community are particularly strong with many parents and grandparents having attended the school in the past. The school is central to village life



with many local people becoming involved in school activities and attending functions run by the school. The Friends of Otterham School is run by an enthusiastic group of parents. They organise a number of social and fund raising events which raise significant funds for the school and support activities such as swimming. The 'bingo' nights are very popular with local villagers. Strong links with local churches are fostered through church services and regular visits to the school by the local rector and other church representatives. The school is fortunate in being able to draw upon local expertise through its creative and sports partnerships, which help to promote pupils' learning in art and music and through various sporting activities. These provide valuable enrichment opportunities and extend pupils' skills development. This was particularly evident last year when pupils joined in the local 'revel', parading the magnificent 'Marshgate Monster' they had created during their art lessons. The specialist sports coaching enables pupils to achieve well in competitions with local schools. Links with a local business have generated sponsorship of the school football and netball kit.

33. Links with other schools are very good and these are promoting pupils' achievement. The close liaison within the cluster of local primary and secondary schools has been very effective in offering enrichment opportunities and enhancing pupils' learning. This includes sharing of expertise, joint staff development activities and a range of sporting activities with neighbouring primary schools. Links with the local secondary school are well developed with opportunities for visits in Years 5 and 6 and include specialist sports coaching and some programmes and workshops for the 'more able' pupils. The very good liaison with Year 7 teachers helps to ease pupils' move to the next stage of their education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership. Governors fulfil their responsibilities **well**. Other staff in management positions are provide **good** leadership.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides a clear vision for the school and a very clear direction for development.
- Governors provide good support for the school and fulfil their roles well.
- Delegation and teamwork are very strong features of the school and ensure the best use of resources.
- Everyone involved with the school has a very strong commitment to inclusion and special educational needs provision is well managed.

### **Commentary**

34. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection. The headteacher has a vision which informs all the school's activities. It is based on high aspirations for the school, a belief that every pupil is of equal value and that staff really matter. He lives and manages to these values and it shows in the very good relationships between adults and pupils and the successes that the school gains. He has a very clear idea of what needs to be done to improve and has set up a wide range of initiatives to address shortcomings. His day-to-day management reflects this clear and thoughtful approach. There is a strong development plan to which new members of staff have already contributed and self-evaluation accurately identifies both successes and the

areas in need of development. The school's effective performance management system has assisted in a smooth induction programme and the planning of appropriate and supportive training opportunities for all staff.

35. The delegation of roles and responsibilities is very good and has improved since the last inspection. Very good use is made of individual expertise within the school, the community and outside agencies to promote achievement and standards. The new subject co-ordinators are developing their roles well under the leadership of the headteacher. Staff make good use of the non-contact time available to them in spite of the lack of a staff room or space to carry out management responsibilities. All staff work as an effective team and are committed to operating an inclusive school in which each child is valued and treated as an individual. They are fully supported in this by the governing body.
36. Governors are very well informed about the school and its work. They carry out their responsibilities well and have a good committee structure to do this. The governing body plays a good role in providing challenge to the school management and in monitoring the work of the school. They have good oversight of finances and ensure that these are directed towards educational priorities. Governors are proud of the school and its deserved reputation in the area.
37. In addition to formal meetings with pupils, staff, parents and governors, the headteacher gives generously of his time to listen to their views on an informal basis. This flow of communication ensures that all feel valued and fully involved in the school's work; they also have a clear understanding of its aims and values and the importance of their role in moving the school forward.
38. All staff have a profound commitment to inclusion and believe that all pupils deserve the same rich experience and opportunities to achieve. The provision for special educational needs is well led and managed. The co-ordinator assists all staff in developing targets and programmes for this group of pupils. There is an effective link from the governing body to the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) and governors receive appropriately detailed information. Training has been good for all involved and the co-ordinator ensures that problems that are on the horizon, such as the arrival of new pupils experiencing difficulties are well prepared for within the staff training programme. Teaching assistants in particular value the guidance and support they receive from the SENCO. They act on it very effectively. The school has developed its links with others in the area to ensure good provision for gifted and talented pupils.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	274,725
Total expenditure	267,907
Expenditure per pupil	2,877

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	2,097
Balance carried forward to the next year	8,915

39. The school's finances are well managed and funding is well directed at educational priorities. Good attention is given to the principles of best value. Funds for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately allocated.
40. The personal commitment and vision of the headteacher, the school's ethos which promotes positive attitudes to learning, good teaching, the strength of the governing body and the very strong support that the school has from parents and the community are all very effective aids in raising the achievement of pupils. The size constraints of the building are the only barriers to further improvement and there are well established plans to overcome these factors.
41. Given the constraints placed on staff and the curriculum by the accommodation, the influx of new pupils in the upper part of the school and the overall good achievement, the school provides good value for money.

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

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

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. Provision is **good** and the children are well prepared for Year 1 of the statutory curriculum because of the good teaching they receive. The school provides a well-planned curriculum which is soundly based on national guidance and ensures that all the areas of learning which are recommended for young children are fully covered. This makes a significant contribution to the progress that the children make and is an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and are used well to inform planning for children's different needs. There is good support for children who have special educational needs and they are fully involved in all activities. Although resources are satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses in the provision of resources to promote learning through play.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Children have a good introduction to school life that helps them feel secure and confident from an early stage.
- Activities are presented in ways that help the children to become increasingly independent and to enjoy their learning.
- Children develop a growing ability to express their own feelings and to understand the feelings of others.

#### **Commentary**

42. The children's personal, social and emotional development is below the level expected for their age when they first start school. Children achieve well in their personal and social development and most reach the goals set for children of this age by the end of the reception year.
43. Teaching and learning are good. Classroom routines are carefully explained to the children when they start school and they settle quickly into school life because they know exactly what is expected of them. They are helped to feel secure by the positive and supportive response they receive from their teachers and they try out new activities and speak in small group and whole class situations with growing confidence. Formal and informal activities are presented to the children in ways that engage their interest. Consequently they develop positive attitudes to learning. There are clear procedures to help children to work independently and to take responsibility for their own learning. Many of the activities that are provided are designed to encourage children to work together and thus they develop a growing awareness of the needs and feelings of others. Snack time is used well to help the children to learn social language such as 'please' and 'thank you', and to acquire the skills of turn taking and sharing. There is good support for children with special educational needs and this ensures that those children who are less confident are fully included in all activities.

## Communication, language and literacy

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The basic skills of reading and writing are taught in interesting ways which help children to learn well.
- There is good support for children who have special educational needs.
- There are not enough resources to promote the imaginative use of language through play.

### Commentary

44. Children's attainment is a little below that expected for children of a similar age when they first start school. They achieve well and most reach the standards that are expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Most children enjoy sharing stories and poems with their teacher. They show a satisfactory understanding of the elements of a story and follow the events as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud. The higher-attaining children enjoy looking at books, comment on the illustrations, recognise letters of the alphabet and associate them with the sounds that they make. This enables them to read words in simple texts by the end of the reception year. Children with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their starting points as a result of the good support they receive and work that is planned to meet their language and literacy needs.
45. Teaching and learning are good. The children are actively encouraged to look at books and to make their own attempts at writing from an early stage. As a result, most compose and write down, with help, short, simple statements and sequences of ideas by the end of the reception year. Higher-attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three-letter words and make very plausible attempts at spelling the words they need. Children enjoy making up their own imaginative stories when writing with their teachers in small groups, working independently in the role-play area and when using small toys which represent the real world. However, most children have a limited vocabulary and there are limited resources with which to extend these aspects of their language and literacy work.

## Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The basic skills of counting and number recognition are taught well.
- There are limited resources to promote children's mathematical development through play.

### Commentary

46. Children's achievement is good. Most children attain the levels expected for their age when they enter the reception class. Nearly all reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year and many exceed them in their number work. The children with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points as a result of the good

support they receive. Teaching and learning are good. There is a wide range of opportunities for children to count in different ways. Children are taught how to write numbers correctly and this helps them to develop the skills that they need to record their own calculations. Many children identify simple two-dimensional shapes, such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles, and some describe in simple terms the properties of these shapes, using the correct mathematical vocabulary. Role play in the class 'shop' provides opportunities for children to develop their understanding of money and to apply their early knowledge of number in a practical situation. Opportunities to play in sand and water help children to develop a growing awareness of capacity. When playing outside they explore ideas of space, direction and speed. However, the resources that the school has to extend this work and to develop children's skills in using mathematics to solve simple everyday problems that are meaningful to them are barely adequate.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the wider world.
- The outdoor area requires further development and there are limited resources for developing children's investigational skills at higher levels.

## **Commentary**

47. Children's achievement is satisfactory and their knowledge and understanding of the world are in line with the level expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The children are given a satisfactory range of opportunities to explore the world around them using all their senses. Visits to places of interest are used well for this purpose. For example, the children have visited a farm where they have learned something about the natural world. A visit to an optician followed up by a visit by the optician to the school has helped them to learn something about health services in the local community as well something about how eyes work and how lenses can be used to help people to see better. A visit to the local museum, during which they looked at bicycles, successfully developed their awareness of differences between bikes used in the past and those used in the present day. Children benefit from regular opportunities to explore the large and attractive outdoor area next to their classroom. Although children gain a satisfactory awareness of the natural and material world as a result of this, there are not enough resources to build on children's natural curiosity and promote achievement at higher levels either indoors or outside.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills.
- Children benefit from regular opportunities to run, climb and ride tricycles outdoors.
- Visitors are used well to enrich the curriculum.

- The lack of a hall limits opportunities for physical development, particularly when the weather is inclement.

## **Commentary**

48. Teaching and learning for physical development is satisfactory and results in satisfactory achievement. Most children reach the levels expected by the end of the reception year. There are good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when painting, drawing and cutting. They are taught how to use paint and hold tools such as brushes, pencils, and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning. Satisfactory use is made of the outdoor area for physical education and children learn to move safely with control and co-ordination, and they develop a sound awareness of their own space and that of others. However, the lack of a hall means that children do not have the regular opportunities that they need to develop their physical movements on a larger scale in inclement weather. Opportunities to work with visiting experts make a good contribution to children's learning. For example, they have had an opportunity to learn juggling and other circus skills.

## **Creative development**

49. No direct teaching of the subject was observed in the inspection and so there is not enough evidence to form a judgement about provision. However, the subject was sampled. The evidence suggests that standards are broadly in line with those expected for reception-aged pupils. There are sufficient opportunities for children to develop their creative ideas when singing, painting, role-playing and listening to music. However, there are limited resources for extending children's imaginative ideas when using role-play and small representations of the real world.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils achieve well in reading but do not always achieve as much as they should in writing.
- Teaching and learning are good and have improved since the last inspection.
- There is insufficient guidance to support teachers in planning for progression in speaking and listening.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support.
- Assessment is not as precise as it should be in writing and there is not enough use of target setting for individual pupils.
- Weaknesses in the accommodation limit opportunities for using the library and the ICT suite.

## **Commentary**

50. The results of 2003 national tests for Year 2 pupils were above average in reading and average in writing. Year 6 results were below average in English, with results for reading

being better than those for writing. The results for 2004 indicate that standards are improving and that achievement in English is satisfactory overall. The findings of the inspection are that in reading standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. In writing standards are average in Year 2 but below average in Year 6 where few pupils attain at the higher levels. Standards of speaking and listening are broadly average but there are weaknesses in pupils' spoken vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support that they receive. Although the results of national tests in Year 2 have been sustained since the last inspection, the results for Year 6 appear to have declined. This is mainly due to the fact that the nature of the school has changed. There are a higher number of pupils on roll, many of whom join the school from outside the area in Years 3 to 6, and there are an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs at the school.

51. Most pupils become competent readers because of the emphasis that is placed on reading from an early stage. Pupils are given the skills that they need to sound out unfamiliar words. As a result of well planned literacy sessions they know how books work and are competent in finding deeper meaning in the books that they read. Pupils are heard to read in groups and individually and this ensures that individual progress is monitored and any difficulties are quickly dealt with. Many parents regularly hear their children read at home and this makes a significant contribution to achievement. As a result of the individual attention that they receive, the significant proportion of pupils who join the school in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. When pupils do not reach the higher levels it is because they do not always understand the meaning of the more complex vocabulary that they meet. Pupils know how to use information books and older pupils make competent use of ICT to find information when required to do so. ICT is used well to support learning for individual pupils with special educational needs. A good example of this is the use of a program called 'Moviemaker', which has resulted in a pupil producing a short animated cartoon story. However, the library is not well used for independent research because it is often in use for group work. The lack of Internet access limits opportunities for research using computers and pupils in Years 1 to 4 have limited access to the computer suite for their work in English because it is sited in the Year 5/6 classroom.
52. Pupils throughout the school write for a range of purposes and make satisfactory use of their writing skills to support their work in other subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the school rightly recognises that writing standards are not as high as they should be. Its own analysis of test results and pupils' work indicates that one reason for this is that boys have not achieved as well as girls in the past. The steps that it has taken to address this discrepancy are beginning to have a positive effect. Practical strategies involve all pupils, questions are targeted to anyone who looks as though they are not concentrating and relevant purposes for writing ensure that both boys and girls now learn well in lessons. Higher attaining pupils produce work of good quality. Weaknesses in written vocabulary and the use of complex sentences, together with limitations in the use of different techniques to create impact, prevent lower attaining pupils from achieving at the higher levels. Pupils' spelling and handwriting are satisfactory. Although standards of presentation are variable, they are satisfactory overall.
53. In Years 1 to 6, pupils talk and listen confidently. This is as a result of planned opportunities for paired tasks, drama and role-play. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, not enough attention is paid to increasing the pupils' general



vocabulary and there is a lack of guidance to support teachers' planning for progression in speaking and listening.

54. Assessment is satisfactory overall. End of year tests are used well to track the progress of individual pupils and to set group targets. Written work is checked each term and areas for improvement are identified. The school rightly recognises the need to improve the precision of assessments in writing by increasing the frequency of monitoring procedures, introducing ongoing assessments for each type of writing and improving the use of individual target setting and self-evaluation. Marking is variable. In Years 1 and 2 it is used very well to help pupils know what they have to do to improve. This good practice is now evident in the more recent work of pupils in Years 3 to 6.
55. The good leadership and management of the co-ordinator are significant factors in the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. She provides a good model for all staff and pupils and she is becoming increasingly influential. Her work has not had sufficient time to have a full impact on standards. There is a satisfactory range of good quality books to support learning and pupils make good use of them for reading at home and at school.

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

56. Pupils make satisfactory use of their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. A good example of this is in history where pupils have used their reading and writing skills to find out about and report on life in the past.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well and standards are well above average in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6.
- Work set within mixed-age year groups is well adapted to the full range of ages and attainments.
- The day-to-day leadership and management are good.
- Teaching and learning are good with some lessons being very good.
- Not enough use is yet made of computers in mathematics lessons.
- There are not enough planned opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

57. In the 2003 national tests for Years 2 and 6, results were well above average and the results for 2004 indicate an improving trend. The work seen during the inspection confirmed the standards indicated by the 2003 test results. By Year 2, most pupils exceed the expected national standard. They have considerable dexterity in mental mathematics relating to multiplication, addition and subtraction up to 1,000 and discuss the characteristics of two and three-dimensional shapes well. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have secure skills in geometry and measurement. They have a range of ways of presenting mathematical information through tables and graphs and interpret these accurately and quickly. This allows them to work out real-life problems relating to bus

timetables, car auctions and flight times. Higher attaining pupils have mastered problem-solving well.

58. Teaching and learning are good in all classes and sometimes very good indeed. Planning is well focused on both years within the class and a range of abilities within the two age groups. Teachers use good questioning, clear language and a range of tasks to challenge pupils of all abilities. They have a good knowledge of mathematics and this, together with the very effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy's three-part lesson, means that pace and clear targets contribute well to the good, and sometimes very good, progress made. Higher attaining pupils often work with older pupils and this is effective in providing the challenge that they need. The very good support provided by teaching assistants contributes well to the achievement and work habits of pupils with special educational needs. Good lesson planning and close attention to what pupils can do and need to do next ensure that these pupils succeed.
59. Although work is regularly marked, the use of constructive comments to aid improvement is variable. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and not enough use is made of individual learning targets. During the inspection week there was insufficient use made of computers in mathematics apart from in the Year 5 and 6 class, mainly because computers are sited at the end of the Year 5 and 6 classroom.
60. Mathematics is very well led and managed by the headteacher who has high expectations of pupils and sets a good standard by the quality of his own teaching. He has been very effective in promoting higher standards.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Where pupils are given opportunities to develop their numeracy skills in other subjects, they respond well and show that they can apply their skills in new situations. For example, they draw line graphs in science, use tally charts in history and handle rainfall data in geography. However, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Science is an improving subject with a higher proportion of pupils now reaching above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Curriculum guidance supports the systematic coverage of scientific facts but there is insufficient guidance to support progression in scientific enquiry.
- Assessment lacks the precision that is needed to establish challenging targets for all pupils and they are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work.
- The subject is well led and managed.

### **Commentary**

62. The results of 2003 teacher assessments in science at the end of Year 2 are average. The results of 2003 tests at the end of Year 6 are below average. There are indications that the school's results for 2004 show an improvement, with more pupils achieving at the

higher levels. The findings of the inspection are that pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory and standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. A higher proportion of pupils are now achieving above the levels expected than was the case when the school was last inspected. Factors that contribute to this are the development of the role of the co-ordinator, better teaching and resources that have been improved to a satisfactory level. Higher attaining pupils have had the opportunity to take part in lessons for talented and gifted pupils at the local secondary school and this has also made a significant contribution to their achievement.

63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although half the teaching seen during the inspection was good. Pupils in both the Year 1/2 and the Year 5/6 classes are motivated and interested in their work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and as a result they give clear explanations which are easy for pupils to understand. They take particular care to introduce and reinforce appropriate scientific vocabulary. Their questioning skills are good and enable them to identify pupils who need more help in lessons.
64. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is clear guidance to support systematic planning for progression in life processes and living things, materials and their properties and in physical processes. Consequently pupils' knowledge of scientific facts is good and a significant factor in their overall achievement. The guidance to support progress in scientific enquiry is not as well developed. Pupils learn how to set up the tests and experiments and understand some of the principles of fair testing. Throughout the school pupils use a wide range of methods to record and communicate their findings, including diagrams, tables and graphs. However, most of this work is directed by the teachers and pupils do not have the opportunities they need to develop their skills further by asking their own scientific questions, designing their own tests and making choices about how they communicate their findings, including the use of ICT. This prevents some pupils from achieving at the higher levels. The subject leader is ensuring that current planning takes account of the need to address these skills. However, her work has not yet had time to have an impact and written guidance is not yet in place for all teachers.
65. Assessment is satisfactory. It is used well to track pupils' knowledge of scientific facts. However, there is a lack of precision in the assessment of scientific skills which results in limited analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the performance of individuals and groups. As a consequence, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress often provide insufficient detail in this aspect of their work and target setting in science is underdeveloped.
66. There is a new subject leader for science this term. The quality of her leadership and management is good. She sets a very good example by the quality of her own teaching, has an accurate view of the strengths and weakness in the subject and has a clear action plan for improvement. Science is a bright prospect for the future under her leadership and there is a good level of shared determination to succeed.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good progress has been made since the last inspection and the skills of ICT are systematically taught.

- Although the provision of computers has improved, weaknesses in the accommodation and lack of access to the Internet limit their use.
- Assessment in ICT is not strong enough to assist in the development of individual targets which will assist achievement.

## **Commentary**

67. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with those expected in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and sometimes very good. All teaching and support staff have received effective training to support their work with pupils. This has increased their confidence and expertise and enabled them to teach basic computer skills well. Teachers plan work so that pupils build on the skills that they have gained in earlier years. For example, in English pupils in Years 3 and 4 enter, save and retrieve their work and record their work in different styles, colours and sizes of font. Pupils in Year 6 develop their presentation skills as part of their work in planning a playground. Higher attaining pupils have worked very effectively with those from other schools using ICT to produce short stories using pictures, sound and graphics.
68. The school has made good use of the space available to it, at the end of the Year 5/6 classroom in the main building, to provide an appropriately equipped computer suite. The suite accommodates half a class at a time and the school makes very good organisational arrangements to allow this to happen. However, opportunities for pupils to use the suite for independent study are limited by this, the lack of access to the Internet and lack of networking between computers in the suite and class computers. Years 5 and 6 have access to a recently acquired interactive whiteboard, which is being used effectively as an aid to teaching and learning in this class.
69. The subject is well led and managed. The subject leader has a very clear overview of the subject and, together with other subject leaders, has well established plans to promote greater use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum such as music. There are satisfactory assessment procedures which ensure that teachers know how well their pupils are doing. However, they are not yet used consistently to support the progress of individual pupils. Pupils enjoy their work in ICT and the good attendance at the after-school club indicates the level of their enthusiasm.

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

70. The use of ICT across the curriculum is broadly satisfactory. The school improvement plan shows a clear aim to develop ICT to support learning in other subjects of the curriculum and there is evidence that this work has started. Pupils make satisfactory use of their ICT skills to support their work in English and there is also evidence of its use in art and design and in geography.

## **HUMANITIES**

71. Due to timetabling arrangements and the main foci of the inspection, it was not possible to see lessons in history and geography and to make a secure judgement about provision, achievement, teaching and learning. These subjects were therefore sampled.

72. It was not possible to observe any lessons in **geography** and insufficient evidence was gathered to make a secure judgement about overall provision. An analysis was made of samples of completed work and discussions held with pupils. From this evidence, it is clear the subject meets statutory requirements and that standards are broadly average. The curriculum is enhanced well by visits to the locality and places of interest.
73. No lessons were seen in **history**. Indications from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work are that a satisfactory range of topics is covered. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of the life and times of Florence Nightingale and some of the events concerning the Great Fire of London. Their appreciation of chronology is well developed and they understand how pictures of their family are located in time and what is now, not long ago and in the distant past. In Year 6, pupils have a sound appreciation of what it was like to live as an Aztec or in Viking England. All have good access to historical artefacts, visits and secondary sources. There are good links with music and art. The subject deals with many issues, including slavery, altruism and bravery, which both fire pupils' imagination and contribute well to their moral and social development.

## Religious education

Provision in the subject is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- Links with personal, social, health and citizenship education make it difficult to track pupils' learning and achievement.
- There are very good links with local churches but few opportunities to engage fully with those who have faiths other than Christianity.

### Commentary

74. The subject fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils talk in an informed way about Christianity, re-telling stories well, and discuss other faiths such as Judaism. They are aware of some of the festivals of different faiths and realise that different faiths have the same moral tenets, but different forms of worship.
75. The resources that the school has, both in the school and the local community, are used well to support learning. The school has strong links with the local churches, for example. There is a good stock of books in the library and resources for multi-faith teaching are borrowed from the county loan service. Where weaknesses occur it is in the opportunities for pupils to have first hand experience of other faith traditions, for example by visiting different places of worship and meeting people with beliefs that are different from their own.
76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and half the teaching observed during the inspection was good. Teachers provide opportunities for worthwhile discussion about stories and different faith traditions, as a whole class and in the form of 'talking partners'. Where shortcomings occur it is because there is insufficient use of resources to help pupils develop their ideas and not enough differentiation between the content of religious education and

personal, social, health and citizenship education in lessons. This causes problems in tracking learning and achievement in both subjects.

77. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall but systems to monitor and check standards, teaching and learning have not yet been fully developed.

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

78. Art and design, music and physical education were inspected in full and are reported on below. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and so it was not possible to make firm judgements on provision, teaching and learning. The subject was sampled by looking at examples of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils.
79. The evidence from the lesson seen and from pupils' work in **design and technology** shows that pupils achieve satisfactorily and that standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The factors that contribute to this are better teaching, a clear scheme of work and the expertise of the subject leader. The curriculum is good and has improved since the last inspection. It ensures that all the elements of the national curriculum are covered and there is good attention to each of the designing, making and planning stages. There are good links with other subjects such as English, science and mathematics. For example, the module on bread includes planned opportunities for investigative writing about the texture and taste of bread as well as for comparative writing when recording evaluations of different kinds of bread.
80. It was not possible to make a judgement about teaching and learning because only one lesson in the subject was seen. In this lesson teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved very well because of the expertise of the teacher and the high level of challenge throughout. The lesson, which focused on 'moving books', was well planned and carefully timed. Work was presented in a lively, interesting and humorous way which captured pupils' interest and encouraged them to engage in discussion. Very good attention was paid to the learning processes of planning and investigation. For example, the teacher explained that experimentation with ideas often meant that things would 'fail' and she then emphasised the importance of learning from failure and persevering with difficulties.
81. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The new subject leader sets a very good example by the quality of her own teaching and she has already evaluated the subject, written a policy and developed the scheme of work. She has also provided clear practical guidance to support teachers' lessons. The school's capacity to improve further under her leadership is very good.

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and reach standards which are above the levels expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school makes very good use of outside expertise to enhance provision in art and design.

- The art and design curriculum makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social growth and their knowledge of different cultural traditions.
- The subject is well led and managed.

## Commentary

82. The provision that the school makes for art and design has improved since the last inspection. As a result, standards are higher than they were. Factors that contribute to this improvement are good teaching, the commitment of the headteacher, subject leader and staff to the arts curriculum and very good use of outside expertise. Pupils develop their creativity and imagination in increasingly complex activities as they move through the school, building on their skills effectively and improving their control of materials, tools and techniques. They increase their awareness of the roles and purposes of art and become increasingly confident in using materials and processes to communicate their ideas. A good example of this is the three-dimensional work that led to the creation of the large 'monsters' that were used as part of the Otterham revels procession.
83. Teaching and learning are good overall. A major factor in the improvements that have been made is the involvement of the school with the 'Community Arts' programme and the use of an expert teacher to take lessons throughout the school. A Year 5/6 lesson, which focused on Aztec symbolism in art, was judged to be excellent. The teacher modelled the techniques and use of materials, explaining why they were chosen and linking them to the techniques used by the Aztecs in their art. There were excellent explanations of the symbolism involved and background music added atmosphere to the lesson. The structure and timing of the lesson was excellent and ensured that pupils' learning was taken on one step at a time. The teacher's enthusiasm was infectious and pupils worked with energy and commitment, evaluating and improving their designs as they went with real interest and enthusiasm. Pupils with special educational needs were fully included in this lesson and visibly grew in confidence as they worked alongside their classmates who respected their views and frequently used their ideas and suggestions.
84. The high quality of relationships within classes and opportunities to work together on large creations support the development of pupils' personal and social skills very well. Opportunities to learn about the art, craft and design traditions of their own and other cultures contribute well to pupils' cultural development. In a Years 1 and 2 art and design lesson in which pupils were to design their own three-dimensional portraits the teacher made good reference to portraits by famous artists. She also made good reference to the techniques that could be used to create three-dimensional features on their work.
85. The subject leader sets a good example by the quality of her teaching and keeps an effective overview of standards and achievement. The promotion of the arts through links with outside agencies is highly effective in developing the expertise of teachers and classroom assistants as they not only observe these lessons but also take part in activities alongside the pupils.

## Music

Provision in music is **good** throughout the school.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very good use of specialist teachers to teach music throughout the school.
- There are good links with other subjects of the curriculum.
- The new subject leader has very clear plans for improving the subject.

### **Commentary**

86. The school makes very good use of two specialist teachers, one of whom is employed by the school on a part-time basis, to teach music throughout the school. Opportunities to learn to play the violin and to take part in musical activities with other schools further enhance provision. This enables all pupils to achieve well and pupils throughout the school attain the expected standards for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
87. Teaching and learning are good. The teachers' enthusiasm for music is infectious and is reflected in pupils' enjoyment of music and in their confidence in singing and performing. Throughout the school, pupils' technical knowledge of music develops well as a result of regular opportunities to listen to a wide range of music. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 listened to Saint-Saens' 'Wild Asses' during the inspection and then discussed the use of pitch and speed to create the effects. Good links with other subjects, for example history, result in pupils making recordings of their own compositions on topics such as Aztecs, Egyptians and the Ancient Greeks. Pupils who have special educational needs are fully included in music lessons and grow in confidence because of the opportunities that are given for them to succeed.
88. The new subject leader already provides good leadership and management. She has a good overview of the subject and an accurate view of where improvements are needed to raise standards further. To this end she is appropriately developing curriculum guidance, the use of ICT and improved assessment procedures.

### **Physical education**

Provision for physical education is **good**.

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

- The school has many successes in a range of competitive sports and provides a wide range of physical education activities for its pupils.
- Very good use has been made of coaching to enrich the curriculum both during lessons and in after-school activities.
- The lack of a hall constrains learning in gymnastics and dance, although the school works hard to overcome these difficulties.

### **Commentary**

89. The school provides very good experiences for pupils in physical education. Achievement is good and most pupils meet national expectations. Many exceed them. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is a result of good leadership and management.
90. Pupils benefit from the expertise of well qualified coaches who provides high quality, expert advice and training. From being successful in one or two sports, the school now



succeeds in competitions in swimming, tag rugby, athletics and basketball. In addition there is skilled training in abseiling, canoeing, tennis, volleyball and gymnastics. Work is already under way to develop orienteering and dance. Very good links with a local secondary school and the Camelford leisure centre also make a significant contribution to the physical education curriculum. Every pupil has the opportunity to swim every year and their achievement is good as a result.

91. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils develop balance, movement, use of space and games skills well as the result of enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching. In a Year 3 and 4 dance lesson, pupils showed keen awareness of space and moved well, demonstrating good body control and co-operation. The movement was based on an Egyptian dance and made a very good and meaningful link with the current history topic. In one after-school club, an all-age group of fifteen pupils practised dribbling and passing skills. The commitment of the pupils was total and, despite very poor weather, they followed instructions and improved their ball control significantly over a period of an hour. Pupils of all abilities took part and developed their skills equally well.
92. Good use is made of the playground and fields to ensure that pupils develop the relevant athletics and gymnastic skills. However, the lack of a school hall has a negative effect on the curriculum. The school is reliant on using the village hall, secondary school facilities and the leisure centre to provide basic elements of physical education, particularly in dance and gymnastics. The need to travel detracts from the time available for teaching and when these facilities are not available for use it constrains the school in developing standards to an even higher level.

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

93. No formal teaching was seen in this area of the curriculum, so no judgement about provision is made.
94. The evidence suggests that the personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is taught satisfactorily within religious education lessons and in science. Pupils are taught to maintain safe and healthy lives and become aware of the importance of friendship and good relationships, for example. The school has clear policies for sex education and drugs misuse. Although there is a policy for personal, social and health education and citizenship, the school does not have a formalised assessment system. In addition the close links that are made with religious education make it difficult for teachers to assess the year-on-year increase in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. There are many informal opportunities for pupils to develop their rights as citizens, such as voting for class captains in Years 5 and 6. However, there is no formalised system for developing these skills throughout the school.

## 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 (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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