

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St Columb Major Community Primary School**

St Columb Major

LEA area: Cornwall

Unique reference number: 111893

Headteacher: Mr Antus Phillips

Lead inspector: Mr Stephen Dennett

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 267765

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 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	334
School address:	Newquay Road St Columb Major Cornwall
Postcode:	TR9 6RW
Telephone number:	01637 880272
Fax number:	01637 880272
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mike Higgins
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Columb Major Community Primary School serves the community of St Columb Major and the surrounding rural districts. It is located on the edge of the china clay region of central Cornwall, where there are some significant levels of deprivation and seasonal unemployment. A number of pupils from St Mawgan airbase also attend the school. It provides full-time education for 334 pupils aged four to eleven. At the time of the inspection there were 53 children in the Reception class. The school roll is relatively stable, but has fallen slightly in the last two years. However, pupil mobility is above average, with significant numbers of pupils leaving and joining the school in Years 3 to 6. Nearly all the pupils are from a White British background, although a few pupils are of mixed race (White British and Black African) and White American backgrounds. All pupils speak English as their mother tongue. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average but rising and currently stands at around 14 per cent. Fifty-one pupils (15.5 per cent) have been identified as having special educational needs at present. This figure is close to the national average. There are six pupils (1.8 per cent) attending the school who have Statements of Special Educational Need which, again, is broadly average. Pupils have been identified as having specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and language problems, physical disabilities and autism. Inward pupil mobility is above average. A small number of Traveller children also attend the school periodically. The composition of year groups varies considerably but, overall, children's attainment on entry to the school is below average and well below

average in their language skills. The school has participated in a number of local and national initiatives, including a local 'Wraparound' facility and the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools. It has close links with St Austell College, the Family Learning Programme and the Cornwall School Centred Initial Teacher Training programme. It has received the Investors in People Award (2001), Partnership Promotion Award (2004) and the NAACE Quality in ICT Service Providers Award (2004). The school also houses a grant funded Early Years group.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
13712	Stephen Dennett	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology
11564	Jean McKay	Lay inspector	
31801	Yvonne Bacchetta	Team inspector	English History Geography Art and design
20671	Jon Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Personal, social and health education
13307	Ian Hancock	Team inspector	Special educational needs The Foundation Stage Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
GL53 7JX

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

St Columb Major Community Primary School is now beginning to improve after a period of decline. It provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils and its effectiveness is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

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

- Standards in writing are well below average in Year 6.
- Pupils' achievement is good at the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- There are very good links with parents and other schools.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

The school has made a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection. Good progress has been made on improving the school's library facilities. Significant improvements have been made in the provision for outdoor play equipment for the youngest children in the school. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving standards of writing in Years 1 and 2 and they are now rising. Although the school has improved its procedures for promoting good attendance, attendance is still unsatisfactory.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

Standards are average overall and pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**.

Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average overall and well below average in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress at the Foundation Stage and achieve the goals expected for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1 in all areas except communication, language and literacy. Their achievement overall is good.

In the 2004 national teacher assessments, standards in reading and writing were well below average at the end of Year 2. In mathematics, they were average and in science above average. Preliminary results from the 2005 teacher assessments indicate that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are average. Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science is good. Standards are good in design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. In design and technology and religious education, pupils' achievement is good and in ICT it is very good. In history, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were well below average in English and mathematics, but average in science. Overall, the amount of progress this

group of pupils made between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 was well below average. The school has been through a sustained period of disruption due to the retirement through ill health of the previous headteacher, the sudden death of an acting headteacher and a rapid turnover of senior managers. This had a significant negative effect on pupils' standards of achievement and behaviour. However, a new permanent headteacher was appointed in September 2004 and the school is now improving. Pupil mobility is high in Years 3 to 6 and this has an adverse effect on standards. Provisional results from the 2005 national tests indicate that standards are still below average in English overall. Standards are broadly average in mathematics and science. Inspection findings confirm these improved results and show that standards are below average overall in English, with writing still well below average. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards in mathematics are average and pupils' achievement is good. In science, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average in design and technology, ICT and religious education. Pupils' achievement in design and technology and religious education is good and in ICT it is very good. Standards in history are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils have good attitudes to school and their work and their behaviour is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is below the national average and is unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

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

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. During the inspection, the quality of teaching seen was good overall. Teaching at the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall, although teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good. Pupils are making good progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6. Assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and is sufficiently well adapted to the need of pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good access to the curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. The school provides good opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum and participation in sport is very good. The accommodation and resources are good. The school makes good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Pupils are supported well and given good advice and guidance when needed. Provision for their personal, social and health education is good. The school has sought to involve pupils in its work well, through the school council and through seeking pupils' views on important decisions. Links with parents are very good and the Parents' Association supports the school very well. There are good links with the community and members of local organisations pay regular visits to the school. Links with other schools are very good and there are very good transfer arrangements for pupils going on to secondary school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school and has done much to move the school forward since he took over in September 2004. He is well supported by the senior management team, who carry out their duties effectively. However, the lack of a deputy headteacher is a weakness as it results in an unduly heavy load on the headteacher. The governing body is very supportive of the school, but has yet fully to develop its responsibility to challenge senior management. Overall governance is satisfactory. The management of the school is satisfactory and improving. The management of finances and staff professional development is good and the day-to-day administration is efficient. However, systems for

self-evaluation are not sufficiently developed in all subjects and more use needs to be made of performance data analysis.

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

Parents' views of the school are very good. They think the school has improved significantly since the new headteacher took over. They feel that staff are very approachable and that any problems are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils have good views of the school. They say that standards of behaviour have improved since the new headteacher took over and that bullying has almost disappeared. Pupils particularly enjoy the sports offered by the school.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve standards in writing throughout the school to at least national averages;
- continue to improve attendance.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards are average overall and pupils' achievement is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good.
- Pupils' achievement in ICT is very good.
- Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics, design and technology and religious education throughout the school.
- Standards of writing are well below average in Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average overall and well below average in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress at the Foundation Stage and achieve the goals expected for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1 in all areas except communication, language and literacy. Their achievement overall is good.

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
reading	14.6 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.4 (12.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (14.3)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In the 2004 national teacher assessments, standards in reading and writing were well below average. In mathematics, they were average and in science above average. In comparison with school with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were also well below in reading and writing, but average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Preliminary results from the 2005 teacher assessments indicate that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 has increased in all four subjects and is now also average. Inspection findings confirm these improved results and that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are average. Pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science is good. Standards are above average in design and technology, ICT and religious education. In design and technology and religious education, pupils' achievement is good and in ICT it is very good. In history, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory and are sufficient to enable pupils to make progress in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils' ICT skills are good.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (24.9)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	25.5 (25.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.6 (28.2)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were well below in English and mathematics, but average in science. In comparison with schools in which pupils performed similarly at the end of Year 2, standards were also well below average in English and mathematics, but average in science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Overall, the amount of progress this group of pupils made between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 was well below average. The school has been through a sustained period of disruption due to the retirement through ill health of the previous headteacher, the sudden death of an acting headteacher and a rapid turnover of senior managers. This had a significant negative effect on pupils' standards of achievement and behaviour. However, a new permanent headteacher was appointed in September 2004 and the school is now improving. Pupil mobility is high in Years 3 to 6 and this has an adverse effect on standards. Provisional results from the 2005 national tests indicate that standards are still below average in English overall, but that the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has increased and is now average. Standards are broadly average in mathematics and the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has increased, although still slightly below average. Standards in science are also average overall, but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is above average.
4. Inspection findings confirm these improved results and show that standards are below average overall in English, with writing still well below average. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, as they are now making good progress in their learning. Standards in mathematics are average and pupils' achievement is good. In science, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average in design and technology, ICT and religious education. Pupils' achievement is good in design and technology and religious education, and in ICT it is very good. Standards in history are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' writing skills are poorly developed and are insufficient to support their learning in other subjects. However, their reading and mathematical skills are satisfactory and their ICT skills are good.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. When withdrawn for intervention by teachers and teaching assistants they achieve well. When working in class pupils achieve at a similar rate to their peers, often supported by teaching assistants.

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

Pupils have **good** attitudes to school life and to their learning. Behaviour is **good**. Pupils' relationships with each other and staff are **good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**. Punctuality is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good understanding of how they are expected to behave.
- Pupils' spiritual awareness is raised effectively in teaching and learning.
- Opportunities to take on responsibilities has raised pupils' self-esteem well.

## Commentary

6. Improving pupils' behaviour was the first priority when the present headteacher joined the school in September 2004. Consistency of approach to deal with challenging behaviour and many effective strategies to encourage and reward good behaviour has helped pupils respect the classroom and school rules. Relationships between all members of staff and pupils are respectful and pupils are polite to visitors. Pupils are pleased with the way behaviour in the school has recently improved and display good independence. During lessons, most pupils listen to each other's ideas and explanations about their learning. However, behaviour occasionally deteriorates when lower attaining pupils are not appropriately engaged in lessons.

## Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils	Exclusions in the last school year		
Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	327	1	1

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

7. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' spiritual development is good. The purposeful atmosphere of the school helps pupils feel cared for and secure and know that they are individually valued. During assemblies and visits to the local church, pupils welcome the calm and stillness of reflection. Their responses in religious education demonstrate a good respect for Christian values and the beliefs of main world faiths. Discussion and written work in history shows sensitivity and insight into how to relate to those less fortunate than themselves and in geography shows consideration for the environment. Pupils confidently express their feelings about the work of other artists. Pupils' moral development is good and they have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have contributed to class and school rules and this has given them a good understanding of living in an ordered society.
8. Pupils' social development is good. Pupils delight in opportunities to help each other. They comment on how being a 'buddy' gives them a good feeling because they are recognised for being sensible enough to take on responsibility. They say they felt safe on the residential course and how much they enjoy all extra-curricular activities and greater opportunities to take part in sport this year. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Although they have a reasonably good grasp of Cornish and British culture through visits to local places of interest and from a good range of visitors into school, they have an insufficient grasp of the multicultural aspects of modern British society and the wider world. Pupils have positive views of the school and they think there has been a big improvement over the last year. They say that incidents of bullying have almost disappeared and behaviour is much better. They also enjoy the many sporting opportunities provided by the school.

9. Attendance is below average and is unsatisfactory. Despite the best efforts of the school to improve the attendance figures, contact with the parents of pupils with poor attendance figures has had little effect.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.2	School data:	0.4
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**. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and there are good opportunities for enrichment. Provision for pupils' care, support, health, safety and welfare is good and there are very good links with parents and local schools. Links with the community are good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 4.
- Teachers are good at insisting on high standards of behaviour.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants and they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Assessment is not always used effectively to plan the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	8 (14%)	27 (48%)	18 (32%)	3 (5%)	0 (%)	0 (%)

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

10. The quality of teaching and learning at the Foundation Stage is good overall. Occasionally teaching is unsatisfactory, but in many lessons it is good. Teachers are developing a good understanding of the needs of early years children, but do not always plan activities that are appropriate to match and support their learning effectively. Teaching and learning are at their best where activities are well planned to match all children's needs, often involving practical opportunities, where adults use conversations and questions effectively to draw out children's own ideas and develop their confidence and independence. Teaching assistants offer good support to make learning effective

and use assessments well to identify the next stage of learning. The warm praise and encouragement children receive ensure they have positive attitudes and enjoy school.

11. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. Teachers have begun seriously to challenge the more able pupils and all pupils are now making better progress overall and standards have risen. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. Planning between classes is effective and ensures continuity and progression as pupils move through the school. Teachers are good at engaging pupils' attention and providing them with tasks that are well matched to their needs. Teaching methods are effective and, as a result, pupils are making good gains in their knowledge, understanding and skills. In most lessons, pupils concentrate well and their productivity is high.
12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 overall although, in Years 3 and 4, teaching is good. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is variable, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory grasp of the subjects they teach and the aspects they need to cover. Planning is satisfactory overall, although occasionally lessons go on for too long and pupils lose interest. In most lessons, the level of challenge is satisfactory although, on a number of occasions, it was noted that teachers were teaching material that pupils had already covered. In these lessons, teaching was unsatisfactory. Some good use is made of interactive whiteboards, especially in Years 3 and 4. In these years, teachers effectively engage pupils' interest and challenge them to achieve high standards. Other resources are generally used satisfactorily. Pupils are making good progress in their learning in Years 3 and 4 and satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6.
13. Throughout the school, teachers insist on high standards of behaviour in lessons. As a result, behaviour in many lessons is good and pupils have positive attitudes to their work. Teachers' behaviour management is positive and pupils enjoy the rewards they receive for their good behaviour. These all have a positive effect on the standards they achieve and the progress they make. There has been a significant improvement in behaviour management since the new headteacher took over and there is now a positive ethos throughout the school. Good use is made of teaching assistants in most classes. They teach small groups effectively and often monitor pupils' learning by making observations during introductory and plenary sessions. The information is used well to adjust planning to ensure all pupils have opportunities to participate in lessons. The information is also used to ascertain pupils' understanding of the concepts being taught. Effective use is made of 'setting'<sup>1</sup> in English and mathematics in Year 6. As a result, pupils are making better progress overall and standards are rising.
14. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Where pupils are withdrawn in small groups, often led by teaching assistants, teaching is good and pupils achieve well. However, in class lessons, work is not always planned well enough to meet pupils' needs and as a result many do not make the expected progress. Individual education plans are not always specific enough and, as a result, work is not always well matched to pupils' individual needs.
15. Assessment is satisfactory. Information gathered is used effectively in English and mathematics to guide teachers' planning. Assessment is used very well to identify groups who are just below national expectations for their age in English and mathematics. This is raising the standards of these pupils by providing additional teaching. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable, but satisfactory overall. In the best practice, marking by the teacher clearly informs pupils about what they need to do

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<sup>1</sup> 'Setting' is the process of putting pupils into groups according to their ability.

to improve their work. However, in some classes, marking is merely congratulatory and does not help pupils to move forward in their learning. Assessment procedures are not used well enough to identify pupils who are underachieving. Consequently, their learning is not planned for in small enough steps and these pupils do not achieve as well as they could by the end of Year 6, particularly in writing. The lack of a whole-school assessment system in science and the foundation subjects does not help pupils to build upon previous learning. Good use of assessment in ICT helps pupils reach standards in the subject higher than those expected nationally. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plan targets are regularly assessed and reviewed. Records are kept up to date, but performance data is not yet used effectively to track progress.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is **satisfactory**, with **good** opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Equality of access and opportunity are good.
- Provision for outdoor and adventurous activities is very good.
- There is a good range of enrichment activities.

## **Commentary**

16. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship. All pupils have access to the curriculum and teachers take steps to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all. Planning ensures that parallel classes get similar lessons and that good support is provided for those who need it. Planning identifies links between subjects, giving coherence to the curriculum. Improvements in ICT resources are having a positive effect on raising standards. The personal, social and health education and citizenship programme has had a very beneficial effect, especially in raising standards of behaviour and in developing pupils' positive attitudes to learning.

17. A particular strength of the curriculum is the enrichment programme. Many visits and visitors are planned to give first hand experiences, particularly for history, geography and religious education. There are several residential opportunities for pupils in all year groups, even starting with reception children, and a variety of extra-curricular clubs. Apart from teachers, teaching assistants, parents and governors, a number of experts help to give pupils rich experiences, particularly in sport. These also include opportunities to compete with other schools, thus contributing to pupils' social and moral development.

18. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and meets the Code of Practice. However, individual education plans are not always sufficiently detailed to help plan appropriate work for pupils. Teaching assistants have a good understanding of the needs of individual pupils. They provide good quality support to keep pupils focused and fully involved in all activities in class or when withdrawn for group work.

19. Accommodation is good, with well maintained and attractive classrooms and two computer suites. The recently created library area is a very useful addition. Outside

areas are particularly good and used very well, ranging from enclosed areas for the youngest pupils to a field and hard play areas with adventure playgrounds. Resources are generally good, especially in ICT and physical education, but there are too few tools for work in design and technology and the quantity and quality of musical instruments are unsatisfactory.

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

Standards of care, welfare and the guidance and support given to individuals are **good**. The school seeks and acts on pupils' views **well**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The environment of the school adds considerably to pupils' learning experience.
- Pupils have good quality, secure and trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- There are very effective induction arrangements for children joining the school.
- Pupils feel fully involved in school life and their views are valued.

### **Commentary**

20. The school provides a clean, safe, happy and visually attractive environment that is conducive to learning. There are good facilities for pupils with disabilities, including a lift. Pupils are encouraged to be healthy, including healthy eating, and to be aware of sensible safety procedures. The personal, social and health education programme is enhanced by talks by the police and many visitors such as the local vicar. First aid provision is good and there are good arrangements for looking after pupils who are unwell, including good records kept of any medication pupils have to take. Procedures for child protection are good and are carried out in accordance with local practice.

21. Teachers and support staff know pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide good support and guidance. There are good relationships between pupils and staff and, when asked during the inspection, pupils said they would have no hesitation in approaching an adult if they had a problem. Initiatives such as the 'friendship bench' in the playground and the mature attitude of older pupils towards younger ones contribute to the harmonious atmosphere in the school. There are satisfactory procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress and good procedures for monitoring their personal development.

22. Arrangements for settling children into school when they start are very good. Parents spoken to during the inspection praised the 'Wrap-around Club' and 'Learning Together' programmes for young children entering the school. Because of this very good introduction to school, parents thought children looked forward to starting their full time education. Pupils who are members of the school council said they felt their contribution to school life was valued. For instance, they had asked for playground toys in an effort to combat occasional instances of bullying. Pupils spoken to during the inspection understand their role of representing the opinions of their classmates and also enjoy the various tasks they carry out around the school, such as taking registers to the office or putting on music for assemblies.

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

The school's partnership with parents and other schools is **very good**. Partnership with the community is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very good links with parents and the school ensures they are fully involved in their children's education.
- Parents find staff approachable and think that the leadership of the school has improved considerably.
- The good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

23. Links with parents are very good. Parents are very satisfied with what the school now provides and, most especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2, are able to support learning in meaningful ways. They are keen to help with reading and spellings at home and some also assist in the classrooms. The 'Friends of St. Columb School' fund raise and organise a wide range of social events for parents, children and members of the community. They have provided many valuable resources that greatly benefit the school including digital cameras for each classroom, whiteboard accessories, computers, books and dictionaries for school leavers. Parents also help with sporting activities, extra-curricular clubs and on school trips. Many parents praise the much more friendly and open style of leadership now in place and say they find staff approachable and helpful, and the strength of this link with parents now makes a very positive impact on relationships within the whole school community. Inspectors agree with these comments. The good range of information within the newsletters, which are also placed on the school's web site, means parents are properly informed about school events. In addition, parents receive clear information about what is being studied in each class.

24. The school has good links with the local community that has traditionally played an important part in the life of the town. Many activities, such as visiting the local old people's home, raising money for the Tsunami appeal and regular press coverage raise the profile of the school. Good links with local businesses exist including with the local air base at St. Mawgan and with the church. The school also offers work experience placements for students from the local college. The very good sporting and academic links between this and the local comprehensive schools mean that a smooth transition is managed when pupils are leaving school. Parents of pupils who had left to go onto the comprehensive schools said their children were very well prepared for the next stage of their education. This preparation included familiarisation visits to the school and pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they felt confident about moving to their chosen schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and the leadership of other key staff is good. Management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a clear sense of purpose and is fully committed to raising standards in the school.

- Work for pupils with special educational needs is not always well matched to their needs.
- Performance data is not used consistently to adapt teaching to improve pupils' learning.
- Financial management procedures are good.

## **Commentary**

25. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has a clear vision and high aspirations to improve the school. He has given stability to staff and pupils after the significant disruption in leadership and management prior to his appointment. The headteacher provides a very good model in his own teaching and encourages his staff to set high standards in their own practice. This is improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. Since the appointment of the headteacher there has been a strong commitment to improve behaviour significantly. This is now good and ensures that the school is a happy and supportive community where pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy learning. The clear focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science has already improved the achievement of many pupils, particularly those reaching the higher levels in national tests. As a result of the clear focus of the headteacher, the quality of teaching is being improved. The school is fully committed to inclusion, actively promotes equality and shows concern for the needs of individuals. Strategic planning demonstrates this commitment and also places emphasis on raising standards, particularly in writing. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory overall, but ineffective use is made of performance data to devise individual education plans or to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

26. The governing body supports the school satisfactorily, but governance is improving. Many governors have only recently been appointed, but are eager to help shape the vision and direction of the school under the guidance of the new headteacher. New sub-committees have been introduced and governors visit regularly to become more proactive in leading and managing the affairs of the school. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils statutory responsibilities and is becoming more aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, governors are not yet sufficiently involved in challenging senior management where necessary in ensuring the school gives best value for money.

27. Management is satisfactory and improving. The school make satisfactory use of self-evaluation to identify areas for improvement, which are incorporated into the school improvement plans. Teaching strategies to address weaknesses in reading and writing are much better now that leadership and management is more organised than in recent years. Data is used effectively to provide intervention programmes to accelerate learning that are raising standards in English and mathematics of pupils who are just below expectations for their age. However, insufficient use is made of data analysis in science to enable teachers to plan effectively for each pupil's progress over time. Co-ordinators have been appointed for each subject during the last year and they have been given some time to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and focus attention on the quality of pupils' work. The absence of a deputy headteacher is a weakness in the senior management team. This lessens the opportunity for the headteacher to delegate and share responsibilities in order to make the management of the school more effective and efficient. Performance management is good. Professional targets are agreed openly and supportively at performance reviews, where further training is encouraged to develop both teachers' own professional needs and those of the school.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>		<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Total income	800,251	Balance from previous year	109,383
Total expenditure	808,732	Balance carried forward to the next	100,902
Expenditure per pupil	2,652		

28. Financial management is good. The headteacher and chair of governors, who is also the chair of finance, work closely together to monitor the school's financial position on a regular basis. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements. The school's budget has a healthy carry forward, which is appropriately targeted for the installation of the new library. Day-to-day financial arrangements are good and the school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services. The school provides 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 **good**.

29. When children start school their attainment is wide and varied, but below average overall. Induction arrangements are very good where many children benefit from the good provision in the pre-reception class and 'Wrap Around' group on a part time basis before attending full time. Most children achieve well and make good gains in learning due to the wide range of experiences offered to them. The majority will meet the expected goals for children of this age in all areas of learning except literacy and language by the end of the reception year. Since the last inspection the school has suffered significant instability in leadership and management, which has had a negative effect on provision in the Foundation Stage. However, since the appointment of the new headteacher, the Foundation Stage has a higher profile and status. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and has been given more responsibility. She has worked hard to improve resources and provision including developing attractive outside areas. The classrooms are colourful and stimulating and provide an attractive environment to support children's learning.

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

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

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

- Because the school places a high priority on the development of pupils' personal, social and emotional skills, their achievement good.
- Children have good relationships with each other and their teachers.

#### **Commentary**

30. Teaching and learning are good. By the time children enter Year 1, they have reached the goals for children of this age and their achievement is good. High priority is given to this area of development. Children are happy, confident and secure in school. They know the classroom rules and expectations and are aware that sometimes they must wait for adult attention. They take a lively interest in activities offered to them and know where classroom resources and equipment are stored. The teachers and support staff ensure they reward good behaviour and have good relationships with children, encouraging them to show kindness to one another.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make good progress in developing their literacy skills.
- Some children have difficulty in listening.

## **Commentary**

31. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Many children enter school with poor communication skills but progress well due to regular practice to develop their confidence in speaking. Achievement is good. Some children find difficulty keeping their concentration with poor listening skills and lose interest quickly. Attainment in reading and writing is still below average by the end of the Foundation Stage. Some children read and write their own names and know initial letter sounds. They write recognisable letters and are aware that print is from left to right and carries meaning. They enjoy sharing books and taking books home regularly. Children are introduced to key words and 'Jolly Phonics' to decipher new words. However, as yet many are unable to build key words by their sounds or read all the words recommended for children in reception. Less able children use a pencil and write letters but little of their writing has reasonable meaning. Higher attaining children read confidently and write well-constructed sentences by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision for children's mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning for free play activities is good.
- Some children have difficulty with calculations.

## **Commentary**

32. In mathematical development most children will achieve the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Achievement is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. There are many planned sessions and free play activities where children communicate and extend their understanding of number, shape and measure. As a result most children learn the names of basic shapes but many have difficulty calculating and using numbers. Too few opportunities are currently provided for children to engage in simple counting games or rhymes during everyday activities to reinforce and practise these skills.

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

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have limited experience of the world when they enter the school.
- Well-planned activities stimulate children's curiosity well.

## **Commentary**

33. Many children have limited experiences of the world around them on entry to school. Most achieve well and the majority will reach the expected goal for children of this age when they enter Year 1. Teaching and learning are good. A wide variety of activities are planned which stimulates the children's curiosity and enables them to develop a good range of skills. For example, many children attain high standards for their age, developing information and communication technology skills including good mouse control and keyboard skills. A wide range of visits such as to Blue Reef to look at rock pools and sand sculptures and visitors bringing in owls ensures that children are interested and gain first hand experiences whenever possible. The co-ordinator has identified the need to introduce more historical topics to broaden and further develop this area of learning.

## **Physical development**

Provision for pupils' physical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers encourage children well and this has a positive effect on their achievement.
- Good teaching enables children to gain early confidence in swimming.

## **Commentary**

34. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children use the school hall and outside environment, including the climbing apparatus on the field, to ensure they develop skills of confidence, balance and co-ordination. Teachers and assistants provide strong encouragement, which has a positive influence on accelerating children's progress and many will exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Good opportunities are provided for children to gain water confidence at the Water World swimming pool in Newquay. Activities and tasks provided by staff ensure that children handle tools well to develop their manipulative skills. Nearly all children reached the expected goal for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1 and their achievement is good.

## **Creative development**

Provision for pupils' creative development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use a wide range of media well.
- Good role-play develops their creative imagination well.

## **Commentary**

35. Teaching and learning are good. Children have a wide range of media with which to draw, paint and make models such as a magic box. Children enjoy dressing up and

participating in imaginative play such as the shopkeeper and customers in the green grocery shop. Children thoroughly enjoy playing percussion instruments and singing rhymes. As a result they achieve well in their creative development and the majority will have reached the expected goal for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- More able pupils are now achieving well.
- Assessment has not been used effectively in the past to raise standards in writing.
- Leadership has implemented effective teaching and learning methods which have raised standards in reading.
- Pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently well developed to support their learning in other subjects.

#### Commentary

36. In the 2004 national teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, standards were well below average in reading and writing. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were also well below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading and writing. Preliminary results from teacher assessments in 2005 indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing are now average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 has increased and is now average in reading and writing. Inspection findings confirm these improved standards. Pupils' achievement is judged to be good because these pupils have made good progress from the end of reception to the end of Year 2. These findings represent a good level of improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be well below average.

37. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were well below average in English. In comparison with schools in which pupils performed similarly at the end of Year 2, standards were also well below average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well below average. Provisional results from the 2005 national tests indicate that standards have improved, but are still below average overall. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has increased and is now average. Due to significant disruptions over the past few years and the above average pupil mobility, observed standards, which are now judged to be below average at the end of Year 6, are not as high as they were at the end of the last inspection. Standards in writing are still well below average, but improving. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although achievement is good in Years 3 and 4. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are average. Although pupils' achievement is now satisfactory, the pupils in Year 6 made insufficient progress between Year 3 and Year 5 due to the disruptions in the school at that time. However, pupils are now making better progress due to good leadership and management and improved teaching.

38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 4. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory. The good practice of sharing the purpose of the lesson with the pupils is raising standards effectively in most year groups. Very good teaching results in pupils enjoying their learning because teaching matches writing tasks to pupils' interests so that they respond enthusiastically and are keen to write. Weaknesses in lessons in Years 5 and 6 are that the level of text is either too difficult or uninteresting. As a result, pupils are not motivated to write. All year groups benefit from the good relationships in the school and the additional support provided by well trained teaching assistants is valuable. They carefully record pupils'

responses in lessons and support pupils with special educational needs and small groups so that they achieve as well as they can. Behaviour is good and pupils co-operate well in shared activities. This year, results from tests have been used more effectively to identify groups who need additional support. Historically, assessment was not used effectively to plan teaching and learning in 'small steps' for pupils who make slow progress in writing between Years 3 and 6. Consequently, a third of pupils in Year 6 do not reach standards expected for their age. These pupils, who find learning difficult, do not know how to reach the next steps in their learning. Marking does not consistently focus well enough on pupils' needs to inform them of small steps for improvement.

39. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and management is satisfactory. She is well supported by the headteacher and local education authority literacy consultant. Data is analysed effectively and this information used well to identify groups for intervention. It is also used to raise the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring relevant reading and writing targets for each year group. This support has helped pupils to be successful and become more aware of their own learning. Analysis of test results has been used well to match books to pupils' reading ages for guided reading. Sampling of pupils' work means that the co-ordinator has a good overview of standards in the school. Her action plan accurately reflects the needs of the subject.

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

40. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are provided with a good range of activities in other subjects that help them to practise their language and literacy skills. Good examples of factual and informative extended writing are found in pupils' recorded work. Effective use of word processing to write newspaper reports in geography are displayed and skilful evaluative writing about their puppets in design and technology was observed. For pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 the overuse of worksheets in several subjects restricts opportunities for writing across curriculum. There is inconsistency in pupils' correct use of subject-specific vocabulary in their writing and marking which informs pupils how to improve is inconsistent. Overall, pupils' writing skills are insufficiently developed to support their learning in other subjects. Frequently, their poor handwriting and spelling mean that otherwise good work is poorly presented and difficult to read.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well.
- Good use is made of data analysis.
- Setting in Year 6 is helping teachers to match work to pupils' abilities more effectively.

### **Commentary**

41. Attainment at the time of the last inspection was close to the national average at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. Since then, the school has been through a difficult period and results of national tests in 2004 showed standards to be in line with national averages at the end of Year 2, but well below average at the end of Year 6. Early indications from unvalidated data, and inspection evidence, are that standards at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are both in line with national averages. This is a

marked improvement for Year 6 pupils and particularly for the higher ability pupils in both groups.

42. Pupils start school with below average ability in mathematics so to reach average levels by the end of Year 2 indicates good achievement. The current Year 6 pupils were below average when they sat the national tests at the end of Year 2 so they too have achieved well over time to reach average standards now. This indicates that teaching over time has been good.
43. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In lessons seen, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Good lessons are well planned and pupils know what they are going to learn during the lesson. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching techniques and activities to engage pupils' interest. As a consequence, pupils' learning is good. Work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils and is appropriately challenging. Pupils are managed well and their behaviour is good. Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants to support pupils' learning. On occasions, there are aspects of teaching that hinder pupils' learning. They include pupils not being sufficiently involved in the lesson, particularly at the start, insufficient use of ICT to support learning and inadequate marking to indicate how pupils can improve their work. Teachers make rigorous analysis of assessment data to help them understand pupils' strengths and weaknesses. From this, they plan appropriate work to remedy the weaknesses. Where necessary, they use the information for grouping pupils, including setting pupils by ability in Year 6. They also use the information to plan their intervention strategies to give pupils extra support. These strategies have all proved effective in raising standards.
44. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The role of the co-ordinator has developed considerably over the last two years and her work is now having a significant positive effect on the development of the subject and on standards. In particular, analysis of data, setting of targets, intervention programmes and the promotion of the development of problem solving skills have all been effective. The monitoring of teaching and learning is still developing throughout the school. A major area for development is the use of ICT to support learning in mathematics. Whilst some good work is being done, this aspect is not yet an integral part of planning and so is under-used.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

45. There are many good examples of mathematics being used across the curriculum and this has a positive effect on the development of pupils' mathematical skills. In particular, pupils use their mathematical skills in science, ICT, geography and design and technology. Pupils' skills are sufficiently well developed to enable them to use them satisfactorily in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been a significant improvement in the achievement of more able pupils
- Disruptions in the school have adversely affected pupils' achievement in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good.

- Pupils enjoy science and behaviour in lessons is good.
- There has been insufficient analysis of performance data.

## Commentary

46. In the 2004 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2, standards were above average compared both nationally and with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average compared both nationally and with similar schools. Provisional results from the 2005 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicate that again standards are broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 has improved significantly and is now also broadly average. Inspection findings confirm these average results. Overall, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good as pupils are making good progress in their learning and standards are continuing to rise.
47. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were average when compared nationally. When compared with schools that achieved similar points at the end of Year 2, standards were again average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was also broadly average. The results showed that girls generally did better in the test than boys, but the evidence from the inspection is that this is no longer the case and there is little difference in the performance of girls and boys. Provisional results from the 2005 national tests and teacher assessments indicate that standards are again broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 has risen significantly and is now above the national average. Inspection findings tend to confirm these results and standards are currently average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although there is evidence that the disruption the school experienced over the past four years has adversely affected pupils' progress through the junior department. Good teaching over the last year in Year 6 has begun to overcome the effects of past unsatisfactory achievement and this is borne out in the increase in pupils achieving Level 5. However, a number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still underachieving, mainly due to poorly developed literacy and presentation skills.
48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils are making good progress in their learning. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and make good use of questioning to extend pupils' understanding of the subject. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is also good and teachers challenge pupils effectively in these year groups. Very effective use is made of ICT to support learning and engage pupils' interest. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory overall, although some good teaching was observed in Year 6. Occasionally the pace of lessons is too slow and teaching lacks challenge. In some classes worksheets are used too frequently to record pupils' work. When this happens, pupils lose interest and their learning becomes unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good, teaching methods engage pupils effectively and they become animated and enthusiastic about what they are learning. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, pupils behave well in lessons and treat equipment carefully. Lessons are well ordered and planned. Systems for assessment are satisfactory overall and teachers generally make satisfactory use of the information gained to plan the next steps pupils need to take in their learning. However, there has been no analysis of national test results and, as a consequence, teachers do not have a detailed breakdown of how individual pupils performed. It is also not possible for management to make use of assessment information when drawing up action plans for future developments.

49. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has carried out an audit of resources and has sampled pupils' work. She has a reasonable idea of standards throughout the school and has rightly focused on developing pupils' problem-solving skills in her staff development plan. However, she has not had time to monitor teaching and learning and, as a consequence, is not fully aware of the quality of teaching throughout the school. In addition, as indicated above, there has been no analysis of national test results and self-evaluation in the subject is largely superficial. Despite the adverse results of the disruption of the school over the past few years, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and standards in national tests are higher now than they were in 1998.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
- The leadership of the subject by the co-ordinators is very good.
- Some teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT to support pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

50. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is very good. Younger pupils make very good use of their ICT skills when combining text and graphics. They are familiar with the computer operating environment and skilfully use the mouse, keyboard and on-screen menus to select programs, save their work and print out copies. Pupils make appropriate choices when editing text and are able to describe well their use of ICT at school and at home. Some of the youngest pupils achieve well when giving sequences of instructions and working out directions to move a small car on the computer screen. Older pupils know very well how to search the Internet for information and make effective use of search engines to accomplish these tasks. They use this information effectively when designing brochures to attract visitors to a number of places of worship from different religions, for example. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development by building their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils produce good quality presentations, combining their technical knowledge effectively with their well-developed design skills. Pupils' data-handling skills are very well developed and they quickly and successfully develop graphs from their findings, for example.

51. Teaching and learning are both very good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and they are confident in their use of ICT in their lessons. Several teachers make very good use of data projectors to make presentations which effectively engage pupils' interest. Behaviour management is very effective and, as a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Lessons are both challenging and stimulating. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to the subject and work well together in pairs or small groups. Assessment is good and provides teachers with detailed information to help improve pupils' work. Teachers work hard, and to good effect, to include all pupils when planning ICT lessons. Very effective use is made of the well-equipped ICT suites and learning support assistants are deployed very effectively.

52. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinators have detailed knowledge and understanding of ICT and they have done much to raise staff confidence in the subject. They have implemented an effective assessment system and instigated a thorough training programme for teachers and teaching assistants. A good feature of assessment is that pupils are actively involved in the assessment process, which gives them a good idea of the progress they are making and what they have to do to improve. The school has continued to improve on the already high standards observed during the last inspection and improvement is good.

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

53. Generally good use is made of ICT to support learning across the curriculum and this has a positive effect on the development of pupils' skills. Effective use is made of pupils' computer skills in science and design and technology. Pupils enter data into spreadsheets and produce graphs from measurement made of leaf lengths, for example. Some teachers make good use of projectors and presentation programs to engage pupils' interest and explain difficult concepts. However, some teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT to support learning and in a number of lessons opportunities were missed to link relevant programs to pupils' learning. Occasionally the interactive whiteboards are not use interactively and merely for writing up text. However, most pupils have a good level of competence in ICT which they apply effectively to their work when they are given the opportunity.

## **HUMANITIES**

**Geography** was not an area of focus for the inspection and it is not therefore possible to make an overall judgement about provision. No lessons were seen. Pupils' knowledge of physical geography is developing satisfactorily and the subject is making a good contribution to their awareness of citizenship. There is insufficient evidence of a wide enough range of pupils' geographical enquiry skills. Pupils' use of geographical vocabulary and the quality of marking are inconsistent.

### **History**

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment does not monitor the development of pupils' historical skills well enough.

### **Commentary**

54. Standards are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is judged to be satisfactory. Their recognition of different kinds of evidence and understanding of how the past can be interpreted in different ways are satisfactory. In their writing, there are good examples that show that pupils empathise well with how people in the past coped with adversity. Literacy lessons are used well for inferring how people lived from poems written about past times. Pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of the passing of time through dramatising change in holidays in Year 2

and from carrying out interviews in Year 5. Pupils in Year 2 explain events such as the Great Fire of London clearly. Pupils in Year 6 make satisfactory links between how the lives of people in ancient civilisations were influenced by their environment.

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well managed but lack challenge for higher attaining pupils to carry out their own research when considering evidence. In Year 6, they carry out tasks that are the same for all level of abilities. There is a tendency in some classes to make too much use of worksheets for pupils to record their work. Good teaching in Year 2 challenges groups of pupils to construct their own actions and dialogue that they enjoyed performing to the class. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and achieve as well as other pupils in the year groups. Teachers' marking is unsatisfactory, with little indication how to improve the work and few comments to extend pupils' ideas.
56. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. This year the co-ordinator has usefully identified more opportunities for different forms of communication in the subject and gathered ICT for topics. Assessment is made at the end of topics, but the school does not have a system to monitor how well pupils' historical skills have developed or how well the subject is used to raise standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The subject was not inspected at the time of the last inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement about improvement since then.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
- Lessons are well planned to ensure teaching and learning are good.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management.

### **Commentary**

57. Standards of work throughout the school are above those expected for their age in the agreed syllabus and pupils achieve well. Standards and provision have been maintained since the last inspection because the subject has remained a focus, with due regard to the syllabus. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have respect for the beliefs and customs of world religions. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding of relationships and explore feelings thorough regular discussions, where there are good opportunities to promote personal skills. By Year 6, many pupils have a secure understanding of the Christian faith and other religions such as Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. Pupils are given good opportunities to gain first hand experiences of Christianity by visits to local churches and regular visits to school by the local Minister. Visits from a Hindu priest and a representative of the Jewish faith provide good support for pupils' learning, understanding and appreciation of different customs and beliefs.
58. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage their pupils well and encourage them to show respect for other people's feelings. The good quality resources are used well and work is well planned by teachers, who have good subject knowledge. Some

good cross-curricular links were demonstrated in pupils' exercise books using their literacy skills well to record work, but this was not consistent throughout the school. In some classes, there is an over-reliance on worksheets to record pupils' work and this restricts their opportunities to write at length.

59. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator whose enthusiasm has ensured the subject has had a high profile since the last inspection. She has received good support from the local adviser and kept well up to date with new initiatives, including the introduction of a new syllabus. She has identified new assessment procedures to improve provision further in the future.

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

**Art and design** was not a focus of the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement about provision. Only one lesson was seen and pupils' work was sampled. Pupils in Year 5 have considered the work of famous artists and craftsmen to inform their own work well. They demonstrate good development in the use of a wide range of media to explore their ideas, discuss their feelings and increase creativity. Scrutiny of work on display shows good standards and that a satisfactory range of learning activities takes place. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

**Music** was not a focus of the inspection. Only two lessons were seen and it is not possible to make a judgement about provision. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards, teaching or provision. Scrutiny of planning indicates use of a published scheme that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There are some good links with other subjects, such as making musical instruments in design and technology and looking at how sounds are made in science.

It was not possible to make a secure judgement on standards or teaching in **physical education**. Only one lesson was seen. The curriculum covers the full range of activities and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, including swimming. The timetable is arranged so that teachers' expertise can be used effectively in teaching the subject. Of particular note is the school's provision for extra-curricular sport and outdoor and adventurous activities. A good number of teachers, teaching assistants, parents and governors all give their time to enable pupils to enjoy after-school clubs and inter-school sporting activities. Pupils throughout the school have outdoor experiences ranging from a sleepover in the hall for reception to seven nights camping in the Isles of Scilly for Year 6. Here, they have opportunities for swimming, walking, cycling, canoeing and, of course, living together. These events have had a very positive effect on pupils' social development and their attitudes towards school and learning. Most pupils reach the national requirement in swimming (25m) by the time they reach Year 6.

### **Design and technology**

Provision for design and technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school.
- Teachers plan imaginative projects which capture pupils' enthusiasm.
- There is a good emphasis on producing high quality finished work.

- The range of resources needs to be improved.

## **Commentary**

60. Standards are above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Younger pupils generate good ideas for their puppets and make realistic plans to achieve their aims. They are adept at clarifying their ideas, using labelled sketches and models to communicate ideas. They evaluate their designs carefully and identify how they could improve their final piece of work. Older pupils make good use of sketchbooks to clarify ideas and make good use of ICT to generate designs. They evaluate products well when generating designs for money containers, for example, and apply ideas from these evaluations to their own designs. Pupils in Year 6 have well-developed design skills which they apply effectively in their designs for cushions. They give attention to detail and ensure that the finished produced is of a good quality. Ideas are clarified well through drawings, prototypes and annotated plans. Pupils use tools and equipment effectively to achieve the outcomes they intended. Pupils are good at evaluating their work. They also make good use of the Internet to research design ideas.
61. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make good use of questioning to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Planning is good and teachers are imaginative in the projects they select for pupils. As a result, pupils are very enthusiastic about their work and work hard to achieve good results. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development by introducing them to a number of design traditions. Teachers also place great emphasis on producing high quality finish to pupils' work. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning by supporting those who need extra help. Assessment is thorough and teachers make good use of the information collected to plan the next steps pupils need to make in their learning.
62. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the direction the subject should take and has drawn up a good action plan to address issues. She has identified the need to improve resources for the subject and currently there are insufficient good quality hand tools for work in resistant materials. Other resources are adequate, but computer software to support the subject is limited. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has taken a lead in setting high standards in her own practice. She regularly reviews pupils' work and keeps a portfolio of samples, which are levelled against national attainment targets. This helps improve teachers' accuracy when making end of unit assessments of pupils' work. The good standards seen at the time of the last inspection have been maintained, despite the disruption the school has experienced over the past four years.

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

63. It was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to make judgements about provision, standards, teaching or learning in the subject. However, from the sampling of pupils' work, conversations with them and the scrutiny of school documents, pupils seem to be making good progress in their personal development. In reception/Year 1, pupils discuss how they can be kind to one another whilst, in Year 6, they discuss making the right decision, democracy and local government and have had their own elections. All aspects are covered, including sex and relationships education, and drugs education for

older pupils. The work done in personal, social, health education and citizenship lessons is having a very positive impact and pupils have responded very well. In the lunchtime club, pupils can attend if they have had a difficult morning. At the Friday achievement assembly, certificates are not only given for academic achievement, but also for overcoming a problem. Activities such as these have contributed to a marked improvement in behaviour and self-esteem.

64. Many opportunities are given for pupils to demonstrate their ability to take responsibility. The school council is a good example of this, although it is still relatively new and still finding its feet. It is an elected body and has made a good beginning with suggestions for the Friendship Bench, Buddy system and playground games, supervised by pupils themselves. The health programme, together with science, is guiding pupils towards a healthy life-style and healthy food. The co-ordinator has worked successfully to raise the profile of the subject in the school. She has updated the policy and is preparing a new two-year rolling programme for September. She ensures that teachers have suitable materials to help teach the units and arranges for visiting speakers to make contributions where possible. Monitoring and assessment are areas for future development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
<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>3</b>
Attendance	5
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>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
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	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*