

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Branscombe C of E Primary School**

Branscombe, Seaton

LEA Area: Devon

Unique Reference Number:113348

Inspection Number: 182723

Head-Teacher: Mrs P Britton

Reporting inspector: Mr P Inness  
21015

Dates of inspection: 22 November 1999 - 24 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707211  
Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	C of E Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Branscombe Seaton Devon EX12 3DA
Telephone number:	01297 680339
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Nigel Freathy
Date of previous inspection:	30 January 1995 - 01 February 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Mr P Inness, Rgl	Under fives, Equal opportunities, Mathematics, Science, Information technology, Design and technology, French, Physical education.	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Leadership and management; Efficiency.
Mrs L Barley, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development: Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community.
Ms E Whiting	Special educational needs, English, Religious education, Art, Geography, History, Music.	Curriculum and assessment; Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development; Staffing, accommodation and resources.

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **What the school does well**

At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in English, mathematical computation, science and religious education.

Pupils make good progress in the core subjects of English, numeracy, science, religious education and information technology. They make good progress in French, design and technology and swimming.

Provides good teaching throughout, especially in literacy lessons.

Inspires very positive behaviour, attitudes and relationships in pupils.

Makes very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Gives very good leadership and vision for the development of teaching, curriculum and accommodation.

The ethos; and partnership between the village, church, the wider community and school is a strength.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

There are no significant weaknesses.

Providing enough information through marking of books to guide pupils' improvements.

Extending using and applying mathematical skills in a sufficiently wide context.

Promoting books in classrooms and library sufficiently.

Establishing that governors extend their understanding to monitor school improvement and pupils' learning.

This is a good school with many outstanding features. Its minor weaknesses are far outweighed by its strengths. Issues raised in this report should be seen in light of the undoubted success of the school. The comments and recommendations are intended to help the school improve still further.

### **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

Governors and staff have responded appropriately to the few issues raised in the last inspection. Monitoring by the staff of the effects of its policies are now suitable for a small school. This is particularly so with regard to teaching and curriculum, and the important changes required in literacy and numeracy. The staff have quite rightly continued in collaborative planning and monitoring of the curriculum. Recording and reporting of attendance through required documents meets statutory requirements. Improvements in reporting of pupils' achievements now better inform reports to parents of progress, but there is still scope to provide further details about pupils' standards, on written reports to parents. Target setting, whereby pupils are aware of what they have to do to improve, are made through discussion, but further advice is not fully represented in the marking of work. The school has maintained its very positive ethos.

## Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
English	A	C	<i>well above average</i>	A
Mathematics	B	C	<i>above average</i>	B
Science	A	B	<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E

These grades are derived from statistical analysis. As there are only 10 pupils in the 1999 year group, these might be misleading as the performance of just one pupil has a significant effect on percentages.

At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' results are well above the national average in comparison with all schools in English, and science. In mathematics results were above average when compared to all schools. The percentage of pupils gaining, at or above, the national average in each subject compares favourably with similar schools. Recent trends show improvements are being made in all three subjects.

This inspection confirms a broadly similar picture for these three core subjects. Across the school attainment and progress in reading, writing, science and religious education are good. At the end of both key stages attainment is average in information technology but due to increased opportunity to use new equipment progress is good. Progress in geography, history, art and music is satisfactory, but in design and technology, French and swimming it is good. By five years of age, the majority of pupils are above average in language development and reach the other expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science	Not applicable	Good	Good
Information technology	Not applicable	Good	Good
Religious education	Not applicable	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The school has built on the high quality of teaching identified in the previous inspection. Good and very good teaching is a positive feature across the school. In no lessons was the overall quality less than satisfactory. Teaching was very good or better in over a quarter, and good in almost three quarters, of all lessons. However teachers' marking of pupils' work sometimes provides insufficient information for corrections to be made. There are too few occasions for pupils to use and apply their computational skills and knowledge of mathematics.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses*



## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Behaviour in and around the school is very good..
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are punctual.
Ethos*	Excellent. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Relationships throughout are high. Pupils, staff, governors and parents value and take pride in their school.
Leadership and management	Leadership of the school is very good. It has excellent values and provides extremely well for all of its pupils. The very strong links with the community have continued to be developed.
Curriculum	Good overall. Sufficiently broad and balanced for the under fives and across key stages. Strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but less so on application of mathematics. Very good planning overall. Some constraints in providing enough physical activity, within restricted accommodation. Very good record keeping, but less emphasis on some marking of pupils' work and individual target setting at a daily rate. Satisfactory range of extracurricular clubs, mostly for sports and games.
Pupils with special educational needs	Sufficiently well managed for the low number of pupils requiring additional support.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good provision across all aspects.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Sufficient staffing and resources. The arrangement and extent of accommodation, sometimes makes teaching through current curriculum and practice, difficult. Pupils and teachers have to work very hard by continually making adjustments to plan and organise enough space for some learning.
Value for money	Good.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school

### What most parents like about the school

Its small school, caring family atmosphere. It is approachable. Their children like coming to school. It develops independence

### What some parents are not happy about

Reading books are not changed quickly  
Levels of homework.

Inspection supports the overwhelming positive response of parents. The ethos of the school is seen as very positive with extremely strong links to the local community. Entries in children's home/school reading diaries indicate insufficient dialogue is made between parents, children and teachers, and there is a case for a better review of the progress pupils are making, and in the quality of some reading books.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

This is a good school that has made progress in all of the key areas identified in the last inspection. There are a few minor issues arising from this inspection and in order to further improve the school, governors and staff should:-

- **Increase** the progress of pupils by:

Improving the quality of marking of pupils' books to provide support and challenge, particularly in mathematics;

Developing a means of recording useful dialogue between pupils, parents and teachers, especially in home/school reading diaries;

Reviewing the provision of physical activities and modifying timetables to improve the opportunity for pupils to have appropriate times to move from the often cramped spaces provided for some year groups;

Setting a timescale for the intended increase of learning space and classroom reorganisation;

Extending the promotion of books in library and classrooms.

(Paragraphs: 15, 18, 20, 24, 25, 26, 32, 45, 54, 56, 60, 64, 66, 69, 71, 72, 87, 92, 97, 100, 101.)

- **Extend** the close involvement already shown by governors by:

Establishing a policy to help governors collectively fulfil their responsibilities as critical friends of the school.

Ensuring governors' training establishes a good understanding of school improvement and pupils' learning.

(Paragraphs: 29, 58.)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. This smaller than average primary school is set in an area of outstanding beauty and conservation. It serves pupils who come from an area wider than the village of Branscombe, near Seaton. Pupils come from a variety of economic backgrounds, but socio-economic factors are about average. Attainment on entry judged by the baseline assessments the school makes, fluctuates from year to year, but is about average, although currently children under five have skills in speaking and listening which are above average.

2. There is an about average percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (17.5 per cent). A below national average percentage of pupils have English as an additional language and there are fewer than the national average of pupils with special educational needs (just four per cent are at the first stage of extra help required for such pupils).

3. Since the previous inspection in February 1995, there have been a small number of staffing changes. Additions to the entrance area and toilet facilities have been made.

4. The school's principal aim and value as stated in its prospectus is that its work is based on trust, respect and openness. High standards are set for teaching and learning in order to seek to help children develop lively and enquiring minds; to make reasoned judgements and to apply themselves to the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

5. The main targets for the year 1999 - 2000 as outlined in the school's development plan are to continue to develop provision in literacy, numeracy, information technology, and make improvements to school accommodation. As a Voluntary Controlled school acts of worship were inspected by an inspector appointed by the diocese under Section 23 of the Education Act. Her report appears under a separate cover.

6.

### Key indicators

#### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

As the number of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 was between five and nine the school exercised its right only to publish the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding Level 2 which was 100 per cent in reading, writing and mathematics.

#### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	4	6	10

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	7	8	9
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	70	80	90
	National	65	59	69

<sup>1</sup> Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<sup>2</sup> Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	5	5	6
	Total	9	8	10
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	90	80	100
	National	65	59	59

Only results of 1999 National Curriculum assessments are stated above. As the numbers of pupils undertaking assessments in 1998 were very low the school chose not to publish the details of national assessments for that year. Care should be taken in interpreting the above figures as numbers of pupils are low making statistics unreliable.

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised Absence	School	%
		National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised Absence	School	0.03
		National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

**Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	28.57
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

7. According to the school's assessments, the majority of children come into reception with slightly above average skills in language but average capability in number and other skills. By five years of age, the majority of pupils reach the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes of language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in creative and physical development including personal and social development. They are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

8. In 1999 national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, a majority of pupils reached the national average Level 2 or higher grade (Level 3 ) in reading and writing. In mathematics a majority achieved the average national level or above. Teacher assessment recorded all pupils as reaching the national average, but not higher, in science.

9. In similar national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 for 11 year olds, the percentage of pupils achieving average standards in English and science was well above the national average for all schools. In mathematics the percentage was above average when compared to all schools. The percentage of pupils gaining at or above the national average in each subject compares favourably with similar schools. Trends in the two years since 1998 show improvements are being made in all three subjects but due to some very low numbers of pupils in previous years, such trends over a longer period of time are difficult to evaluate.

10. This inspection confirms a broadly similar picture for the three core subjects, whereby for pupils now in Year 6, attainments in English and science are above average. Pupils achieve good skills in mathematical computation, but their overall attainments are about average.

11. Across the school, attainment and progress in reading and religious education are good. At the end of both key stages attainment is average in information technology but due to increased opportunity to use new equipment, progress is good. Progress in geography, history, art and music is satisfactory but in design and technology and French it is good. Due to timetabling no lessons of physical education were seen to make judgements but evidence confirms good progress in swimming is being made.

12. Pupils with special educational needs are few in number. They mostly work alongside other pupils; and receive appropriate support according to their capabilities. They make similar progress to the majority in all but some aspects of language and mathematics where progress is satisfactory.

13. The programme to meet the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is good. Well structured lessons help pupils to make good gains in understanding in all aspects of English, including poetry and drama.

14. Inspection evidence is consistent with the school having very good management, including analysing data to set individual targets for pupils, which will allow them to achieve higher standards.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

15. Pupils show very good interest in their work and this is particularly evident in literacy, religious education and French at Key Stage 2, as well as in personal and social education across the school. Where the pace and interest of lessons are appropriate, even young children can sustain concentration. Pupils contribute readily in class. They have good listening skills with speaking skills which are developing well. They follow instructions accurately and take a pride in their work. Pupils are keen to make progress and complete tasks, but where space is cramped they cannot always take responsibility for their own learning sufficiently: for example making selections from resources.

16. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils show a high degree of respect for property and equipment. They are friendly, courteous and trustworthy. The discipline policy effectively promotes very good behaviour and this is reflected in the zero exclusion rate. All staff, including mealtime assistants play an important part in this. At lunch time pupils make good use of the extensive range of small equipment for positive play. Even when the expectations for learning are too great and progress slows, pupils' behaviour remains very good. If pupils have any behavioural difficulties they are managed well by the school.

17. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and are firmly based on mutual respect. They positively promote learning. Pupils listen well to each other and show consideration for other people's feelings and values. This is particularly promoted by personal and social education held regularly in all classes. Pupils are mutually supportive. Older pupils help younger ones. For example, in paired reading, even younger pupils take equal turns. Pupils work well collaboratively as seen in history and art at Key Stage 2.

18. Pupils take responsibility for their own actions and express themselves with increasing confidence. Older pupils ably assist at break times, lunch times, with the library and in the office. Pupils are involved in the formation of the playground charter and the praise and encouragement guidelines. When they are given suitable opportunities, pupils show initiative and take responsibility. The school's strong involvement in the local community encourages independence and initiative but these are sometimes hindered by the lack of space in the school building.

### **Attendance**

19. Pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory. At 94.3 per cent it matches the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence or lateness. Lessons begin promptly and registration provides an orderly start to the morning and afternoon sessions.



## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

20. The school has built on the high quality of teaching identified in the previous inspection. Good and very good teaching is a notable feature across the school. In no lessons was the overall quality less than satisfactory. All teachers taught at least one lesson that was very good or excellent. Such strong teaching benefits pupils greatly. Progress is enhanced and knowledge and understanding extended. However, a number of areas for improvement in teaching was identified. Occasionally teachers' expectations as to what all pupils in a group can do does not match the needs of some. For example, marking in a majority of Year 6 mathematics books shows that insufficient challenge and extension tasks had been provided for those pupils who had already proved they were capable of more advanced work. On the other hand, expectations are occasionally too high. In a French lesson, some pupils had to attempt work they were not quite ready to do. Lack of room restricted what could have been an appropriate practical activity. Consequently progress was slower than it might have been if pupils had been able to consolidate previous learning and then practise the new work in the interesting way intended.

21. The best teaching was in English, religious education, music and French. Teaching of literacy across the school was very good. The overall quality of teaching in the other core subjects of mathematics, science and information technology, children under five, those in reception and pupils with special educational needs, was good.

22. Classroom assistants and volunteers are effective in assisting in the progress pupils make. It is obvious that helpers enjoy working with children. For example, they enthusiastically encourage under fives and reception children to engage vigorously in a game with numbers in the playground leading to good gains made in understanding. Other effective support is provided especially in helping pupils to read. However, although this occasion for reading is valuable there were times where a pupil was withdrawn from a lesson just at the point when they were deriving the most benefit from what they were already doing.

23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum is good. All staff are actively involved in useful training directed at recent initiatives such as literacy and numeracy. A strong feature of the work of the school is in taking part in educational research such as a national project for school provision for those in early years. Much work is done by teachers in reviewing planning and procedures, and assessing their work on pupils' attainment and progress.

24. Recording of pupils' academic and personal progress is mostly very good. Folders of work matched to the National Curriculum requirements provide a useful profile of each pupil and their gains in attainment. Although a broad view of what pupils can do is very well documented and analysis of assessments helps to modify curriculum planning, there is a lack of written information about the day to day progress made by individual pupils. For example, not enough of pupils' work is marked and annotated compared to national standards along with teachers' comments about how the work had been accomplished. This restricts the opportunity for teachers and parents to have a ready means of identifying achievements and for pupils to correct their work, or to know how well they are doing. In other respects pupils are appropriately involved in setting targets for themselves.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

25. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. It satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education and the current demands of the National Curriculum subjects including swimming, and sex and drug education. The curriculum is successful in implementing the aims of the school and is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Considerable improvement has occurred since the last inspection in the match of work to pupils' abilities, following the successful development of a wide range of schemes of work and policies which ensure a consistent approach across the school. The school policy on homework is consistently applied but homework varies in amount over the term. This was raised as a concern by some parents, who felt that there were inconsistencies in approach. The school should consider the detail of the policy to ensure equal provision between groups of pupils. Support from parents helps to improve learning, attitudes and standards particularly in reading and spelling. Parents have expressed a wish to be better informed about the curriculum. There is information about the broad curriculum in the school prospectus, but information about termly topics is insufficient.

26. The curriculum for the under fives is effective and follows the Desirable Outcomes for Learning. Provision for purposeful play, and role play is good, but facilities for outdoor play are limited. Space in the classroom is cramped by the need to provide for Key Stage 1 pupils as well. There is no dedicated area for the under fives set aside for them outside.

27. The school has planned well for the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Training has been used to familiarise staff with manageable planning and teachers achieve satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and high standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy has placed constraints on the development of other subjects but overall the school manages a broad curriculum with the inclusion of a modern language. Lessons begin promptly and a well constructed timetable ensures that no time is wasted in the delivery of subjects.

28. Curriculum planning is thorough. Long term planning ensures sufficient coverage with time allocations clearly stated. Medium and short term plans are comprehensive. Delivery of the literacy hour meets the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and the daily mathematics lesson includes numeracy in line with new national recommendations. Good planning has helped to improve pupils' learning and raise standards.

29. Governors feel well informed through good quality documentation provided by the headteacher but visits to the school to observe the curriculum in action are limited.

30. The Code of Practice for pupils with special needs is fully implemented when the need arises, but at the time of the inspection there were no statemented children and no pupils requiring individual education plans. The quality of provision is deemed to be satisfactory. The named governor for special educational needs monitors procedures adequately.

31. Educational visits provide relevant and first hand experiences that raise levels of knowledge and understanding. Residential trips provide opportunities for social and physical development. Visitors from the community and beyond extend pupils' experiences in areas such as art, drama and music. The church runs a 'Fish Club' once a week and some pupils learn a musical instrument. However, enrichment activities are limited due to the small number of extracurricular activities provided by the school and which mostly cover sporting activities over the year.

32. Teachers know the capabilities of pupils well. Good practice is seen in the opportunity made for pupils to evaluate their progress and add to their own records of achievement. Pupils are tested regularly for reading, and results supplement pupils' assessed work, and add to their school profile. Assessment for under fives is good. Baseline assessment informs the next stage of planning and key stage tests provide useful information to assist planning. Teachers assess informally and make minor adjustments to lesson plans and delivery of the subject at the time, but there is inconsistent written feedback to pupils and their parents about levels of attainment and progress. Parents still have some reservations about reports and this inspection supports the view that more information about standards and progress could be made. Reports do not fully identify the next stage of learning or set enough targets for pupils. Pupils' work in books, or held in portfolios, is not always dated to provide information about the rate of progress. Marking of pupils' books is not sufficiently used to diagnose what they need to do to improve their work and much assessment mostly records curriculum coverage rather than attainment. This is most evident in home/school reading records which do not provide enough dialogue with parents or pupils about specific learning needs.

33. A good feature is the setting of appropriate targets for mathematics and literacy after analysing the outcome of national assessments with a view to improving results in the year 2000.

### **Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The previous inspection recognised that a sound religious education curriculum provided a solid framework for spiritual development. This inspection confirms that current practice is equally as strong.

35. Pupils are helped effectively to develop spiritual awareness in a number of subject areas: for example in religious education through quiet reflection; and in history through a sense of awe that one picture can tell a detailed story of a journey through life. Pupils lead prayers, at lunchtime and the end of school, which they have written themselves. The school has a strong commitment to Christian values with clear aims based on respect and trust.

36. A strength of the school is the consistent approach by all staff to pupils' social and moral development. From starting school as under fives, pupils are encouraged to relate well to each other, to take turns and to share willingly. There is a strong sense of community among pupils and examples of very good cooperation are seen in the many times pupils work in pairs or groups, often of mixed gender. Pupils have a range of responsibilities such as setting up the room for the day and clearing it for large group activities, and sharing tasks at lunchtime. Adults set pupils good examples of working together in harmony. Pupils relate very well to all adults who support the daily life of the school. The lunchtime supervisors make a significant contribution to the personal development of pupils through their co-operative approach to pupil management.

37. Pupils join in neighbourhood events and develop a sense of the needs of others through a wide range of activities, which include a harvest lunch for senior citizens. All residents of the village are invited to the Christmas performance. Community events such as preparing a piece of ground in the churchyard and planning a millennium orchard, provide pupils with a sense of citizenship and an awareness of community.

38. Cultural development of pupils is very good. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their cultural understanding through literature, poetry, music, art and drama, and through the many visits to local areas of interest. They are given secure knowledge of their own and other cultures through taking part in local activities, such as traditional dancing. Pupils join in drama workshops and have received visits from music and theatre groups. Opportunities to develop an awareness of the cultural diversity of society and multicultural aspects are sufficiently developed through topic work, studies of other cultures and religions and a range of music and art from around the world. Good links with other European schools are being developed well.

39. There is clear guidance in the prospectus for staff, pupils and parents. The school has a clear vision statement and aims and values are consistently promoted. Rules are based on a commonsense approach and incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are isolated. There are no recorded incidents of bullying. The school offers a small range of extracurricular activities.

### **Support, guidance and pupils welfare**

40. The school provides a caring environment for all pupils. Positive and supportive relationships exist between staff and pupils. A good programme of induction, particularly through the pre-school group on site, prepares young children for school life. The transition to secondary education is smooth and is supported by good liaison between schools. Year 6 make several visits and staff from both schools liaise regarding pupils' learning. Personal development is enhanced by the residential activity provided for pupils.

41. Teachers have good knowledge of pupils and generally monitor pupils' personal development informally. Procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress through school and national testing are good. Pupils are actively involved in target setting but these lack precision. The homework policy helps to promote pupils' personal development. A programme of personal and social education is regularly provided in each class and is well monitored.

42. The good discipline policy is an important feature of school life and includes a bullying policy. The emphasis is on positive behaviour, through praise and encouragement guidelines formulated with pupils at Key Stage 2. Commendation certificates and cups are awarded and a 'thank you' book, which celebrates helpfulness, is in use. The policy is consistently implemented and there is very good support from all staff, including meal time assistants. The fun at lunch time policy incorporates a playground charter and designated areas for the use of play equipment. A good range of strategies is in place to promote high standards of behaviour. Negative incidents are rare and are dealt with quickly by the school. The school has not yet formulated a policy on pupil restraint.

43. Pupils' attendance is very well managed and parents are regularly reminded of attendance and punctuality requirements. Registers are accurately marked and properly monitored. Absences are closely monitored by the headteacher, who personally follows up individual cases.

44. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection. Satisfactory procedures are in place, but staff have yet to be appropriately trained for guidance with regard to child protection issues. The school has good working relations with local agencies: for example to address educational needs and school attendance.

45. The school building and equipment are in satisfactory condition and procedures are in place to monitor pupils' health and safety. These are effective with the exception of the cramped conditions in the school building where some movement of pupils and storage is restricted. Procedures for school visits and off-site lessons are good. Staff, including appropriately trained first aid personnel, are on duty at key points of the day.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

46. The school's partnership with parents and the community is very good. Parents are actively involved in school life. They make valuable contributions as part of the governing body as well as in daily school life. Parents are supportive of children's learning. They help regularly in classrooms, with displays and on educational outings. Volunteers work with small groups and assist with practical tasks. They receive good guidance from class teachers. Special events are well supported. The parent, teacher and friends association is very active in its promotion of fundraising and social events for pupils and parents. The parents' committee is well supported by staff. The association makes a very significant contribution to the life of the school.

47. Weekly newsletters inform parents about practical matters and specific events. Detailed homework timetables are communicated to parents but they receive too little curriculum information. The home/school agreement is in place. The partnership with parents and homework policy is consistently implemented across the school. Parents find the headteacher and staff approachable and generally feel that complaints are appropriately dealt with.

48. Parents receive information about their child's progress through the end of year reports and through consultation and open meetings held in the autumn and spring terms. Targets are discussed with pupils and parents in the autumn and summer terms, while annual reports provide an annual attendance record and subject assessments.

49. Visitors come into the school from the community: for example police, the vicar, National Trust wardens, theatre groups, a librarian, a Hindu priest and the chair of Devon County Council. Classes make several visits each year linked to the curriculum. Very good use is made of the community and resources particularly in humanities. Pupils at both key stages make a residential visit each year and older pupils use a local outdoor pursuit centre. The school participates in local curriculum discussions and headteacher meetings. Links with Sidbury primary school are strong. Creative art and music experience days are shared and pupils participate in inter-school sports competitions. Relations with the pre-school group which meets on the site are very good. Secondary school staff are invited to a garden party for Year 6 leavers. Teachers in training are welcomed to work in the school.

50. The school has very good links with the community. It contributes to the parish magazine and has produced a parish map and newspaper. Members of the community are invited to a number of school events. In most years the school undertakes a community project which currently, in liaison with the National Trust, involves pupils and parents planning and planting a Millennium orchard. Pupils at Key Stage 2 provide lunch and entertainment for the local senior citizens. Links with the local church are strong. Pupils participate in three Sunday services each year and an after-school group meets in the school building. Pupils have refurbished a corner of the churchyard and participated in a National Trust local woodland project. The school is contributing a tapestry made by the pupils to the Millennium Dome. Through the Business Education Partnership the school has links with a neighbourhood engineer. Links are established with two schools in Finland and Holland and the school supports several national and local charities.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

51. Leadership of the school is very good. Since the last inspection it has developed its policies to allow its aims to be very successfully reflected in its day-to-day life. It has excellent values and provides extremely well for all of its pupils, including equality of access to an interesting and broad curriculum and related activities. The very strong links with the community and wider world identified in the previous inspection have continued to be developed. The school is successful in maintaining a very high quality of teaching. Parents are pleased with the ethos of the school and fully support its aims and values. The school is a very well ordered place with an emphasis on a blend of independent and structured learning.

52. The headteacher provides high quality leadership and has taken the school forward successfully from its position at the time of the last inspection. By undertaking thorough evaluations of how it carries out its work and reviewing policies and curriculum content the school has made very good progress in tackling the few minor weaknesses identified in the last inspection. Committed governors, teachers and other staff very well support the headteacher.

53. Day-to-day management and organisation of the school are very good. Written communication regarding details of school life, is regular and informative. This aspect of management has a positive effect on pupils' achievement and apart from missing some advanced information about what topics their children are learning about each term, is appreciated by parents. Governors comply with all statutory duties. Their annual report gives good information about progress the school is making.

54. Teachers' and staff roles and responsibilities are clearly established and they are set specific targets. Some subjects such as English and mathematics are managed jointly by all teachers. This ensures that all teachers are aware of developments, but occasionally the lack of a clear oversight by a single co-ordinator has resulted in some minor deficiencies. For example in not providing sufficient promotion of books.

55. Monitoring the planning, provision and outcomes of subjects, and good formal assessments of pupils' work, to ascertain progress, is made. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss progress and to set targets to improve the work of the school. Overall monitoring by staff is effective in providing a good picture of the curriculum and its effect on pupils' progress.

56. The preparation of the good school improvement plan is managed very well by the headteacher. It is a clear and detailed document. Staff, and to a lesser extent, governors are involved in its initial preparation which provides for appropriate development and priorities. There are ambitious plans for the much needed reorganisation and increase in space for learning within the building. But the school has yet to set a schedule for work to take place. The provision of in-service training for staff associated with the school improvement plan's targets is good, with an emphasis on National Curriculum initiatives, outcomes from teacher appraisal and agreed personal development.

57. The governing body complies with its obligations relating to the identification of pupils having special educational needs, and in ensuring equality of opportunity for all. There is a helpful special needs policy that informs on provision, and which conforms to the requirements of the Code of Practice. Special educational needs is managed well including the writing and usefulness of pupils' individual education plans when required. The school takes full advantage of expert support services.

58. There is regular communication between the school and governors. Since the last inspection there has been reorganisation of the governors' responsibilities. Governors are now beginning to be more closely involved in the management and planning of the school. Individual governors are linked with aspects of the curriculum and special educational needs, in order to gain a better understanding of the school's provision for the National Curriculum. Further training into how governors might help in these aspects are yet to be fully exploited. However, measures taken so far, are becoming effective in assisting in making informed decisions, establishing priorities, obtaining good value for money and measuring and reporting success.

## **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

59. All staff are committed to the school, and conscientious and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of pupils. They work effectively as a team, which contributes to the good standards of teaching and quality of education provided. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified and deployed to meet the needs of pupils at both key stages and reception. They regularly attend training courses in order to maintain the high standard of their professional knowledge and skills. There is a clear policy for staff development.

60. All staff have job descriptions which are reviewed annually as part of the appraisal process. Teachers have designated roles as co-ordinators for subjects. In such a small school this means that each teacher takes on responsibility for several subjects. The core subjects of mathematics, literacy and science are developed through a team approach. There is a considerable amount of focused dialogue between staff and the headteacher on curriculum issues but the monitoring of standards is limited to a consensus approach which occasionally misses the sharpness in development a single co-ordinator might bring. The outcomes of training are regularly shared with other staff to ensure consistency of approach across the school and this contributes well to standards across both key stages.

61. Good links are made between teaching and non-teaching staff with the school improvement plan. Classroom support staff have clearly defined roles and make a positive contribution to the quality of learning for all pupils. They are well supported through a close working relationship with class teachers who evaluate them effectively.

62. The school site comprises a Victorian main building with an attractive entrance and library area. This has been improved since the last inspection and the school plans to develop this area further. Teaching takes place in two main classrooms and a smaller room. Key Stage 1 pupils have access to a resources area. Some group teaching takes place in the small library area.

63. The décor is clean and attractive and is enhanced through good quality displays of pupils' work. The school has a small environmental area including a pond, and the site overall is secure. Lunchtime supervisors effectively help pupils make good use of the playground space by encouraging and assisting in games and activities. The school has no hall, but utilises the local community centre for physical education, presentations and drama. During the year, the school uses an adjacent field and local playing facilities for sporting events and team games. The church, which is situated close by, provides a good resource for religious education, festivals and celebrations.

64. Accommodation is effectively used by staff and pupils, despite the restrictions caused by the buildings and lack of space. However, the lack of space sometimes impacts adversely on movement around rooms and limits opportunities for pupils to maintain their own classroom environment and to work independently by selecting resources themselves. The absence of dedicated outdoor space to include off ground equipment for those children under five reduces opportunities for physical development. The school has good systems for organisation. These involve pupils setting up chairs and tables and generally thinking ahead to meet the requirements of the curriculum and the space lessons will require.

65. The quality and range of learning resources adequately meet the needs of the curriculum, but access to some equipment is limited due to the layout of the building and often cramped conditions. Resources are well ordered and maintained and can be accessed easily by staff. A clear system of labelling on cupboards and doors identifies the difference between adult and pupil access and this system works well.



66. The library is well organised and pupils access books using the Dewey system. The library has recently been audited by the school library service who identified 'under resourcing' of non fiction books in some subject areas. The school intends to act upon this audit and is actively seeking to improve library facilities.

67. Resources and artefacts in all subjects are accessed using a loan service. The school maintains a stock of these resources in line with topic work and the packs include good quality and relevant resources which contribute significantly to the standards in school. Good examples were in history, with models of a Tudor house; and in science, with an impressive array of skeletons available to pupils. The ratio of computers to children is good. Equipment is appropriately maintained and the range of programs available is adequate at both key stages. The school is working with the local authority to improve provision through the installation of a computer network.

68. Teachers make very good use of all resources and pupils treat them with respect. The school appreciates the support parents have provided through fund raising.

### **The efficiency of the school**

69. The school's finances are very efficiently managed by the headteacher and overseen by the governing body through the finance committee. Accounting by the school is very thorough. Governors are well aware of the projected annual income and expenditure and finances are appropriately linked to the long term development planning of the school. Priorities are identified clearly. Money raised by parents and school initiatives has contributed well to increased resources for the school. There are plans to improve the educational opportunities within the school by creating additional space for learning. The parent, teacher and friends association hold a healthy contingency, mostly earmarked for this development but a timescale for its completion has yet to be made.

70. Funding for pupils with special educational needs has been used appropriately to sustain good support of staff and to purchase resources. All teachers have benefited from the in-service training they have received. Other grants, such as that for information technology, are pursued to the school's advantage. The appropriate charging and remissions policy follows local education authority guidelines.

71. Subject development plans are sufficiently detailed to clarify items of expenditure. Much work has been done in evaluating and rearranging resources. All staff are deployed very well. The school is satisfactorily provided for, with books and equipment effectively used. As implied in the previous inspection, the arrangement of accommodation makes teaching to current curriculum and practice, difficult. Although the buildings are in a good state of repair, lack of teaching space occasionally impacts negatively on progress pupils are able to make. Pupils and teachers have to work very hard by continually making adjustments in the position of furniture and resources in order to organise enough space so that the full curriculum for the age range can be provided. Through no fault of the school this cannot be totally efficient.

72. Expenditure has continued to be monitored carefully by the governors since the previous report. The most recent auditor's report indicates that finances are very efficiently managed and governors have responded promptly to the few minor recommendations. The school makes very good planning for the curriculum and in the good quality of teaching identified. From a good start in reception most pupils continue to make consistent, and often good, progress as they move through the school. Pupils display very good behaviour and attitudes to work. Attendance is satisfactory, and timekeeping is good. Considering their broadly average attainment on entry and the good standards and progress in many subjects, notably literacy, pupils achieve by the time they leave, the school gives good value for money. This is an improvement on the last inspection.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

73. At the time of the inspection there were three children attending part time or in reception under the age of five. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but according to assessments on entry most children under five start with good skills in talking and listening. They display average skills in number and social development. Children frequently make good progress. By the time they are five, standards of attainment meets expectations in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in creative and most physical development, including personal and social development.

74. All children develop well personally and socially, and attainments are above expectations. Their overall behaviour is very good. They show respect for others' feelings and are developing a good sense of right and wrong. Children are willing to share materials and equipment with others. They play and work together well, often persisting in tasks for longer than normally expected for this age group. A good example being the playing of a number game in the playground, waiting patiently for a turn and sharing advice to help others succeed. Children persevere even when the task is quite demanding and take pride in completing their work well. Teaching provides good occasions for children to care for each other, for their surroundings, books and equipment.

75. In English, attainment is in line with expectations. Children listen attentively to adults and to each other. They delight in listening to stories They can follow simple instructions. For example, during a cutting and sticking activity they discuss their feelings and hold meaningful conversations with the learning assistant. In small group discussions children are sufficiently confident to ask questions and make contributions, giving reasons for their choices. They take part in role play in the home corner with enthusiasm.

76. Teaching makes very good opportunities for the development of literacy. Children gain an appreciation of books. They handle books properly and all know that print carries meaning. Children make satisfactory progress in writing, from forming letters to writing their own names.

77. Children have a satisfactory understanding of number for their age. They can sort, match and measure. They can count to ten and are beginning to understand that numbers represent quantity. They solve simple number problems set within a game. For example, learning assistants help children to recognise simple number sequences by playing a playground game to add and subtract, using coloured shapes placing each in the correct place on a number grid.

78. Children regularly investigate aspects of the world around them. They observe and discuss daily changes in the weather. They are curious and want to find out things for themselves. Children develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the past through discussion of things old and new. They can use a keyboard or control mouse successfully to give commands to a computer.

79. Children are active and enthusiastic about physical activities. In most respects attainment is to expectation. They draw, colour and cut confidently and carefully. The use of the village hall, for physical education sessions allows children some opportunity to develop skills of co-ordination. Occasions for structured outdoor play, where large portable apparatus is made available are insufficient. There is no suitable outdoor space set aside and resourced for this age group. Outdoor opportunities during which agility, co-ordination, balance and gross motor skills can be developed are restricted. However, good provision is made for swimming at a local pool. Other good uses of the environment within the community, such as the nearby beach, are made.

80. Children show satisfactory ability to use imagination, to listen and to observe. They sing with enthusiasm, remembering many words of hymns and songs, during lessons and whole school assemblies.

81. The quality of teaching is good. Children are encouraged to develop independence and confidence in choosing and moving between activities. This they do very well. All staff including classroom assistants show skill in talking to young children, asking good questions and extending children's vocabulary. Teachers and the assistant work as an effective team. They plan and evaluate together regularly, ensuring continuity and progression to Key Stage 1. There is very good, detailed planning for the early years curriculum. Teachers and assistants make regular and frequent assessments of the children as they work and play and keep detailed records of their progress. A strong feature of the school's work is the national research it undertakes. The recent work into the 'Effective Early Learning Research Project' is most commendable and has provided good insight into the impact the curriculum and other provision makes for children's development.

82. Apart for some reduced opportunity for physical activities, there are enough good resources for children's needs. The school has ambitious plans for the development of some internal and outdoor provision.

83. Staff have developed constructive links with parents and encourage them to take an active part in children's learning. These factors, as well as the definite strengths in teaching and curriculum, have a positive influence on the good quality of education provided for children under five.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

84. The school gives high priority to the teaching of English at both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in 1999 in English were above the national average. At the end of Key Stage 2, 70 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 and above and 50 per cent achieved Level 5 in national assessments. Over the last three years boys have recorded better results than girls in reading and writing at the average levels but girls frequently scored better at the higher levels.

85. At the end of both key stages standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils in Year 2 speak clearly and confidently, particularly in discussion during the literacy hour. They confidently read aloud together from big books. Pupils comment on, and discuss, the content of non-fiction texts and give clear explanations of differences between factual and story books.

86. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils express a wide range of opinions. They are able to evaluate plot and characters well. When discussing 'The Hobbit' for example, they could analyse characters in the story. They listen attentively, follow instructions and readily respond to teachers by making contributions throughout lessons. They offer reasoned responses to their views on literacy and recently made a short video which evaluated their personal development since the introduction of the literacy hour. Teachers make appropriate references to standard English and its application.

87. Standards in reading across the key stages are good for the majority of pupils and there are some very capable readers in all year groups. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words including phonic and contextual clues. They are enthusiastic about books but some pupils are less enthusiastic about the choice and range of books available to them to use as reading material and to take home. An over reliance on scheme books, particularly for more fluent readers, restricts the skills of evaluation of a range of reading material including non-fiction texts and poetry. Books at Key Stage 1 do not always accurately reflect topics of interest to children. Progress in reading is monitored through teacher interaction during the literacy hour but individual reading is managed mainly by a classroom assistant. Records in the home/school diary do not show how often pupils read to their teacher. Comments relate directly to titles of books and are not diagnostic and as such do not form an appropriate basis for communicating directly with parents about progress. This was a concern raised by parents prior to the inspection. The enhancement of book areas to include a wider range of reading materials is underdeveloped.

88. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall and at Key Stage 2 extended writing skills are well established. The range of language used is imaginative and descriptive accounts indicate that pupils have developed the skills to produce stories and accounts which are increasing in complexity and fluency. Literacy hour tasks appropriately relate to the basic grammatical structure of writing and particular emphasis is placed on the teaching of spelling at Key Stage 2, with good progress being made

89. At both key stages pupils are given spellings to learn, and homework at Key Stage 2 is given regularly and marked by the class teacher. The amount of information given to pupils in Years 5 and 6 at times lacks enough differentiation. Some Year 5 pupils need more time to consolidate their learning. Very good use is made of word processing as an integrated aspect of English and there is a high level of collaboration when discussing or evaluating texts.

90. Drama at both key stages is well managed and enjoyable for pupils. They engage well in planning, sharing and developing a range of ideas which they perform imaginatively.

91. The quality of teaching is good and at times very good. It was never less than satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and lessons are well planned following the structures and learning objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. Where teaching is best, skilled and focused questioning during introductions and plenary sessions is used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and to take their learning forward. In these instances progress is good. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, there is a lack of pace in delivery and expectations of what pupils should achieve. Teachers demonstrate good classroom management, resources are well prepared and in the main, well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils. Teachers use big books and suitably enlarged extracts from texts to emphasise teaching points.

92. Marking does not always identify areas for improvement and is not sufficiently evaluative in its content and at times there is an overuse of the marker's pen which masks pupils' work.

93. Staff are monitoring the implementation of the literacy hour well and are currently developing writing opportunities across the curriculum. The school has developed a good scheme of work for the subject and which enhances its delivery. Pupils across the school make good progress in reading and writing, including those with special needs. The requirements of the National Curriculum for English are met.

## **Mathematics**

94. At the end of both key stages attainments are average across the subject. They are average in mental numeracy and practical mathematics but above in written computation.

95. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained with 89 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieving the expected Level 2 in 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national assessments. These results compare favourably with all and similar schools' standards.

96. At the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 statutory assessments for pupils at the age of 11 showed that 80 per cent of pupils achieved the national average including 20 per cent who achieved the higher Level 5. The percentage of pupils reaching national averages and expectations are above the national average of all schools but in line when compared with similar schools.

97. A satisfactory start has been made in adopting the National Numeracy Strategy structure for activities. A feature of part of most lessons focuses on numeracy with a positive impact on standards. Most pupils, including those few with special educational needs, benefit from this carefully structured work. Although, challenges for pupils capable of higher attainments are given, more could be done in using and applying knowledge practically.

98. Pupils make good progress in most mental and computation work. At the end of Year 2, pupils read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. They can add and subtract accurately to 100 on paper and most understand place value to hundreds, tens and units. Pupils know tables to 2, 5 and 10 in sequence starting with the lowest multiple. They are not so confident and able at remembering the answer to a multiplication table at random. There is a similar picture for pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2, although they too can mentally work out answers successfully by recalling the sequence.

99. By the end of Year 6, pupils know the properties of flat and solid shapes, including hexagons, cuboids and pyramids. They can calculate the third angle of a triangle when both others are known. They can use protractors well to construct shapes. Most pupils tell the time accurately on analogue and digital clocks. In work on handling data, pupils across the school draw appropriate graphs and diagrams and are making good progress in interpreting data from charts. They handle data using computers successfully across the curriculum, particularly in science.

100. Pupils enjoy lessons. They are very well organised and work with good concentration and sustained interest. They are keen to answer questions and become excited and eager as pupils in Year 1 did when playing counting on and back games encouraged by enthusiastic teaching. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have acquired confidence to choose resources for themselves but sometimes cramped space makes it difficult for pupils to move from their workplaces to make selection of equipment for themselves. This reduces the opportunity for personal development.

101. Teaching is mostly good and not less than satisfactory. What pupils have to do in lessons is made very clear and there is a strong emphasis on accuracy and success. Good, planned use is made of classroom assistants to support learning, including help for any pupil with special educational needs. Marking of pupils' work is not as good as it could be as it mostly confirms what is right or wrong without stating exactly what needs to be done to make corrections, or in setting appropriate targets for consolidation or extension work. The pace of some of the quick-fire question and answer numeracy memory sessions could be increased by applying more of the strategies suggested in the National Numeracy Strategy.

102. There is a helpful, detailed policy and the school uses the support of a variety of commercially produced schemes which provide sufficient stimulus and guidance. In addition, it has produced detailed plans that ensure sound coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum and Numeracy Strategy. Teachers make good analysis of National Curriculum assessments to monitor pupils' progress and to set targets.

103. Text book resources are good and provide sufficient interest. Other equipment is satisfactory and used effectively to support learning. Requirements for the subject are met.

## **Science**

104. Inspection confirms that the school is maintaining above average levels of attainment identified in the last inspection. Standards reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 compare very well nationally and with similar schools.

105. At the end of Key Stage 1 all pupils achieved the national average in the 1999 statutory teacher assessments. In similar national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 results were well above national averages at the expected Level 4 and that above.

106. Pupils make good progress in work on experimental and investigative science with skills of prediction and evaluation as expected. At the end of the Key Stage 1 pupils have had ample opportunity to study the growth of plants. They are clear that light and water are essential for healthy plant growth. They can identify the major parts of a plant, and that light is given out by the sun. They know that different materials may be affected by heat or force and that some changes are irreversible.

107. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have a good understanding of their own bodies and the requirements for healthy living. They know that environment, light and nutrition are important in sustaining plant and other life. They enjoy science. Pupils treat equipment and ongoing experiments and displays with respect. They enthusiastically plan investigations to discover about rates of change in body temperature or heart rate, after exercise. They measure and record information using computers after making appropriate predictions.

108. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and support the differing learning needs of pupils sufficiently. In all classrooms there are good displays of current investigations such as observations into the effect different liquids have on eggshells. Pupils are curious to know the outcomes of experiments.

109. There is a detailed policy, and teachers' thorough planning ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. A good scheme of work is proving successful in supporting teachers and pupils. Recent curriculum guidance further guides planning. Pupils' attainment and progress is recorded by sampling and agreeing standards reached across the school, an initiative started at the time of the last inspection. Assessment is used well to determine and predict pupils' attainment.

110. Resources are sufficient and stored adequately. Good use is made of the school grounds and local environment. A feature which positively supports the subject is the close links with local environmental issues such as pupils' involvement in planting trees including an apple orchard to mark the passing of the millennium. The cramped grounds are well laid out to include a wildlife area and to be a valuable resource for measuring differences and similarities, changes and patterns of the natural world. Requirements for the subject are met.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

111. Standards in information technology are at national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with a significant minority of pupils achieving above average expectations. The majority of pupils make good progress in their skills and competencies in using equipment such as keyboards and mouse controls. They know how to load programs, save and print work.

112. Year 2 pupils' repertoire of techniques is secure by demonstrating they can, for example, save and print work, but they are not always confident to do this without asking a member of staff for help. At the end of Key Stage 2 their familiarity and skill with computer programs, drawing down screen menus to make choices and decisions is about average. The school has maintained the good provision and sound standards since the previous inspection. Pupils use information technology to communicate and handle information effectively. They recognise fully that computers are used for the control of many everyday devices. By the time pupils leave school, at the end of Year 6 they are becoming fluent in most operations. The independent use of computers across much of the curriculum is a helpful factor in the rate of progress they make in many subjects. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils successfully use light, sound and temperature sensors to measure a number of environmental factors as part of a science investigation.

113. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. Most are enthusiastic and confident. Pupils work well in pairs, often of mixed gender, and take turns appropriately.

114. The quality of teaching is good across the school. Teachers and learning assistants are becoming secure in their knowledge of the new equipment available. Time is used well to give pupils equal access to computers. The policy and scheme of work covers the National Curriculum requirements well. A broad curriculum is planned with good links to other subjects and implemented competently by all teachers.



115. Resources are sufficient and well maintained. Connection to the Internet will pave the way to extending the good links already established with similar small schools in Finland and Holland. This is an excellent way in which electronic mail can relay information based on first hand, often real time, information. The tracking of pupils' progress is developed through samples of pupils' printed work and files held within computers of pupils' individual and group work.

### **Religious Education**

116. By the end of both key stages the majority of pupils attain standards which are above the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils make good, and at times, very good progress as they move through the school.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with important Christian festivals such as Christmas, Easter and Harvest. They understand the significance of the cross and candles. They have regular involvement with the local church and the vicar regularly visits the school to take assemblies and to run the 'Fish Club' which is a mid-week activity club relating to the church. This is well attended. Pupils perform in the church and pupils and staff organise and present three major services each year to the congregation. Educational visits to the church develop pupils' understanding of the significance of religious symbols and events, such as baptism, and they are able to explore what makes them happy or sad.

118. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are familiar with a variety of stories from the Old and New Testaments and they can relate the meaning to their own experiences. Pupils listening to the story of David and Goliath could explain parts of the story that link to courage, fear and gentleness. Pupils use their knowledge well to compare stories from other cultures and they have satisfactory understanding of the key features of other world faiths.

119. The majority of pupils listen attentively and are able to participate co-operatively in quiet reflection. They are willing to share ideas and help each other. They show interest and respect for each other's opinions.

120. The quality of teaching is good and at times excellent. Good features include well-structured lessons, sensitively approached and good management of pupils. Resources are well used and artefacts enhance the content of lessons and support the delivery of topics. Teachers regularly take into account the wishes of pupils. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils understand that when the candle is burning they speak quietly and only when asked. Their request not to blow out the candle during one lesson was valued by the teacher. Planning is based on a good scheme of work, which identifies a wide range of topics with clear learning objectives and progressive expectations for each group. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Art**

121. By the end of both key stages pupils' progress is satisfactory. Pupils are motivated, able to sustain concentration and appreciate each other's work. Teaching is sound and staff plan interesting tasks. At Key Stage 1, the subject is well supported by the classroom assistant. The study of famous artists and understanding of their styles of work is good and is skilfully woven into other subject areas, such as history and design and technology. Pupils' art is valued. Displays are bright and attractive and enhance the school environment. Labelling is clear and informative, and work is well mounted. Good examples of pupils' artwork include a large tapestry completed by pupils for display in the Millennium Dome.

122. Throughout both key stages pupils use a wide range of materials including pastels, charcoal, and fabric paints. Work in Key Stage 1, where pupils identified different parts of the body, is well represented through boldly printed figures of themselves. Appropriate balance is maintained between designing and making, knowledge and understanding, and craft and design. At Key Stage 2 pupils use a broad range of textiles. Groups of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are currently engaged in making good models of Henry VIII and his wives using fabrics and beads. Pupils are enthusiastic and settle to their work quickly. They work well individually and in groups and activities in lessons are appropriate and well matched to pupils' ages and ability. Art is well resourced.

123. The previous inspection report stated that pupils' practical work was of good quality in relation to their age and that the quality of learning was good. Planning for the subject reflects the time constraints imposed by the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, but overall the findings of this inspection support a similar view.

## **Geography**

124. By the end of both key stages most pupils attain standards which are in line with national expectations. During the inspection, because of the school's timetable, it was not possible to observe any lessons in geography. Judgements are based on examination of pupils' work, teachers' planning, scrutiny of class books and photographs and discussions with pupils.

125. By the age of seven most pupils develop a sound understanding of maps and places as they successfully locate different parts of their school. They are able to recognise physical and human features in the locality. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate their ability to describe how changes in these features can affect activities and lives of people through their environmental studies. Lessons and visits are well organised. At both key stages planning is thorough with clear learning targets.

126. The quality of learning in geography is sound in both key stages. At Key Stage 1 pupils use real life experiences to develop their skills: for example a visit to the village identified items they could buy locally and pupils interpreted their findings through drawings and captions. A recent visit to a hospital to visit patients, provided an opportunity to consider a different locality, discuss routes and locations and a weather map is used to record findings on a regular basis.

127. Pupils show an interest in the subject especially where lessons have engaged them in practical work. They show enthusiasm for their local study of the village and are able to share in discussions and ideas. A display about the village clearly shows that pupils have considered aerial views in relation to map work and there is good teaching in the compilation of symbols and links with design and technology in the accurate representation of houses in the village.

128. Pupils have been encouraged to develop links with pupils in other schools in Europe through the Comenius Project which links Branscombe with Finland and Holland. Scrutiny of the work completed by pupils indicates a growing awareness of global issues and the effects of change on people's lives. The school has a well travelled teddy bear and a display identifies the extent of its locations, distances and routes. Further information is supplemented by postcards and photographs. Resources are limited due to lack of storage space, but good use is made of a loan service which provides artefacts for topic work.

129. Opportunities for assessment in geography are limited and there is no school portfolio or central resource for evidence of work to aid with monitoring of the subject. A team approach to the management of the subject, led by the co-ordinator has produced a sound policy with aims and principles for teaching.

## **History**

130. History at the school is taught through topics. During the inspection period there was limited opportunity to observe history being taught at Key Stage 2 and no lessons were observable at Key Stage 1. However, a scrutiny of planning documents, displays, pupil folders and other information provided, in the form of class books and photographs, suggests that pupils are developing a good basic understanding of aspects of British, ancient and local history. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress across both key stages.

131. The last inspection report noted that pupil standards matched expectations. A broadly similar picture is reflected in the current inspection where pupils' progress is satisfactory. Pupils at both key stages are given the opportunity to learn history through handling artefacts, role play and drama. The school makes particularly good use of visits and field trips to explore aspects of history. For example, pupils at Key Stage 2 are able to interpret the past and can present historical information in a timeline and a family tree as part of a display about life in Tudor times.

132. Pupils are developing a wide range of appropriate terms, such as monarch, parliament and source. A lesson based around the family painting of Sir Henry Unton provided a resource for historical enquiry. Lessons in history at Key Stage 2 are well organised and presented, and offer good background information for pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. Pupils take an active interest in the content and are enthusiastic about their current and previous topics, which they are able to recall in considerable detail. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are familiar with some of the features of past societies.

133. Links with other areas of the curriculum are strong. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have sketched artefacts and emblems in art and are using a wide range of textiles to represent accurately Henry VIII and his wives through model making and clothes design. The school supplements topic work through the use of historical artefacts on loan. These artefacts are valued by pupils and are handled with care and respect and enhance the subject by making it real to pupils.

### **Design and technology**

134. Pupils' progress across the school is good. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop good skills in designing and making models for a purpose, or to solve problems. Pupils in Key Stage 1 investigate problems to do with making and transporting a giant bread roll. They produce details for their own ideas and evidence shows they work competently to build vehicles or keep to a recipe to make bread. The project provides good opportunities for pupils to express themselves well in writing and to explain what they have done. At the end of Key Stage 2 the curriculum is planned to maintain these good links with other subjects, such as building and observation of the movement of model boats when floated on a stream. Good scientific evaluations are made.

135. Pupils show enthusiasm when talking about their work and finished models or projects such as a tapestry to be exhibited in the Millennium Dome. This and other needlework displayed in the school is of a good standard.

136. Evidence from retained work shows that teachers value the subject as being important to pupils' development. Staff plan for regular lessons, usually for a purpose to enhance or support other subjects such as English, science, history and art. Pupils lively accounts and drawings of how to make a grotto provides good evidence. Resources are managed well and safely.

### **French**

137. The subject is taught throughout Key Stage 2. Overall progress is good especially in Year 3, where it is very good. Progress is variable at the end of the key stage as sometimes the very high teacher expectations are beyond what a minority of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are ready to take on board. However, all pupils are developing a good vocabulary and can understand many useful phrases. They are beginning to hold simple conversations with each other.

138. Year 3 pupils become inspired by a vibrant and enthusiastically teaching. They willingly join in with action songs and respond with good accent to conversations with a partner about their names, age and where they are. Pupils in Year 6 can give and understand replies to where are they going, with average confidence. However, because of the lack of space within the classroom progress was slower than it might have been. Pupils found difficulty in practically moving left or right or straight on to physically locate features in an imaginary market place. Nevertheless, overall teaching is good. It is based on high expertise and purpose which results in most pupils progressing further in knowledge and understanding of both spoken and written French than normally is expected for the primary phase of education. As such it prepares pupils for a very good start in the subject at secondary school.

### **Music**

139. Pupils at both key stages approach activities eagerly and listen carefully. Progress is satisfactory over the required range of musical skills and knowledge. Pupils follow instructions well and treat resources with respect. The quality of singing in assembly is good.

140. The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory and the requirements of the National Curriculum in relation to performing, composing, listening and appraising are met. Lessons usually relate to topics and music forms a large part of performances and events outside the school. Teachers have a broad knowledge of the subject.

141. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to be involved in a range of musical activities. They evaluate their own compositions and are able to make improvements, adapting style and technique where appropriate.

142. Younger pupils are knowledgeable about instruments and respond to music through movement. They recognise changes in mood and are aware of each other as performers. At Key Stage 1, the daily procedure of listening to taped music creates a calm atmosphere and pupils respond to this positively. Good attempts to compose their own music were made at Key Stage 1 after pupils listened to Handel's Messiah during a religious education lesson.

143. At Key Stage 2 pupils beat out rhythms using body sounds and their knowledge of notation to produce linked phrases. A good example was seen where Year 3 and Year 4 pupils used cards relating to a history topic to clap out rhythms. Pupils sing tunefully and can maintain a round in several parts. Sometimes, there is insufficient work planned for the different age groups in order avoid pupils repeating similar musical activities at each key stage.

144. A good feature is in encouraging visiting musicians from other cultures. Pupils have considered music from around the world and over different periods of time. Pupils have examined some styles of music in depth, through their research into the origins of jazz and their experience of madrigals relating to topic work. A musical evening held to support a charity event provided pupils with the opportunity to perform. Some pupils are involved in extracurricular lessons in music.

145. Storage and access to resources is difficult, but there is a good range of taped music and compact discs. Planning is good and is guided by policy. An outline scheme of work is of sound quality.

### **Physical education**

146. Due to timetabling arrangements no lessons were seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of planning, video recordings and photographs, interviews with teachers as well as observations of pupils' play at breaktimes was sufficient to make judgements about provision made by the school.

147. A full range of activities for the subject is carried out. Dance, traditional and creative; gymnastics and games, such as football, netball and tennis, are taught including some as an extracurricular club activity. Pupils' play in the small hard surfaced playground demonstrates appropriate agility and balance expected for the age range. Pupils are careful of each other, are energetic and enjoy the occasion.

148. The constraints of accommodation within the school buildings and grounds identified in the last report (and raised in this inspection) make it necessary for teachers to use other facilities for most lessons. Each year group has only one lesson a week which is held in the local village hall or grounds. When coupled with the restricted space in most class bases, where pupils are required to stay mostly deskbound, this is barely adequate for the physical needs of pupils of primary school age. However, good use of activity and residential centres, the local environment, nearby walks and beach are made, which helps to compensate for these deficiencies.

## **Swimming**

The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below:-

149. Planning for provision and assessment shows that pupils' progress in swimming is good across the whole age range. The policy to provide regular opportunities for swimming for all pupils helps ensure that by the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils attain at least the National Curriculum requirements. Often pupils achieve much higher. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

150. The school views swimming as an important life skill to be taught to pupils. Swimming lessons are provided for the whole age range and capability of pupils in the school. Most teaching is through qualified instructors, but with the additional support of the school's own staff. Satisfactory assessments of pupils are made. Good arrangements are made to use a nearby public pool. Transportation for pupils, and hire of the pool as well as instructors, is organised well by the school. Funding by school and parents meets the requirements of an appropriate payment and remissions policy.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

151. The team consisted of three inspectors, including one lay inspector. The inspection was carried out during the week commencing Monday 22 November 1999 and covered an aggregate six days of observations and interviews. Before the inspection members of the team called a meeting of parents to discuss inspection issues and to hear the views of ten parents who attended.

152. During the inspection 22 lessons or parts of lessons, including whole literacy sessions were observed. Inspectors attended daily assemblies and observed registration periods. A total of over 32 hours was spent gathering first hand evidence during the inspection. A sample of three pupils from each year group was heard reading and pupils' behaviour in and around the school was observed. Discussions were held with members of staff, governors and parents. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work. The team scrutinised policy documents, teachers' planning, financial statements, samples of pupils' work in each year group, pupils' records, and attendance registers. Inspectors evaluated the resources and accommodation provided by the school for pupils.

153.

**DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	50	0	2	4

**Teachers and classes**

**Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	18.51

### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	42

Average class size:	25
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	129,601
Total Expenditure	130,536
Expenditure per pupil	2,373
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,862
Balance carried forward to next year	3,927

### PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	40
Number of questionnaires returned:	19

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	63.2	31.6	5.3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	63.2	36.8	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	35.3	47.1	11.8	5.9	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	42.1	42.1	10.5	5.3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	42.1	52.6	5.3	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	52.6	36.8	10.5	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	44.4	50	0	5.6	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36.8	47.4	0	10.5	5.3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	57.9	36.8	5.3	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	63.2	26.3	0	5.3	5.3
My child(ren) like(s) their school	63.2	31.6	0	5.3	0

### **Other issues raised by parents**

There was a consensus of opinion that the ethos of the school is seen as very positive with extremely strong links with the local community. The school is valued for its ability to provide good independence and confidence in children. Occasionally reading books are not recorded in diaries as being changed frequently enough.