

INSPECTION REPORT

Headteachers Version

Offwell C of E VC Primary School
Offwell

LEA area: Devon

Unique Reference Number: 113359
Inspection Number: 182726

Headteacher: Mrs H M Teare

Reporting inspector: Dr Jackie McMullan
2917

Dates of inspection: 18th October 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior school
Type of control:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Offwell C of E VC Primary School Offwell Honiton Devon EX14 9SA
Telephone number:	01404 831417
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Appropriate authority:	Offwell School Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Phillips
Date of previous inspection:	January, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Jackie McMullan <i>(Registered Inspector)</i>	Under Fives Mathematics; Science; Information technology; Design and technology; Art; Equal opportunities.	Attainment and progress; Teaching; Curriculum and assessment; Leadership and management.
Helen Barter <i>(Lay Inspector)</i>		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Partnerships with parents and the community.
Chris Furniss <i>(Team Member)</i>	English; History; Geography; Music; Physical education; Religious education; Special educational needs.	Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources; Efficiency of the school.

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MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- There is an excellent ethos, with a shared commitment to high standards of behaviour and achievement. The school provides a secure, caring and supportive learning environment, where there are excellent relationships between all members of the school community.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes towards their learning, and their behaviour is outstanding.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress, and standards are above average.
- The school benefits from excellent leadership and management. There is a clear educational direction and a consistency of approach, and teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together as a supportive team.
- Teaching is of high quality in all classes. Teachers know their pupils extremely well, and provide interesting and challenging work well matched to individual needs.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' moral development, very good provision for their spiritual and social development, and good provision for their cultural development.
- Partnership with parents is very good, and there are excellent links with the community.
- The school makes very good use of all its resources and manages its budget very well.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- There are no significant weaknesses.

The school has many strengths and no significant weaknesses. It is a very good school, where pupils receive high quality teaching in a secure, caring and supportive environment.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved tremendously since the last inspection, across all aspects of its work. Standards have risen from average in the previous inspection to above average. Teaching has improved from sound to very good. Provision for pupils' cultural development has improved from sound to good. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the last report. There are now written criteria to evaluate the educational effectiveness of spending decisions. Procedures for monitoring quality and standards are working very effectively. Schemes of work exist for all subjects. Assessment procedures have improved and good use is made of assessment information to inform future planning. Value added analysis is now in place

and being used to inform planning, and work is very well matched to pupils' abilities.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The 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
			<i>well above average</i> A
			<i>above average</i> B
			<i>average</i> C
			<i>below average</i> D
			<i>well below average</i> E
English	A	B	
Mathematics	B	C	
Science	B	D	

Statistical comparisons are unreliable, owing to the small cohorts of pupils. However, results over the past three years have also been above average overall. Inspection evidence showed that standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, and religious education, and average in information technology. Attainment was judged sound or good in all other subjects where there was sufficient evidence to enable a firm judgement to be made.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English		very good	very good
Mathematics		very good	very good
Science		good	very good
Information technology		good	very good
Religious education		good	good
Other subjects		very good	very good

In all classes, teaching is always good or better, and more often very good, and there was an example of excellent teaching at Key Stage 2. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and provide for their individual needs.

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	The exemplary attitudes and excellent behaviour of the pupils are strengths of the school. They make significant contributions to pupils' progress, and to the quality of school life.
Attendance	Good, with no unauthorised absence. Effective systems are in place to record, monitor and promote good attendance. Lessons start very promptly.
Ethos*	Excellent. There are high expectations of pupils' personal and academic development. The school is a secure, caring and supportive learning environment, where there are excellent relationships between all members of the school community.
Leadership and management	Excellent. There is a clear educational direction and a consistency of approach, and teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together as a supportive team. Governors are well informed and provide good support.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced, and enriched with a very good range of extra-curricular activities and trips.
Pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for these pupils, and they make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school makes excellent provision for pupils' moral development, very good provision for their spiritual, and social development, and good provision for their cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Teachers have appropriate training and breadth of experience and are deployed very well. Very good support is provided by non-teaching staff. Resources are good in terms of quality and quantity. Some aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory.
Value for money	The school manages its finances very well and provides a high quality of education for all its pupils. It provides very good value for money.

* *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	What some parents are not happy about
<p>I. Progress and standards, especially in English and mathematics</p> <p>II. Pupils' excellent behaviour</p> <p>III. The school's values and attitudes</p> <p>IV. Very good range of extra-curricular activities and trips</p> <p>V. Good provision for the different age and ability range.</p> <p>VI. Very good links with the community</p> <p>VII. Very clear information from the school</p> <p>VIII. Parents are well informed about their child's progress</p>	<p>IX. They do not receive sufficient</p>

The inspection team fully agreed with parents' views, including the need for more information on the work to be covered each term.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

There are no key issues.

Other issues that governors may wish to consider:

*.Seek ways to improve the unsatisfactory aspects of the accommodation. In particular, these are: the damp and draughty Year 5/6 classroom, the lack of an office for the headteacher; the lack of space to site large play equipment for the Under Fives; the lack of suitable, safe storage space for larger gymnastics equipment; and the lack of a 'fridge for storing medicines or food.

*.Involve pupils to a greater extent in their own assessment and target-setting.

*.Develop more detailed targets for pupils on the Special Needs Register.

*.Provide parents with written information on the topics that their children will be covering each term.

*.Further develop information and communication technology provision with appropriate software for data handling, monitoring and data-capture at Key Stage 2.

*

INTRODUCTION

*** Characteristics of the school**

1. Offwell is a small village school which is very much a part of its local community. The school is much smaller than other primary schools, with only 64 pupils currently on roll, but further reception pupils expected at the start of the Spring and Summer terms. Pupils are taught in three classes based on age and attainment, with some flexibility of movement between classes in response to changing numbers.

2. Pupils are drawn from three contrasting villages, from Honiton, and from local farms, and from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.

3. Attainment on intake varies considerably from year to year, but evidence from baseline assessment indicates that it is broadly average.

4. There are very few pupils from other ethnic groups, and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

5. The percentage of pupils identified as having special needs is broadly in line with the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs.

6. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	4	8	12

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	11	11	12
Percentage at NC	School	92	92	100
	National	82	83	87

6. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92	92	92
	National	82	86	87

6.

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	10	5	15

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	87	80	87
	National	70	69	78

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	8	9
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	87	80	87
	National	68	69	75

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.6
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	79
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

6. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

6. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

6. **Attainment and progress**

6. Standards are good overall. In the most recent results at the end of Key Stage 1, standards were above average in reading and writing, and well above average in mathematics. Results of the teacher assessment in science were also above average. While the small number of pupils involved makes statistical comparisons unreliable, the particularly good results in mathematics and the good results in science and reading have been consistent over three years.

7. At the end of Key Stage 2, the most recent results are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science, which represents an improved picture in comparison with that of the previous year. At that time, mathematics was well above average, but while the number of pupils achieving level 4 and above was above average in science and English, a below average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels.

8. The most recent results are average or above in comparison with those of similar schools at both key stages, except for reading and writing at Key Stage 1, which are below average. However, comparison with similar schools is unreliable as the free school meal figure varies markedly from year to year, due to the small number of pupils on roll.

9. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of both key stages, and that standards are sound or good across all other subjects where a secure judgement could be made.

10. In English, Key Stage 1 pupils know, and many can explain the use of, question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks. Years 5 and 6 show an awareness of punctuation, narrative techniques and characterisation. They talk with understanding about commas, apostrophes, semi-colons, colons, speech marks and paragraphs. Listening and speaking skills are a particular strength at the school. The pupils develop a wide and well-used vocabulary and they express themselves confidently and clearly to each other and to adults. Reading is good and there is a very positive attitude to books.

11. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of both key stages. Very good use is being made of numeracy lessons to develop secure skills of number, and appropriate emphasis is also placed on exercises and investigations which enable pupils to gain understanding of space, shape and measure, and to apply their mathematical understanding to recognising patterns and solving problems.

12. All pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, and literacy and numeracy are promoted across other subjects of the curriculum as well as within discrete lessons.

13. Standards in science are above average by the end of both key stages, with some particularly good attainment in Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress in developing their skills and understanding of science investigation as well as their knowledge and understanding of the living and material world.

14. Standards in information technology are average by the end of Key Stage 1, with pupils able to use a range of software to communicate ideas, enter and retrieve information, and enter commands to produce a variety of outcomes. They also make effective use of information and communication technology to aid their learning in English and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are also average, with most pupils able to make confident use of a range of software, including word-processing and simulations. Some use is made of data-handling, but this needs to be extended, and currently there is no software for monitoring and data-capture.

15. Standards in religious education are good throughout the school, and pupils make good progress.

16. Progress in history is good through the school and, at both key stages, pupils attain standards above that expected of their age. Standards in geography are satisfactory overall. Provision for music is unusually good for so small a school. Standards of music are good, and pupils make good progress throughout the school. Standards in physical education are good at Key Stage 2, and it is possible to infer that standards at Key Stage 1 are at least satisfactory.

17. There was not enough evidence to make possible an overall judgement of standards in art, although some high quality work was seen at Key Stage 1. There was also insufficient evidence to judge attainment in design and technology (D& T).

18. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of attainment and, from the evidence available from recent base line testing, attainment is average overall. Pupils of all abilities make good progress across both key stages, as a result of high quality teaching that focuses on meeting individual needs. The good progress that pupils make is evident when the results of the most recent cohort to leave at the end of Key Stage 2 are compared with the results they achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. Almost all of them raised their attainment by two levels, and in some cases three.

19. The school's developing value added analysis also paints a picture of good and steady progress across all year groups since annual testing commenced. There are also examples of extremely good progress, such as the child who joined the school during Year 2 and only achieved level 1 in the Key Stage 1 tests, but who reached level 3 in English and mathematics in the optional tests at the end of the following year.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their targets, as a result of sensitive and effective support from teaching and non-teaching staff. Care is also taken to ensure that high attaining pupils receive sufficiently challenging work.

21. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

21. The exemplary attitudes and excellent behaviour of the pupils are strengths of the school and make a significant contribution to their standards of learning and the quality of school life. The school is very successful in developing strong attitudes and relationships between pupils and staff, and it promotes confidence and self-esteem in each child. Parents show full support for the attitudes and values taught by the school. They feel that the school encourages high standards of behaviour in the classroom and when pupils make visits outside school. They report that pupils are polite, have respect for each other, and care for one another. They value the progress that pupils make in taking on responsibilities around the school as they get older; for example, when older pupils look after the younger ones in the playground. With very little exception, parents report that their children like coming to school.

22. Since the last inspection, the school has focused on developing pupils' independent learning skills and the opportunities that they have to work alone, in pairs or in groups. Pupils have responded very positively to these opportunities, which foster a strong work ethic in lessons. They take an interest in their work, and listen carefully to instructions from the teacher and to responses from other pupils. They have very good concentration, are able to apply themselves to activities for extended periods of time, and persevere with problems which are set for them, for example in a mathematics investigation. They show effort and enthusiasm for their work and are satisfied when they achieve well. They are well organised and handle books and other equipment, such as musical instruments, responsibly and with care. Pupils respond very well to the use of praise and encouragement by teachers. They appreciate the comments that teachers make in their books, and try hard to improve themselves. They value the award of house points, which encourages further improvement in their attitudes to learning and behaviour. They are positive about the work they do and are very willing to discuss it with others, with their teachers, and with visitors to the school.

23. The behaviour of pupils in class, around the school, and in the playing areas is excellent. All staff consistently promote and maintain high expectations of behaviour, and pupils respond very positively. They are sensible, well behaved, and act confidently and with responsibility. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and understand teachers' occasional requests for improvements in their behaviour; for example, if they fall out with one another in the playground. These incidences are rare, however, and the school has no exclusions. As pupils get older, expectations of their behaviour increase. They show maturity and have respectful and positive relationships with staff. The behaviour of all pupils when they attended a morning assembly in the local church was impeccable. They listened and responded positively to the vicar, and behaved correctly during the service and when walking to and from the school.

24. Relationships in the school are also excellent, both between pupils and teachers and between pupils themselves. Pupils work well together in lessons, and support and help each other. They willingly work in groups or pairs, sharing books and other resources without difficulty; for example when using musical instruments to compose a class rondo. In a literacy lesson, pupils discussed their work together and helped one another to improve their work. Pupils in a physical

education lesson were very keen to show others what they had achieved, and their efforts were appreciated by other pupils in the class. Pupils are encouraged to value and respect others, and they are courteous and welcoming to visitors. The staff provide very good role models in their relationships with one another and with the pupils.

25. The small school environment gives pupils many opportunities to take responsibility, and this has a positive impact on pupils' very good personal development. They answer the telephone when the office is unstaffed, show round visitors to the school, and care for younger pupils in the playground. Older pupils run their own 'Crime Crackers' meeting with the involvement of the local police, and have organised their own fundraising to purchase smoke detectors for the school. Pupils show respect and understanding for the needs of other people in the school and in the community. They recognise the importance of the school in the life of the village and willingly take part in fundraising and social events to benefit the local community; for example in supporting the work of the local hospice. All pupils respond well to opportunities for independent study through homework tasks. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their transfer to secondary school and are encouraged to develop responsible attitudes to homework through the use of homework diaries to organise their time. Although pupils have very mature attitudes to their learning and their personal development, they do not contribute written comments to their Records of Achievement or annual reports. Pupils know where they need to improve, because of the support and guidance offered to them by teachers, but they are not actively involved in setting themselves targets for further improvement. Given the high standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their mature personal development, this is an opportunity which could be further developed by the school.

26. **Attendance**

26. Pupils' attendance at school is good, and this has a positive impact on their levels of attainment and the progress they make. Since the last inspection, levels of attendance have been maintained consistently above the national average. The school makes clear its expectations that pupils will attend school regularly and on time, and parents understand the necessity to report the reasons for their child's absences. As a result, there is no unauthorised absence.

27. Pupils' punctuality is also good. The majority of pupils are transported to school by bus or car. The bus service is reliable and is rarely late. Registrations are carried out very promptly and efficiently by teachers. Pupils respond politely to their names, and sometimes choose to use another language such as French or Welsh. Registration periods at both the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions set a positive, purposeful tone in the classroom and very little time is wasted before lessons get under way. During the day, timekeeping is very good, and this makes a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school.

28. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

28. **Teaching**

28. Teaching is of consistently high standard across all classes and key stages. All the lessons observed were judged good or better, with eight out of ten lessons very good, and an example of excellent teaching in Key Stage 2. Teaching is at its very best in mathematics and English, and in other subjects in which individual teachers feel particularly confident. Even where this was not the case, teaching was never less than good.

29. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection, when it was judged sound in Key Stage 1 and variable in Key Stage 2, with some unsatisfactory teaching.

30. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding across the different subject areas, with some very good knowledge apparent in some lessons. For example, very good subject knowledge was shown in the quality of discussion and highly effective use of artefacts in an outstanding history lesson for Years 5 and 6. This resulted in pupils making very good progress in learning about Victorian times. In an information technology session, confident subject expertise enabled the teacher to provide high quality support to pupils using Word and to their learning to use a program on Victorians. In Key Stage 1, the teacher's very good understanding of numeracy was evident in her confident and skilled teaching and in her highly effective intervention and support. They set enjoyable and challenging work, with the result that pupils of all ages and abilities were enabled to make very good progress.

31. Teachers have extremely well informed expectations of what individual pupils can achieve, and provide them with work which is suitably challenging and very well matched to their prior attainment. For example, the teacher of a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils formed appropriately challenging expectations of them and set tasks well matched to the different groups within the class. The pupils were given explanations and support of high quality, and made very good progress in learning to use and make keys to identify minibeasts.

32. There is quite a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this small school, and they are well supported by class teachers and support assistants, who know them very well and give support and help during lessons. They are given work which is appropriate to their ability.

33. There is a consistent approach to planning. Lessons are planned in detail, with clear learning objectives and with tasks set at different levels for the age and ability groups where appropriate. Lessons are planned to include a range of different activities which attract pupils' interest and provide very good progression in knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, very good planning in an art lesson in Key Stage 1 provided a good range of enjoyable and challenging work, set at different levels, which resulted in all pupils making very good

progress. This lesson also made very good use of pupils' responses to promote development of a range of skills and understanding. Very good planning in a Years 3 and 4 English lesson clearly identified the learning objectives, planned carefully for the different age/ability groups. The pupils were enabled to move on quickly to subsequent tasks, and to make very good progress in literacy.

34. In all classes, teachers use a good range of teaching strategies very well to promote effective learning. Lessons include a good balance of teacher-led sessions and purposeful group work, whole class discussion, and individual support. In particular, teachers make exceptionally good use of whole class sessions to assess what pupils know and to promote further understanding. Explanations are clear, and questions are targeted at different levels for different pupils, ensuring that all are involved. Pupils are encouraged to think carefully before answering and to explain their ideas in detail. For example, very good use was made of questioning in numeracy lessons in both key stages to reinforce existing understanding and to introduce new concepts.

35. Relationships between teachers and pupils are caring and supportive, and the management of pupils is excellent, promoting the very positive attitudes to learning which are a key factor in the good or very good progress that occurs in lessons. For example, the excellent relationships in a PSE session for all Key Stage 2 pupils enabled sensitive issues to be raised and discussed with confidence. Day-to-day assessment is excellent. Teachers know the pupils extremely well, and use this information in all lessons to meet individual needs through targeted questions, intervention, support, and work set at different levels. Work is carefully marked, with useful comments and correction. Very good use is made of homework to promote progress, and this is set to match pupils' differing levels of attainment. Parents consider that homework is set regularly and is of good quality.

36. Teachers make excellent use of time and resources to promote learning. No time is wasted, and lessons proceed throughout at an extremely brisk pace. For example, very good pace and tremendous energy throughout a maths lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils resulted in them making rapid progress in learning about square numbers and square roots.

37. Teachers and support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs, and these pupils are given the individual help they need to make effective progress. For example, both the support assistant and the teacher of a Years 3 and 4 class gave a pupil with a statement of special educational needs very good support on a one-to-one basis. They involved the pupil effectively in a literacy session and showed that they valued his responses.

38. **The curriculum and assessment**

38. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets legal requirements. There is good provision for pupils' academic, physical and personal development, which is achieved through clear policy and guidance across all curricular areas, and collaborative planning between teachers. Personal development has a high profile, and there are useful policies for sex, drugs and health education. The breadth of the curriculum is further enhanced by the provision of French lessons to Years 5 and 6, and by the very good range of extra-curricular activities and visits, which is greatly valued by pupils and their parents. The Christian nature of the school is well supported through close links with the village church and the vicar. Pupils attend assembly at the church once a week, and the vicar teaches religious education to older Key Stage 2 pupils.

39. Policy statements and guidance for the different subjects and areas are reviewed regularly and are of good quality, useful, and informative. Since the previous inspection, the school has moved ahead with writing detailed schemes of work, and these now exist for all subjects. Termly planning for each class follows a common format, and is based on a two-year cycle to facilitate teaching the two year-groups within classes. The planning covers what is to be taught in each subject, for each year and/or ability group, It includes learning objectives, clearly linked to the National Curriculum, opportunities for assessment, and a section for evaluation. In the Reception/Key Stage 1 class, the planning also covers the desirable learning outcomes for those pupils under five, with due attention paid to ensuring that these pupils experience all areas of the Early Years curriculum. These are valuable documents from which teachers draw up their daily lesson plans. They ensure that there is effective coverage and progression across all key stages. Detailed planning coupled to high quality teaching ensures that pupils of different age and attainment receive appropriate challenge and support. This is a great improvement over the situation at the time of the previous report, where the need to plan work to match different abilities was a key issue. There is good curriculum provision for pupils on the special educational needs register, and a useful policy statement with clear guidelines for supporting the needs of able and talented pupils. Teachers have a good awareness of potential issues of equal opportunity, and there are no difficulties evident in terms of the provision or progress of pupils of different gender or ethnicity.

40. The arrangements made for some specialist teaching in Key Stage 2 enable the two teachers to make best use of their individual strengths, and these two classes also make good use of combined classes and team teaching, for example in PSHE and games. The teachers also work together to plan and implement the Key Stage 2 residential trip.

41. The school maintains good links with the Under Fives group, and with other primary schools and the secondary school in the Honiton area. These links facilitate progression between playgroup, primary school and secondary school, and also promote the sharing of ideas and some joint initiatives, such as policy development.

43. Assessment has improved since the last inspection, when a key issue was to refine assessment procedures. Procedures for assessment are now good overall, and the school is making increasing use of a wide range of assessment activities to look at the value it adds to pupils' attainment and to keep a close watch on the progress of all pupils.

43.

44. There is a clear policy for assessment, recording and reporting, which provides clear guidance to staff and information to parents. The school now carries out baseline assessments of pupils entering the school, and NFER annual tests which provide National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics. Assessment opportunities are identified in teachers' planning for English, mathematics and science. There are good systems for assessment in English and science, and further tick lists are being developed for numeracy. There is some use of portfolios of work for moderation of levels in these subjects. Information technology uses skills checklists for all pupils, but assessment in foundation subjects is less well developed on a formal basis. However, in all classes, there is highly effective, informal, continuous assessment, which is used to inform teachers' planning and to match work very effectively to individual needs. Use is also made of Records of Achievement, but self-assessment could be further developed as a target setting for pupils' personal and/or academic development. A start has been made in English, where targets are set once a term, and this good practice could profitably be extended to other curriculum areas.

42. Individual education programmes are drawn up for pupils with special educational needs, and parents are kept informed and are encouraged to help wherever possible. The targets set in these plans could be more specific so as to allow for better evaluation of when each target has been achieved.

45.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

43. The school makes very good provision for the spiritual and social development of the pupils. Provision for moral development is excellent, and cultural development is good.

44. The daily assemblies provide occasions for pupils to reflect upon feelings and emotions. Opportunities for such reflection are provided in religious education, where pupils learn, and think, about those aspects of life and faith that are important to people of different religious persuasions. At Key Stage 1, for example, pupils were able to reflect on special occasions and what makes them special in their lives. There were some valuable multi-faith links as pupils were encouraged to think about how some people celebrate Ramadan. There was real awe and wonder as Year 3 and 4 pupils reflected on the symbolism of christening, and when Years 5 and 6 were comparing bread and water in their own lives and in the symbolism of the church. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon the aesthetic and creative aspects of human life through art, dance, music, literature and poetry.

45.Moral development is excellent. There are effective policies in the school, and teachers teach clearly what is right and wrong and are good role models. The whole atmosphere of the school and the exemplary behaviour of pupils illustrate the high moral values held. Pupils are not just told what is right or wrong ; they are encouraged to think about the effect their behaviour has on other people.

46.Provision for pupils' social development is very well developed. From the time they enter the school, pupils are encouraged to undertake useful tasks, such as taking messages, giving out books and equipment, and tidying up. As they go through the school, pupils are given more things to do, and in Years 5 and 6 they have a wide range of useful tasks which develop a sense of responsibility and which they are proud to do. The pupils raise money for a number of charities, and there was an unusual harvest display in the local church; the pupils brought gifts which could be sent to the Gambia as part of their ongoing sponsorship of children there.

47.Cultural development is good. As well as learning about other cultures in religious education, through geography, and through the links with the Gambia, pupils learn about their own culture. The study of the Victorians in history is providing some valuable cultural insights. A variety of visitors and of visits to such places as Buckfast Abbey also enhance the pupils' cultural development. There is a strong cultural element in music, and different cultural dances are experienced in physical education. The use of classical books in Literacy enriches the pupils' cultural awareness.

50.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

48.At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to be effective in promoting the welfare, health and safety of its pupils, and the quality of care was good. During this inspection a number of parents commented on the high quality of care for their children, and the team agrees with this view. The school is very good at providing for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils.

49.The school has very good systems in place for monitoring pupils' academic progress. The end of year reports are very detailed and report on all subject areas, particularly English, mathematics and science. There is clear identification of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and although no specific targets are set there are suggestions of how improvements can be made. There is wide variation in the use of records of achievement, and for some pupils they contain just certificates of achievement. Class teachers have the main responsibility for monitoring personal development, and they know their pupils very well. Support staff in classrooms and at lunch breaks also know pupils well, and they make a strong contribution to pupils' welfare by their caring observation of personal development and behaviour. Involving pupils to a greater extent in records of achievement and in reporting would aid personal development.

50.Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent, as indicated by the

unusually high standards of behaviour shown by pupils. All staff implement the school's behaviour and management of bullying policies consistently and have very high expectations of good behaviour.

51.The school is good at monitoring attendance. Parents are very good at calling the school when their children are absent, but if the school has not heard by the second day a telephone call is made to the home. Either a written explanation of the absence or an oral explanation, written down, is passed to the teacher. Punctuality is good, except for an occasional late-bus problem.

52.Very good procedures for child protection are in place, and staff are aware of them. There are three staff with first aid training, and several easily available first aid boxes around the school. All accidents and incidents are recorded in detail. Parents sign consent forms, and all medication, except asthma inhalers, is kept with teachers. The school should consider acquiring a refrigerator in which medicines could be stored in hot weather.

53.There is a good programme to develop pupils' personal, social and health education. Members of the premises committee undertake regular risk assessments with the headteacher. Fire drills are held termly, and the fire officer regularly visits the school to check the equipment.

54.Pupils with special educational needs receive very good help and guidance from teaching and support staff.

57. Partnership with parents and the community

55.The partnership with parents and the local community is very good and is a strong feature of the school. Since the last inspection, the school has built on its positive relationships with parents to involve them fully in their child's education and on the links that the school has with the local and wider community. The school continues to have a well-established and valued place in the village community of Offwell.

56.In the questionnaires sent to parents and at the pre-inspection parents' meeting with the registered inspector, parents showed good support for the school and its work. Although there were a few criticisms about the way in which complaints are sometimes dealt with, these were in the minority, and the majority of parents expressed approval of the education provided for their children. Nearly all parents reported that their children were happy to come to school, and that they appreciated the staff's hard work in teaching and caring for their children. They feel very well informed about their children's progress and all aspects of the school's work. However, some parents would like more information about what is being taught each term. Parents particularly value the use the school makes of its links with the community to enrich pupils' learning and to involve them in extra-curricular activities.

57.Overall, the quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school prospectus

and the governing body's annual report to parents meet statutory requirements and give detailed information about the work and achievements of the school. Parents of children who are new to the school receive a separate document which gives very good guidance to help them settle their children quickly into school life. There is useful information for parents in this document to encourage them to support their child's learning at home. Parents also receive regular newsletters which keep them very well informed about events and activities taking place in school. Parents are given good information about their child's progress, through their end-of-year reports, two parents' evenings per year, and regular informal contact with teachers. Good arrangements are in place for parents to discuss the reports at the end of the school year, though there is no requirement for parents to contribute written comments. Although the school has held curriculum evenings to explain the National Literacy Strategy and the use of mathematics games, it recognises that parents would like to receive regular termly information about what their children will be learning in class.

58. Parents' involvement in their children's learning and in the life of the school is also very good. The homework policy makes clear to parents what is expected of pupils throughout the school and how they can support learning at home. Home-school link books and homework diaries are used very well by teachers and pupils, and encourage regular communication between parents and teachers. Many parents and other volunteers help in school by offering additional help in the classroom, for example with practical science activities, accompanying pupils on visits, and supporting the school's involvement with village events such as the flower show. At the time of the inspection, parents were still in process of returning the home-school agreement, but there were indications of strong support for the document, which shows a good commitment to a positive home-school partnership. All parents are very supportive of school activities and attend book fairs, church services, sports events and concerts. The school fully encourages parental support and help in its documentation. There is no formal parents' association, but parents, staff, pupils and local people work together to organise fundraising and social events which benefit the school, the village and local charities.

59. The school plays a very important part in its village and in the local community. It makes excellent use of these links to enrich the curriculum and to promote pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils regularly take part in village events, such as church festivals and the annual fete, providing entertainment at Christmas for the Mother's Union and supporting village charity work for the hospice. The school makes very good use of the Devon Youth Music's peripatetic music teaching. There are established links with other local schools, which enable pupils to take part in inter-school sports events, music workshops and performances. There are strong links with the playgroup which uses the school's premises three mornings a week, and the Toddler group meets in the school hall once a week. Nearly all of the playgroup children transfer to the school, and staff get to know the children very well before they transfer into the school. There are well-established procedures in place for the transition of pupils and the transfer of information when pupils move to their secondary schools, through regular curriculum days and induction visits to Honiton Community College and all other receiving schools. Very good use is made of visits to places of interest, such as museums, places of worship and historical sites, to enrich pupils' cultural development and support topics in the curriculum. The school also makes very

good use of visiting speakers and local people to widen pupils' understanding of the world outside school. The vicar, police liaison officer and school nurse are regular visitors, and pupils have also benefited from sports coaching, talks from charity representatives and local historians. Although it is not easy to obtain support from businesses, a local garage has sponsored the football team's kit and the Women's Institute were involved in making 'storybags' for teaching literacy in the curriculum.

62. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

62. Leadership and management

60. The school benefits from outstanding leadership, despite the headteacher having a class, and very little non-contact time. There is a very clear vision for the school and a very strong direction and sense of purpose, which are shared by all members of the school community. All aspects of the vision and direction are focused clearly on promoting pupils' personal and academic development, and raising the quality of education and the standards achieved.

61. The governing body is very supportive of the school and is kept very well informed by the headteacher. Governors are involved in all strategic decision-making, have a good over-view of financial planning, and are taking an increasing role in monitoring the curriculum. They take all their responsibilities very seriously, and take advantage of training offered by the local authority. They are meeting all their statutory requirements, including those for monitoring spending on special educational needs.

62. Management of the school is excellent. Teaching and non-teaching staff work extremely well together as a supportive team, and there is great consistency in all they do. There are well-written, clear and useful policies for all aspects of the work of the school, and these operate in practice, further aiding consistency of approach. While job descriptions are rather general in some aspects, all staff know exactly what is expected of them and are clear about their particular roles and responsibilities.

63. The school development plan is formulated by all teachers and is discussed in detail by governors. It is a useful and detailed working document which gives overall priorities as well as priorities in each curriculum area. There are clear criteria for evaluation, based firmly on raising achievement, and all developments are linked to training where appropriate, and are costed.

64. There is continuous and effective informal monitoring and support of planning and teaching. Dissemination of good practice occurs on an ongoing basis, and the effects can be seen in the consistency of approach and expectations in all aspects of school life. The use of team teaching in Key Stage 2 also aids dissemination of good practice. On a more formal basis, the headteacher has observed lessons, and teachers have observed her teaching. She monitors all planning, as do co-ordinators for their curriculum areas. Currently, no non-contact time is available for observation, but when more children arrive next term, more money will hopefully

be available, and some may be used to support teachers observing their curriculum areas.

65. There are good procedures for day-to-day administration, and the school runs smoothly, thanks to the very good support provided by the secretary and other support staff.

66. The aims of the school are clear in all aspects of its work. The excellent ethos is shared by staff, pupils, parents and governors, and is concerned with doing the best for each child, and with high expectations for pupils' personal and academic attainment. The school works like a large, supportive family, with a great focus on caring for and meeting the needs of each and every child. It is an extremely supportive environment, where there is mutual respect and caring support between pupils and pupils, and between pupils and staff.

67. The school has good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs, so that they can be supported as much as possible as soon as possible. As well as the special needs register there is a 'bubbling under' list of pupils whom the teachers feel may need additional help. These pupils are monitored, and the special needs coordinator is informed so that they can be placed on the register if necessary. Able and talented pupils are noted so that they can be given sufficiently extended work to ensure that they make good progress.

68. The school has improved tremendously since the last inspection, across all aspects of its work. Standards have risen from average in the previous inspection to above average. Teaching has improved from sound to very good. Provision for pupils' cultural development has improved from sound to good. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the last report: There are now written criteria to evaluate the educational effectiveness of spending decisions. Procedures for monitoring quality and standards are working very effectively. Schemes of work now exist for all subjects. Assessment procedures have improved, and good use is made of assessment information to inform future planning. Value added analysis is now in place and is being used to inform planning, and work is very well matched to pupils' abilities.

69. The excellent leadership and management ensures that all pupils who attend this school have access to a high quality of education in a caring, supportive environment.

72. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

70. Despite its small size, the school has sufficient teachers with appropriate training and breadth of experience to teach all of its pupils, including those under five and those with special educational needs. Teachers are deployed very well, and their skills have a very positive effect on the high standard of education the pupils receive. Appropriately trained classroom support assistants ably assist the teachers, and they have valuable experience. They make a significant impact on the progress and attainment of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs.

71. New members of staff are smoothly inducted into the school and receive a very high standard of support. The small size of the school means that members of the teaching staff have several roles and a heavy work load. Teachers work closely together and share their expertise in various curriculum areas. All staff work together extremely well as a team and create a happy and supportive atmosphere, which has a very beneficial effect on pupils and is appreciated by parents.

72. Although the buildings are kept extremely clean and tidy and are generally well maintained, some aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory. The headteacher has given up her office to provide a room for information technology to be taught. Sometimes it is necessary for extra music instrumental lessons to be taught in the staff room because there is nowhere else available, and this happened during the inspection week. Physical education and indoor games have to be taught in the village hall, and there is a shortage of outdoor space available for games. There is a shortage of large play equipment on the school grounds, with no space to site them. The lack of space also prohibits the Under Fives from having any large play equipment, and this is detrimental to their development. Lack of suitable storage space for the larger gymnastics equipment makes it unsafe for pupils to be involved in setting it out and collecting it. This inhibits their personal development and initiative as well as placing an additional time burden upon the staff. The Victorian classroom used by Years 5 and 6 is cold, draughty and damp.

73. The staff make very effective use of the buildings. Good quality displays of pupils' work and exhibits are used very well to make the surroundings attractive and to add interest. They also show that pupils' work is valued and act as an aid to learning. Each classroom is well organised and bright, and provides good support for work in the class.

74. Resources are generally good in terms of quality and quantity. They match the needs of the range of pupils in the school, including children under five and those with special educational needs. Provision for literacy is good, although more multi-cultural texts would extend the range even further. Each classroom has its own stock of fiction books, and there is a small but well-stocked non-fiction library. Good use is made of the school library service, and topic loans are available to support work in the classrooms.

75. Resources are well organised and easily accessible, with inventories kept by co-ordinators. The school's own resources are well supplemented by materials made or provided by teachers and by parents, who often bring in materials, photographs, artefacts and items of interest. Good use is made of the local area and of visits to places of interest.

The efficiency of the school

76.The school runs efficiently and smoothly. There are good channels of communication within the school, between school and governors, and between school and parents. The school secretary is very efficient. The financial administration is very good, and the internal systems ensure that the school runs smoothly and that money is handled securely. The headteacher has a very good grasp of the financial situation, and planning is done with a clear attention to detail and to the educational priorities. An audit took place in 1997 and stated that the financial administration and control were of a high standard. A pre-Ofsted audit review earlier this year confirmed the good standard, and the recommendations, which were minor, are being implemented.

77.The governors are fully involved in the school. The chair and vice chairs of governors meet regularly with the headteacher, at least once a term. There is a governors' finance committee which meets regularly and there are informal discussions when necessary. The chair of finance liaises well with the headteacher and receives a spreadsheet showing the on-going current financial situation of the school. The school development plan has a section on financing, and the criteria for evaluating the educational effectiveness of spending decisions are firmly rooted in improving standards and learning.

78.Teaching and support staff are very well deployed, and they all have a clear idea of their responsibilities. Very good use is made of the resources and accommodation to maintain and raise standards effectively. Funding for supporting pupils with special educational needs is well targeted.

79.Given that the costs of maintaining a small school are relatively high in relation to numbers, the costs of running the school are nevertheless very reasonable, and the financial planning is very good.

80.When account is taken of the pupils' standards of attainment on entry, their good progress through the school, the high standards of teaching, the high quality of extra-curricular education, the very effective use and monitoring of funding, and the standards of attainment achieved at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the school gives very good value for money.

83.

83. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

83. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

81. During the inspection week there were only three children on roll in reception, but more are expected in subsequent terms. Children under five are in the same class as all Key Stage 1 children. There is a good policy statement, and separate planning to include all areas of experience for children under five. In practice, these children receive much of this entitlement, but also have access to Key Stage 1 work where they are able and ready to do this. During the lessons observed, the three reception children worked together with other Year 1 children for most of the time, and their attainment is therefore included in the subject paragraphs.

84.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

84. **English**

82. The pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 was above the national average in both reading and writing for pupils attaining level two and above. However, the number of pupils achieving the higher levels was below the national average. The 1999 results show a marked improvement, especially in the number of pupils attaining the higher level three grade. However, attainment in reading and writing is lower than the average for similar schools. Any statistical comparisons with such small cohorts are, however, unreliable. Attainment of pupils entering the school is a little above average. They make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and by the end of the key stage their level of attainment is above average across all three attainment targets.

83. There has been a significant improvement on standards reported at the last inspection.

84. At Key Stage 2 number of pupils attaining the expected level 4 in the National Curriculum tests in 1998 was above the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was well below average. In 1999 the number of pupils attaining level 4 was higher and the number of pupils achieving level 5 was very much higher. There has been a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The inspection shows that pupils have good listening and speaking skills, with a wide vocabulary. Their reading is also good, they read with enjoyment and understanding and have skills which enable them to use books and computer software to pursue their own research. Writing skills are still not as secure as the other areas but almost all pupils are reaching the expected level and a few are better. Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is good.

85. The National Literacy Strategy has been very successfully introduced and pupils make good progress in these lessons.

86. At Key Stage 1 pupils listen very well and are able to concentrate for quite long periods of time as they listen to the teacher reading, read together, and talk about books in the literacy hour. They are relaxed and willing to express their views. Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils read 'Owl Babies' along with the teacher, with obvious relish, enjoyment and understanding. The sense of shared fun when they reach the expected repetition of "I WANT MY MUMMY!" is tremendous. They discuss sounds such as 'soft', 'silent' and 'swooped' with some appreciation. They know, and many can explain the use of, question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks. They understand that the book uses different type sizes, and when asked why a particular word is all in capital letters several are able to explain that it is because it is an important word. One girl used the word, 'emphasise'.

87. Pupils are given work which is appropriate to their age and ability level. The youngest are clapping out their name in rhythm according to the syllables, and reception pupils are working on letter formation. They are sequencing both lower and upper case letters of the alphabet. Some are making their own 'I Want My Mummy' books, with help from a volunteer mother. Some are writing their own sentences in speech bubbles, and most show a good basic appreciation of how speech works as they explain, "It is only the words he actually says that you put in the bubble, because that's what he says." When they need to spell a word they use their own dictionary books to approach an adult for help. Very often they can supply the spelling themselves through sounding it out.

88. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils are looking at verbs and adverbs. They begin by reading an extract from a playscript set in Victorian England. This links very well with the history work they are doing. They are able to compare and contrast the playscript with the same scene told as a narrative story. They listen well and take part in the discussion with interest and enjoyment. Their communication skills are good and they express themselves clearly. Pupils read the different parts of the script fluently and with clear understanding, though some lack expression. They understand what a verb is, and many recognise that an adverb makes a sentence more "interesting" or "exciting". They all use adverbs appropriately in given sentences and some of them are able to devise their own sentences with adverbs, for example, "The giant fought bravely." Years 5 and 6 are also linking with their history work as they look at an extract from 'Treasure Island'. They discuss the key features and show an awareness of punctuation, narrative techniques and characterisation. They talk about commas, apostrophes, semi-colons, colons, speech marks and paragraphs with understanding. They get involved in the follow-on work of describing a witch, and 'attack' the work with enthusiasm, producing some lively and interesting work. The work shows a developing understanding of the use of language beyond their years, with a variety of similes, metaphors and lively adjectives creating a vivid word picture. One boy talked about the witch's "marble eyes" and a girl used a mature juxtaposition of words with, "cold eyes, burning with hate."

89. Listening and speaking skills are a particular strength at the school. The pupils develop a wide and well-used vocabulary, and they express themselves confidently and clearly to each other and to adults. Reading is good and there is a very positive attitude to books. As one Year 6 boy expressed it, "I like reading because I can get into other people's worlds". The pupils read fluently and with a good understanding.

90. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets. Much of the work set is matched to their needs, and the teachers and the support staff give good support, helping individual pupils or groups of pupils. The Reading Recovery programme was introduced last year and has already proved successful.

91. Attitudes are excellent at both key stages. Pupils enjoy the work, listen very well, and take an active part in class discussions. They all settle down to work quickly and sensibly, and most are able to keep on task and work for quite long periods of time. Pupils work well together, and there is evidence that pupils at both key stages are developing independent study skills and using books as research tools.

92. In the lessons observed, teaching ranged from good to excellent at both key stages and overall is very good. Strengths include very good planning, with teachers including a range of work generally well targeted to the abilities of different groups of pupils. Relationships are excellent, and teachers maintain a brisk pace and lively presentation which keeps pupils' attention and motivates them. They employ a range of behaviour management skills which enable them to maintain control without raising their voices. The teachers and support staff work together very closely, and this teamwork, as well as their individual talents, provides a strong platform for the development of the subject.

93. The English curriculum is broad and well balanced. The scheme of work is based on the National Literacy Strategy but sensibly adapted to the needs of the school and to the two-year rolling programme the school follows. The subject coordinator has already recognised that writing is not as strong as the other elements, and this is now a focus for further improvement. There is now, for example, a greater emphasis on sustained writing. English makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, especially in the relationships built up and the way pupils are encouraged to listen to and read the views of others, and their beliefs, ideas and values.

94. Literacy across the curriculum is good. Pupils are developing good research skills, and even some Key Stage 1 pupils can explain how to use a contents page and what to do to find out about a particular topic. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils know how the library works and can explain clearly how to find a book on a given topic. They understand and explain how contents pages and indexes work and the difference between them. They are making good use of computers and CD Roms in their research work.

95.The accommodation is limited but very well used, with attractive displays and effective use of space. Resources are good, including sufficient books and text-books in good condition, videos and computer software. Effective use is made of the schools library service. Teachers make very good use of the resources to enhance learning and motivate pupils.

96.The improvement in the school's provision for English since the last inspection has been very good.

99. **Mathematics**

97.Standards in mathematics are above average at the end of both key stages, with many examples of high attainment. The small size of cohort makes statistical comparisons unreliable, but results over the past three years have been fairly consistent. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

98.Results at the end of Key Stage 1 were well above average in the most recent results, and for the previous two years. These results are also above average in comparison with those of schools with similar proportions of pupils with free school meals. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average for the most recent year, and for the previous two years. In comparison with schools with similar numbers of free school meals, performance in maths was close to average.

99.Inspection evidence agrees that standards are above average at both key stages, with many examples of high attainment. Attainment on entry is average overall, being slightly above average in some years, and slightly below in others. The three pupils currently in reception are learning to count in twos, and are able to give the next number up for numbers up to twenty. All Year 1 pupils can count up to one hundred, which is Level 2 work, and can count in twos and fives, and most know which are odd or even numbers. They are able to use their fingers confidently to add and subtract numbers up to ten, and are learning to use hundred squares to add and subtract. Most Year 2 pupils can add and subtract in nines and elevens using hundred squares, and can explain how they do it. They are fairly confident in their 2, 5 and 10 times tables, and some have well developed strategies for managing addition. One high attaining pupil was able to confidently add and subtract two digit numbers mentally. Most pupils are also achieving above average standards in using and applying maths, for example in their ability to discuss, organise and check their work. They show good understanding of shape, space and measures with, for example, use of a wide range of metric measures.

100.Almost all pupils in Years 3 and 4 can rapidly add and subtract tens in their heads, and older pupils can do the same with nines, and explain how they did it. Almost half the class are able to add simple two digit numbers in their heads, and around half have a good range of vocabulary for adding and subtracting, and can use this knowledge when tackling problems. A few high

attainers can add and subtract three digit numbers carrying tens and units forward and backward. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make confident use of mathematical vocabulary such as factor and square. Almost all are able to give several square numbers, know the notation for square, and were able to work out which were prime numbers up to 20. Most Year 6 pupils are confident with multiplication facts to ten times ten, can describe square and square root relationships, and can work out simple fractions. Work in books also indicated a good understanding of shape and, for high attainers, the ability to calculate the areas and circumference of circles, and the use of language such as *acute* and *obtuse* angles.

101. Progress is good in mathematics. Comparisons of the results of the most recent Key Stage 2 cohort with their Key Stage 1 results show that all but two pupils moved up two levels. Of the two pupils who only achieved an increase of one level, both are on the special educational needs register. Progress is good for pupils of all abilities as work is challenging and set at different levels, very well matched to prior attainment. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning are also a key factor in the good progress they make. At both key stages they are able to work sensibly on their own, and collaboratively with others. They show enjoyment in their success and perseverance in solving problems, and will turn to their peers as well as to the teacher for help when needed.

102. Teaching is very good across all classes and key stages. The school has implemented the numeracy strategy with confidence and skill. Teachers make very good use of whole class sessions for recapitulating previous work, introducing new ideas, finding out what pupils know, and for reinforcing points at the end.

103. Questioning is of high quality, with questions set at different levels to match different age and ability groups. Pupils are encouraged to think before answering, and to explain how they reached the answers. Mathematical vocabulary is developed well in all lessons, and much emphasis is placed on giving pupils skills and understanding to develop their own strategies for managing calculations. Group work is also targeted at different levels, and very effective support and intervention ensures that all pupils make good progress. Very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, both by class teachers and by support staff.

104. The subject is well led, with clear policy and detailed planning which ensures coverage of the Programmes of Study and progression across each key stage. There is also a good balance between numeracy and other aspects of mathematics. The co-ordinator provides support to others, monitors planning, and will be starting a programme of observation in the summer term. There is a useful audit and action plan for numeracy and clear priorities for further development of the subject. There are adequate resources of good quality.

105. Standards and provision for mathematics have both improved significantly since the last inspection.

108. Science

106. Standards are above average in science in both key stages. Results at the end of both Key Stages are above average over a three year period, but with marked variation in each year, a result of the small size of the cohort. The most recent results were above average at the end of both Key Stages, and in line with the average for similar schools. At Key Stage 1, no pupils reached the higher levels, and this was the case in the previous year. At Key Stage 2, a third of pupils achieved higher levels, although none achieved these last year.

107. Inspection evidence agrees with the test results. Pupils do well across the different areas of science, including science investigation. In Key Stage 1, a range of attainment is clearly evident. For example, reception pupils know that electricity is used by some items in the home, but they have little understanding beyond this, whereas many Year 2 pupils know that electricity comes from batteries or through plugs. One boy knew that electricity can come from power stations, and several high attaining pupils knew that metals conduct electricity. Younger pupils can talk about what they are doing and what they have found out. Most Year 2 pupils are able to make simple predictions and describe and record their observations.

108. In Key Stage 2, standards well above average were observed in a class of Year 3 and 4 pupils. Almost all pupils, including younger ones, knew that animals are adapted to their different environments and were able to give some examples. They used a range of scientific vocabulary confidently and accurately. The majority of older pupils were working at Level 4, able to use quite complex keys to identify animals, and to formulate their own keys. It was not possible to observe Years 5 and 6 pupils in a science lesson, but evidence from other sources indicates that standards are above average. For example, work in books shows that pupils in Year 6 understand series and parallel circuits, and know the shape, position and function of organs in the body, and a higher attainer understood how a pinhole camera works. There is much evidence of investigative work, and pupils are able to plan their own investigations, recognising the need for a fair test, and write them up in their own words, using a good range of scientific vocabulary, and drawing appropriate conclusions from their results.

109. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their work in science. They work with interest and enthusiasm and show a great sense of wonder in the world about them. They carry out practical work very responsibly, and treat living things with care and respect.

110. Teaching in science is good or very good. Teachers show appropriate understanding of science and how it can be taught through a mixture of investigation and of input by the teacher. They plan work which is relevant and interesting, and provide tasks which challenge pupils of all age and abilities.

111.The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has had appropriate training and has developed useful policy and detailed planning which ensure that the Programmes of Study are covered and are taught progressively as pupils move through the school. He teaches both Key Stage 2 classes, and works closely with the Key Stage 1 teacher, monitoring her planning. There are sufficient resources, of generally good quality.

114.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

114. Art

112.One lesson of art was observed in Key Stage 1. Most Year 2 pupils were able to talk about and compare some different techniques, and they produced imaginative work in the style of Alfred Wallis, using water crayons. They were able to discuss the success of their work and any problems they encountered, and were working at a good standard. Younger pupils were making prints of fish, using polystyrene tiles, and the youngest were working with Fymo, modelling coloured fish from designs in their sketch books. Individual pupils were also using a painting program on the computer to draw coloured fish, and there was good support for this work. Pupils are developing good knowledge and understanding of Alfred Wallis, his life and his work. One high attaining pupils remembered that Alfred Wallis belonged to the Primitive school. There were many examples of high quality work on display, using a variety of techniques which included collage and water colour around the theme of Alfred Wallis and the sea. The lesson was very well taught, with much emphasis on teaching skills, knowledge and understanding as well as allowing pupils to express their own ideas. Tasks were imaginative, well planned and set at a challenging level for the different groups of pupils. Good support was also provided by the classroom assistants. The very good teaching, together with the very positive response of pupils, led to all pupils making very good progress in learning new techniques, refining their skills and developing further understanding of the work of a famous artist. Some appropriate work was on display in other classes, but insufficient to enable a judgement of standards at Key Stage 2.

113.The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has much enthusiasm and expertise and is able to provide good support to others. There is useful guidance and careful planning, which provides a broad and balanced curriculum as well as promoting effective progress in art. The co-ordinator has been on several recent courses, and provides good support to other teachers.

116.

Design and technology

114. The school is currently without a co-ordinator for this curriculum area, and there were no lessons to observe during the inspection period. However, there is evidence in teachers' planning and in pupils' work which shows that a range of design and technology takes place within the curriculum, and that work is set at appropriate levels. There is a policy statement for the subject, and there are useful guidance sheets on safety relating to the use of equipment, including cooking and sewing.

117.

Information technology

115. Standards are average at the end of both key stages.

116. In Key Stage 1, pupils use the computer as a regular part of lessons. Older pupils make confident use of a variety of programs and evidence shows that this includes work on control, using Roamer, word-processing to write up work in English, and use of a painting program in an art lesson. Pupils are able to save and retrieve information, with help, and have all made their own disk holder for storing their own disk.

117. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils continue to use computers within lessons in their own class. They show confidence in the use of a range of programs, including one designed to develop mathematical skills. They have produced word-processed Haiku poems on beautifully illustrated backgrounds, and also drawn on the computer, as part of work in English. They use a program on electricity to draw graphs to compare energy conservation. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 make good use of the new computers sited in the headteacher's office. They show good skills in using Word, for example using different fonts to provide different messages, such as *jazzy* for animals, *formal* for correspondence. As part of their English work, they have word-processed letters responding to the suggestion that children are couch potatoes, and generally make good use of information and communication technology for displaying text and pictures. In one lesson pupils were learning to use an interactive simulation of Victorian times, and were able to use different methods to search and retrieve information. Pupils also use the electricity program to draw graphs comparing energy conservation, but work on datahandling is limited in extent. The school is planning to purchase a spreadsheet program for the new computers, and this will extend the work that can be carried out in this area. The school does not yet have equipment and software for monitoring and datalogging.

118. The subject is well led and managed, with a useful policy and guidance, and clear plans for the further development of the subject. The co-ordinator is a part-time teacher who has been in this post for about a year. She has worked hard to get the new computers and accompanying software, researching which computers to purchase, applying for grants, and being extremely proactive. The new computers are now in place and are being very well used by Years 5 and 6. The co-ordinator provides very effective and intensive teaching to pupils in Year 5 and 6,

keeping careful records of individual achievement across the different areas and levels. There is also careful planning to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the computers and that the effect of missing time in class lessons is minimised. The co-ordinator also provides good support in class to pupils in Key Stage 1 for part of her time. Where other teachers were observed supporting information and communication technology in class, the quality of this support was good.

121. **Geography**

119. Because of timetable arrangements it was not possible to see any geography lessons during the inspection week.

120. A scrutiny of work throughout the school and a review of the planning shows that standards in geography are satisfactory overall and that the pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils cover a range of topics from local study, including the school and surroundings through to national and international. They make comparisons between towns in various parts of the United Kingdom and their own. There are similar comparisons between other parts of the world, such as Finland and India and Britain. Pupils contrast village life and city life and look at issues of diet, transport and clothing. Other areas covered include pollution, the earth's climate, and a topic on rivers.

121. Because of the mixed age classes the teachers follow a rolling programme to ensure that there is continuity throughout the school. At Key Stage 1 there is a two-year cycle and at Key Stage 2 a four-year cycle. The scrutiny of work did reveal a small amount of overlapping, with pupils doing the same or similar work at different age levels, but this was the exception rather than the rule. There is need for a little closer monitoring to correct this.

122. Planning is good and the curriculum is broad and balanced. Resources are good and include a useful range of artefacts from the Gambia. The Gambian link is valuable at both key stages in giving pupils a closer insight into another land and culture. The work seen indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory throughout both key stages.

125. **History**

123. At both key stages pupils attain a standard above that which is expected of their age. Progress in history is good through the school.

124. At Key Stage 1 pupils were observed learning about how modern toys are different from toys in the past. There was an excellent selection of old toys and dolls brought in by the teacher and lent by her own family, the support teacher, and parents and grandparents. The pupils showed great interest in the discussion and a good understanding of how toys are made out of different materials, such as wood, metal, plastic, rags and foam. In their individual work some pupils were able to draw and label a toy, and some were drawing two toys, an old and a new, and labelling differences. The older, more able pupils were making Venn diagrams to show the similarities and differences between old and new toys.

125. Key Stage 2 pupils are studying Victorian times, and an excellent lesson was observed in Years 5 and 6. Using a wide range of Victorian artefacts, many of which had been brought in by parents and families of pupils, the teacher and pupils discussed the uses of the various items and compared them with those of the present day. Pupils showed awareness and insight, and were able to recognise and discuss sensibly such disparate items as a cobbler's last, a posser, a family bible, and a jelly mould. Following an interesting and fruitful discussion, they went on to work in pairs, using sets of pictures and examining them for evidence. The basis of the task set was, "What can we learn about the families from these pictures?" Pupils showed both good knowledge about Victorian times and also good historical skills in being able to deduce facts from the photographic evidence.

126. The evidence of work samples and the lessons observed indicates that standards and progress in history are good. Teaching is very good. The planning is good, and the curriculum is broad and well balanced and follows a two-year programme at Key Stage 1 and a four-year programme at Key Stage 2, because of the mixed age classes. Resources are good and are very well supplemented by families of staff and pupils.

Music

127. Provision for music is unusually good for so small a school. In addition to weekly music lessons there is a well-supported orchestra and a choir. A large number of pupils have instrumental lessons from either the music co-ordinator or visiting peripatetic music teachers.

128. From the few lessons it was possible to observe and from listening to singing in assembly and a tape of music performed by pupils, it is clear that standards of music are good and that pupils make good progress throughout the school.

129. The orchestra was observed during its weekly lunchtime practice, led by the co-ordinator. Almost two-thirds of Key Stage 2 pupils were involved, and instruments included two guitars, two trumpets, a clarinet, a keyboard, xylophones, glockenspiels, and a range of other tuned and untuned percussion instruments. There was a good sense of rhythm and timing, and several pupils were reading musical notation as they played 'Lavender Blue'. Standards were well above those which would be expected for this age range.

130. Years 5 and 6 were observed performing and composing rondos in a music lesson. They understood the musical structure of a rondo. They had already composed simple four-part rhythms, using a range of tuned and untuned instruments. Some pupils were using guitars, xylophones and keyboard proficiently.

131. Teaching of music is good overall and is sometimes very good. There is a well thought out music policy, and a scheme of work is being built up, following the Devon county syllabus. Although some of the instruments need repairing or replacing, resources are good and are very well used.

134. **Physical education**

132. It was possible to observe only two physical education lessons during the inspection week. Both of these were at Key Stage 2.

133. From planning seen and from the standards of the present Year 3 pupils who have only recently transferred from Key Stage 2, it is possible to infer that standards at Key Stage 1 are at least satisfactory. Planning is good and covers all necessary elements of the National Curriculum. Standards and progress are both good at Key Stage 2.

134. Year 3 and 4 pupils were observed at an indoor games lesson. They were working in pairs and groups on throwing and catching skills, using large balls. The level of hand-eye co-ordination demonstrated was good, and with appropriate help and intervention from the teacher and the support assistant even the least able were able to improve until they were both catching and throwing successfully. All pupils succeeded in throwing a ball accurately, using a netball throw. All pupils made good progress, improving their skills.

135. Year 5 and 6 pupils were observed at a gymnastics lesson. They effectively performed a variety of warm-up exercises of their own choosing, and went on to develop a series of movements and balances, using five, four, three and one points of balance. Almost all pupils showed a well-developed sense of balance and used imaginative movements and poses to develop the sequence. Skilled instruction and encouragement ensured that all made good progress.

136. There is a shortage of outdoor space, and the lack of a suitable school hall means that indoor lessons have to be taken in the village hall. Resources are good and include a range of balls and games equipment, mats and gymnastics equipment and large apparatus. However, lack of suitable storage space means that pupils cannot safely help to move apparatus and this is an added burden on teachers. Despite the shortage of both indoor and outdoor space the school provides effectively for all elements of the National Curriculum.

139. **Religious education**

137. Standards in religious education are good throughout the school and pupils make good progress.

138. At Key Stage 1 pupils were observed learning about special days and celebrations. They were fascinated by the various photographs of parents' and grandparents' weddings, etc. Discussion ranged from the details of the story of John the Baptist to how Ramadan is celebrated in the Gambia, with the teacher drawing on her own visits there.

139. In Years 3 and 4, work focused on special events in Christians' lives and particularly christening. With the help of a range of artefacts brought in by the teacher, pupils discussed and learned about the significance and symbolism of the christening candle, the name-giving, the water and the oil. Years 5 and 6 had a well-known visitor to take the lesson, the rector of the local church. They were looking at the theme of bread and water "In my life" and "In the church". Very good use was made of resources, and there was something very close to awe and wonder in the gasp and the expressions of Years 3 and 4 when the teacher brought out a small font, borrowed for the occasion. They were fascinated by the priest's robes, and one girl had even brought her very own, and clearly precious, christening clothes, which delighted them all. The pupils all have a very positive attitude and enjoy religious education. They take part in discussion and listen well to the views of others. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well-integrated into the groups.

140. Teaching is very good. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and motivate them well. They have a good knowledge of the subject, plan their lessons very well, and make good use of resources to make the lessons more interesting and meaningful.

141. There is a good range of artefacts for each of the major religions being taught and these are well supplemented by teachers' own contacts. Good use is also made of visits, for example to the local church, the cathedral, a synagogue and Buckfast Abbey, and of visitors.

144. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

144. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

142. The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors, including a lay inspector, over a total of seven inspection days. Twenty-five lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed. Every teacher in the school was observed teaching. Inspectors met and had discussions with governors, staff, pupils and parents. Interviews and discussions took place with the headteacher, 'deputy headteacher,' subject co-ordinators, class teachers and those with additional management responsibilities. Discussions were also held with a range of other individuals involved in the life of the school.

143. Assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes were observed. Pupils were heard reading and their work was scrutinised, as were teachers' plans, assessments and records. A meeting was held for parents to gather their views. All parents were sent a questionnaire and 27 replies were received and analysed.

146. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

146. **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	65	1	9	2

146. **Teachers and classes**

146. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	3.20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.31:1

146. **Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	39

Average class size:	21.7
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146.

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	138366.00
Total Expenditure	146589.00
Expenditure per pupil	2255.22
Balance brought forward from previous year	13192.00
Balance carried forward to next year	4969.00

146. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

65

Number of questionnaires returned:

27

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	37	56	4	0	4
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	15	81	0	0	4
The school handles complaints from parents well	24	48	19	9	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30	41	15	11	4
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	37	52	7	0	4
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	50	50	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	59	33	7	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	15	70	11	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	33	55	7	4	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30	59	11	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	41	48	7	0	4

146. **Other issues raised by parents**

[A short comment should be included if applicable]

146. **Summary of responses**

[Included when there are only a small number of returns]