

ERRATUM

In the section, “**What could be improved**”, please delete figures 1 and 2. These should be bullet points.

INSPECTION REPORT

CRANBORNE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Cranborne

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113853

Headteacher: Mr D Benson

Reporting inspector: Ms S Tweddell
1709

Dates of inspection: 7 – 11 February 2000

Inspection number: 113858

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	9 - 13
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cranborne Wimborne Dorset
Postcode:	BH21 5RP
Telephone number:	01725 517348
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Rex
Date of previous inspection:	June 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Sandra Tweddell	Registered inspector	Modern foreign languages	What sort of school is it?
		English as an additional language	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
			How well are pupils or students taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			What should the school do to improve further?
Margaret Morrissey	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal developments
			How well does the school care for its pupil?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Paul Cosway	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
Angela Fraser	Team inspector	Science	N/A
		Design and technology	
Mark Gill	Team inspector	History	
		Geography	
		Physical education	

Janet Harvey	Team inspector	Music	N/A
Roy Pitcher	Team inspector	Religious education	N/A
		Special educational needs	
Marguerite Presman	Team inspector	Mathematics	Staffing, accommodation and resources
Christopher Shaw	Team inspector	Art	N/A
		Information technology	

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cranborne Middle School is situated in a rural part of Dorset and takes in pupils aged from nine to thirteen from the immediate area and the surrounding villages. There are 413 pupils on roll, most of them from white European homes. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well below the national average at 4.6%. The number of pupils on the register of special educational needs is above average at 35.4% and nine of these have a statement of special educational need. The attainment on entry is broadly average although there are fewer pupils of high attainment than in an average school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is highly effective in ensuring that pupils take pride in being part of a community. The attitudes of pupils towards school are very good, as is their behaviour, and relationships throughout the school are very good. Senior management has been successful in raising standards of average and lower attaining pupils in English and mathematics and ensuring that the highest attainers achieve as well as they should. A small number of pupils sometimes mark time and do not make the progress that they should as they are not consistently challenged in all lessons. The teaching of art, music, French, physical education, design and technology and history is good. Teaching is satisfactory overall although there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching within the subjects that are taught by many staff. The leadership of senior management, governors and staff with management responsibility is satisfactory overall. The school has made satisfactory progress on the key issues identified in the last inspection and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- There is a strong sense of community and pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance is very good.
- The provision for moral and social development is very good and for pupils' personal development is good.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good.
- Pupils achieve well in art, music, history and physical education at both key stages and at the end of Key Stage 2 in design and technology.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils are cared for well in a secure environment.
- Links with parents and information for them are very good.

What could be improved

1. Monitoring of teaching is planned but has not taken place.
2. A small number of pupils do not always achieve as highly as they should.
 - The teaching of geography and religious education is inconsistent as many staff have insufficient specialist knowledge in these subjects.
 - Governors do not make use of the information they receive to review how the school is doing.
 - The good information that is being collected about assessment is not used by all staff when planning their lessons.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected four years ago and has made satisfactory progress on the key issues that were identified. The health and safety issues have been successfully tackled and the budget is now linked to the priorities of the school development plan. The National Curriculum is covered in full. There are still weaknesses in expertise in teaching English, mathematics, science, geography and religious education. There have been improvements in skills of investigation and inquiry particularly in history and science.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	C	D	C	D
Science	A	C	C	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Performance in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science, but in comparison with schools that take in pupils from a similar background was below average in English and mathematics and well below average in science. The findings of the inspection are that the school has been successful in improving the performance of most pupils of average and below average attainment and maintaining the standards of the highest attaining pupils in English and mathematics. It has been less successful in ensuring that a small number of average attaining pupils reach the standards of which they are capable although this has been identified as the next focus for attention. The trend in performance over the past four years has risen in line with schools nationally. The drop in attainment in 1998 was predicted by the school as the year group had many pupils of below average attainment. At the end of Year 8, pupils achieve in line with the expectations for this age group, but a small number of pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged by the work and mark time.

At both key stages, achievement in art, physical education, music and history is high. Achievement is good at the end of Key Stage 2 in design and technology. Attainment in geography and religious education is below average.

The school exceeded its targets for 1999 and is on line to achieve the ones set for 2000. The targets are similar to those of 1999 as there are more pupils with special educational needs in the year group than last year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen and respect one another's desire to learn and achieve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes in lessons and the school is an orderly community.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are developing well as responsible citizens and there are very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers.
Attendance	Very good and well above the national average.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. They relate well to one another and show great tolerance and respect for each others' views and opinions. They accept responsibility well. Attendance is well above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 9 - 11 years	aged 11 - 13 years
Lessons seen overall	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall and has many strengths. 93 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better and 18 per cent of this is very good or excellent. 64 per cent is good or better. There is little difference between the key stages. Teaching is good in art, music, French, history, physical education and design and technology. It is unsatisfactory in geography and at Key Stage 3, in religious education as there is insufficient expertise in the subjects. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is satisfactory overall and there are many strengths, but it varies from very good to unsatisfactory as a few staff are insecure with the subject. Basic skills are taught well. The school meets the needs of most pupils well, but the needs of a small number of pupils are not always met as there is inconsistent challenge. Strengths in teaching are very good relationships that encourage pupils to learn and very good management of behaviour which helps to create an environment in which all can learn.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. There is a good range of learning opportunities at Key Stage 2 and sound range at Key Stage 3.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The Code of Practice is now fully operational. The special educational needs co-ordinator has established clear policies and procedures. The teaching of the two special needs teachers is consistently good and results in good progress by pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. There are good opportunities for personal development. Provision for moral and social development is very good and for spiritual and cultural is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. There is a caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel valued.

The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. There is a wide range of sporting and musical activities, as well as other clubs. The booster classes have been used well to raise standards in English and mathematics as have the setting arrangements in these subjects and science. The community makes a positive contribution to the work of the school and there are effective links with the partner schools. Links with parents and their involvement in their children's learning are very good. The provision for moral and social development is very good, it is an intrinsic part of the school's ethos and contributes to the mutual care and respect shown to all members of the school community. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about Western European cultures, but there are fewer opportunities for them to gain an understanding of other cultures and traditions. Very good procedures are in place for ensuring that pupils attend regularly, behave appropriately and treat one another with respect. There are effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress and predicting their attainment in English, mathematics and science. The information is not yet being used by all staff when they plan lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Very good leadership by the senior management team has maintained the high standards of behaviour and personal development. Co-ordinators have recently produced good subject guidance. The roles of the two co-ordinators for one subject are sometimes unclear.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors know the school well, but do not use the information they receive in a critical way to measure how well the school is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Effective procedures are in place for monitoring the progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science. Systems for monitoring teaching are not in place.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Planning of the budget is satisfactory and grants are used appropriately. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

The headteacher and deputy together have identified appropriate priorities for the school's development. The standards of most pupils have been raised by effective management action and senior management is planning to tackle the inconsistency in teaching which results in a small number of pupils not attaining as highly as they should. Governors are highly supportive, work hard and give much of their own time to the school. They contribute effectively to the ethos of a community. They have not ensured that the school is meeting the requirements of the daily act of collective worship. Over the past eighteen months, the school has begun to evaluate its performance through a review of the whole school, monitoring the progress that pupils make and reviewing aspects of teaching and learning. There are plans to extend this aspect, but currently, monitoring of teaching and learning is weak and is the main reason why there are inconsistencies in provision. The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and resources is satisfactory and information and communication technology is used well. The accommodation for science and music is unsatisfactory and has an adverse effect upon the progress of pupils in the subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The standards achieved by pupils and the progress they make. 2. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for higher attaining pupils. 3. The behaviour of the pupils and the positive attitudes and values the school promotes. 4. The quality of the teaching and the high expectations that teachers have of pupils. 5. Most parents feel comfortable when talking to staff. 6. The meetings at which parents can talk to subject specialists about their child. 7. The range of clubs and activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The links between first and upper schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency and amount of homework. • More information about the progress of their children. • More close working with parents.

The inspection team found that parents are justified in their views that the school supports pupils with special educational needs well and that pupils achieve in line with national expectations and make sound progress. The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are highly positive. Teachers work hard and are approachable and there are good links between first, middle and upper schools. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities. A small number of pupils sometimes mark time

and do not make the progress they should. Although teaching has many strong features, there are inconsistencies in its quality. Pupils receive homework regularly. The links with parents are very good and they receive good information, but a few parents who have children with special educational needs would welcome further information. Parents are involved in the school through the Parent Teacher Association and offer much support, particularly with reading, trips and extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average, although the school has fewer pupils of higher attainment than is found in most schools. A larger than usual proportion of pupils has special educational needs. Over the past four years, there has been a rising trend in attainment which is similar to the trend nationally. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance was broadly average in relation to the country as a whole in English, mathematics and science. When compared with schools that take in pupils from similar backgrounds, performance in English and mathematics was below average and performance in science was well below average. Girls performed better than boys in English but there was little difference in the performance of girls and boys in mathematics and science. Performance fell in 1998 due to the larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. The fall was predicted by the data that is used to measure attainment when pupils enter the school.
2. The inspection found that attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly average at both key stages. Senior management has successfully ensured that lower and average attaining pupils achieve as highly as possible through using booster classes in English and mathematics to improve their attainment. Setting pupils by ability in English, mathematics and science ensures that the highest attaining pupils achieve well. A few average to higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged by their work and so do not make the progress they should make. The school has recognised that this is the reason why performance is below that of similar schools and is planning to use the same methods with these pupils that have been successful with the lower attainers
3. Effective methods are being used to track the progress of all pupils and to predict their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. In English and mathematics, the information is starting to be used to set targets for each pupil. This analysis, and the evidence from inspection shows that pupils make satisfactory progress overall and many pupils of average and below average attainment, including the large number of pupils with special educational needs, make good progress.
4. On entry there is a core of pupils with very low level skills in literacy and numeracy. In the present Year 5 there are 46 pupils on the special needs register, of whom 21 have a need for some degree of special tuition. The pattern of progress shows that by the end of Year 8 that number is likely to have halved. This progress is typified by most pupils on entry being from level N to level two in mathematics and English and at the end of Year 6 they are at levels two to four. By the end of Year 8 they are approaching the level of competencies required at the high school. Pupils are tested regularly to ensure that they are making progress. When they leave the school they are able to read appropriate textbooks, write letters, use good oral skills and present their work clearly. Also, they have satisfactory skills in basic numeracy and are not dependent on calculators. These skills are applied across the curriculum effectively.
5. Standards in English are close to the national average and progress is satisfactory overall. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have well developed skills of speaking and listening and most are fluent, confident readers. By the end of Year 8, many pupils have the confidence to put forward a point of view and to support their opinions by referring to texts they have read. Pupils at both key stages take pride in their writing which is usually well presented. Many pupils write expressively and fluently, although lower and average attaining pupils sometimes make errors in spelling. Most pupils use skills of literacy well across the curriculum. They read effectively for information and know how to use the library. They are able to present information well, particularly in history.
6. Standards in mathematics are also close to average and pupils make sound progress in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils apply their skills of numeracy well across the curriculum. At both key stages, they have good mental skills. Most pupils develop a thorough understanding

of shapes such as when Year 6 pupils made boxes to store odds and ends. Most pupils understand and use mathematical language well.

7. In science, pupils attain standards that are close to average and make sound progress. Pupils' understanding of the process of planning and carrying out an investigation is less well developed than their skills in investigation which have improved since the last inspection at both key stages. Many pupils do not have the confidence to explain how they have carried out an investigation, although they have the necessary speaking and listening skills.
8. Attainment in information and communication technology is close to average and pupils apply their knowledge, skills and understanding effectively in other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are proficient in word processing and desktop publishing. A strength in Year 8 is the pupils' ability to use spreadsheets and multi-media presentations. They make sound progress at both key stages.
9. Pupils attain highly in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2 and they make good progress. At the end of Year 8, they reach average standards and make sound progress. At both key stages, they are particularly proficient in design and use their imagination well. The final product often has careful attention to detail as was seen in work shown by Year 8 in the achievement assembly.
10. Attainment in French is close to average at the end of Year 8 and pupils make good progress at both key stages. They listen well and are confident speakers, although most pupils are reluctant to use French when they ask questions or need resources. Their writing is reasonably accurate and very well presented as pupils take a pride in their work.
11. Pupils achieve highly in history at both key stages. They make good progress because work is usually well matched to the different levels of attainment and there is a wide range of interesting activities. Most pupils have a good knowledge of events in the past and they interpret evidence from the past to speculate about what might have happened.
12. Achievement in art, music and physical education is good at both key stages and pupils make good progress because the subjects are taught well. Strengths in art are in the good use of sketch books to try out and then refine ideas. Work in ceramics is often of a high quality. In music, singing is of a high quality and pupils compose interesting pieces. Skills in listening are well developed and pupils at Key Stage 3 use them well when appraising performances. Pupils develop good skills in physical education and they become adept at evaluating the performance of others.
13. Standards in geography and religious education are below average as the subjects are taught by non-specialists who do not enable pupils to develop a depth of understanding. At Key Stage 2, geography suffers from lack of curriculum time; it is taught as part of humanities but receives less time than history. Religious education lessons have a strong moral and social dimension but often do not cover religious ideas in depth. As such, they have merit, but at the expense of pupils' understanding of religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The school is a very happy and orderly community where pupils respect one another's desire to learn and achieve. They develop very good attitudes to learning and are keen and willing to take responsibility and help others. There is a very positive ethos and very good relationships among pupils, and between pupils and teachers. This supports their attainment and progress and prepares them well for the next stage of education.
15. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes in lessons, concentration is good and they take a real pride in their work always looking for opportunities for improvement. They are well motivated and become thoroughly absorbed in their work. This was evident in all lessons and particularly in art, mathematics, physical education, design and technology and music. Pupils' good attitudes and enthusiasm are extended to a wide range of extra curricular activities and the school council, where they are working hard to develop a school newspaper and also develop a school policy to counteract bullying.

16. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good. From entry in Year 5 they respond well to the calm and positive ethos of the school generally and the special needs provisions in particular. Not only do they maintain good attendance but their enthusiasm and developing social skills and learning capabilities enable them to work well. The good progress and the secure learning environment foster a sustained enthusiasm in every year. This results in them being able to cope and respond well in special withdrawal groups, mixed ability classes and the school generally. Their personal development in particular is good.
17. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were very happy with the attitudes and values the school promotes. They say pupils are treated like young adults, have good manners and show respect for adults and each other. This was confirmed to be so during the inspection.
18. Behaviour is a strength of the school. It is very good in lessons and generally throughout the school day and also on school visits. Pupils co-operate with their teachers in establishing conditions in which they and others can work productively without fear of distraction or interruption. They observe the code of conduct for classrooms and school and absorb the values transmitted by the staff. No issues of bullying were observed and pupils feel bullying is not a problem for them. There has been one short fixed term exclusion during the school year.
19. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers and pupils relate well to one another and the friendly relaxed manner is built on a foundation of mutual respect. Pupils genuinely care for each other. This was demonstrated when three Year 5 pupils were reading to an inspector and the bell for the next lesson rang before the end. As the lesson was games, all were keen to leave. When the first pupil finished he was told he could go but said it would be unkind and waited for the others. There were many other good examples of such consideration during the week. A Year 8 girl who has recently joined the school is receiving good support and said, "Everyone encourages you to learn here and cares if you are happy, you feel proud to achieve and want to work."
20. Since the last inspection the co-ordination of personal and social education has been reviewed and there is now a clear co-ordinated programme effectively taught in all years by designated staff. The programme gives pupils good opportunities to express and discuss their own views. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 8 were very positive and felt the topics covered related very well to the stages of development they had reached in their life.
21. All pupils show exceptional levels of initiative and are developing as very responsible citizens. The house system motivates pupils to work well together and take responsibility as leaders. All are given a range of responsibilities within their classroom and at lunch and break times, they set up and clear the school hall. By Year 8 these responsibilities extend to walking around the school with visitors on open days and parents' evenings.
22. Attendance is well above the national average and punctuality is good. There are no unexplained absences. The good attendance and punctual arrival allows the school day to begin on time in a calm atmosphere, this prepares pupils well for lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and much of the teaching has many strengths. 93 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better and of this 18 per cent is very good or excellent. The amount of good or better teaching that was observed was 64 per cent. There is little difference between the key stages.
24. Teaching is good in art, music, French, history, physical education and design and technology. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught well. Teaching is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3 in religious education as many staff have insufficient expertise in the subjects to broaden pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. In other subjects, although much of the teaching is good, there is a variation between very good and unsatisfactory teaching. Similarly, although teaching was not observed in geography, evidence from pupils' work and other documentation indicates that teaching is unsatisfactory

as it lacks depth.

25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The two specialist teachers are efficient and effective in their orderly, well-structured approach which promotes confidence and success amongst the pupils in every year. They are highly experienced teachers, good managers and are well motivated. They recognise the urgent needs of the pupils and so calmly and insistently develop work which is challenging and well paced for the class as a whole. High standards of work and behaviour are expected to which pupils respond well. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is linked closely to the ongoing school developments so that the transition from a special needs group to a mainstream class is relatively easy. Individual education plans are in place.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are taught all subjects except English and mathematics in mainstream classes. This is generally beneficial although there were a range of situations, as in science, where the work had not been developed to meet their particular needs. In subjects such as religious education, history and geography each subject's key words are taught explicitly. In music the weaker pupils are particularly well supported by workbooks prepared by staff which enable them to record quickly the work they do each week. These are used for reference as they pick up the threads in the following lesson. This principle could be used more widely. The school's developments in the use of information and communication technology are proving to be very beneficial and motivating. Typically, as in music, pupils become self-reliant and work without constant direct teacher intervention, even when they find that the work is difficult. At Key Stage 2, the pupils use the computers to develop a range of basic skills such as spelling and older pupils enjoy using them to write letters and other tasks. There is relatively little apparatus available to support the teaching of English and mathematics. The pattern of general social inclusion for pupils with some highly planned specialist teaching provides a secure basis upon which both pupils and parents can rely.
27. Two common strengths in teaching throughout the school are the very good management of behaviour and very good relationships. These factors are an intrinsic part of the ethos of the school which is based upon mutual trust. As a result, pupils are confident to try, in the knowledge that what they say will be valued by their classmates and their teachers and they are enabled to listen and learn.
28. In most subjects, teachers have a secure understanding of the subjects they teach which enables them to take pupils' learning forward. In a Year 8 badminton lesson, pupils extended their understanding of techniques because of the effective demonstration by the teacher. In a science lesson with Year 8 pupils, the teacher used his subject knowledge effectively when he challenged the pupils to predict whether substances were acids or alkalis. This extended their learning well.
29. In many lessons, resources are used well to motivate the pupils and to maintain their interest. In a Year 7 English lesson in which pupils were learning to distinguish between fact and opinion, the teacher had found materials about forests and conservation that appealed strongly to the pupils and ensured their interest. Good learning took place as a result.
30. Most teachers use the time in lessons effectively. In a Year 8 French lesson in which pupils learned the vocabulary of clothes, the teacher had prepared her resources in advance, planned the lesson well and ensured that the activity focussed on learning vocabulary. She had prepared a sheet that involved the pupils in crossing out errors, instead of writing out a series of sentences. This was highly appropriate and as a result, pupils gained knowledge of new vocabulary and consolidated old learning.
31. Many teachers are skilled at using questions to extend and develop pupils' understanding. A Year 6 class was classifying surfaces in science and the teacher questioned them effectively which encouraged them to reflect. Very good questioning about shapes in a mathematics lesson, for example, *why is it not a rectangle?*, encouraged Year 5 pupils to look carefully at different shapes and to draw on their previous knowledge about them.
32. In many lessons, careful planning ensures that the lesson is well focused and flows at a good pace. A Year 7 class in design and technology effectively learned about designing a desk lamp because the lesson was planned to build upon previous knowledge. Similarly, another

Year 7 class extended their understanding of spreadsheets because the lesson was well planned and organised. Homework is given regularly and usually extends the learning of the lesson effectively.

33. A few teachers use the information from assessment well to improve the pupils' work and to raise standards. In French, the teachers listen carefully to pupils and correct errors of grammar and pronunciation. A teacher of a Year 5 class used errors in mathematics as teaching points, sensitively avoiding humiliating the pupils who had made the mistakes. In some subjects, including French and history, pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. A few teachers set targets for the pupils, particularly in history and mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 talked confidently about their work and like knowing where they are in relation to the progress that is expected of them.
34. Many teachers have high expectations of their pupils' work and pupils know that they must always do their best. In a Year 6 English lesson, the teacher asked probing questions and insisted that pupils extended their answers. This led to high achievement in reading as pupils were forced to look closely at the text.
35. Classroom assistants support effectively and sensitively so that their targeted pupils can contribute to the lesson. An assistant in a Year 6 English lesson had prepared for the topic and was able to ask questions of her group which increased their understanding of genre and later, in the class discussion, to put forward their ideas. This support was highly successful.
36. The main reason for the seven per cent of unsatisfactory teaching is lack of subject expertise and sometimes, low expectations of the higher attainers. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher gave the wrong information and in geography, some books were marked correct when they were wrong. In an English lesson, the teacher's aims for the lesson were not clear so approximately half the class did not have a clear understanding of how to adapt writing for a different audience.
37. As in the last report, there are many strengths in the teaching but the problem with a lack of subject expertise, particularly in geography and religious education, remains.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

38. The curriculum is planned and organised effectively to meet the needs of its pupils. The curriculum at Key Stage 2 is good in its breadth and balance, providing two hours a day of literacy and numeracy teaching, in line with government guidance, as well as the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is personal and social education for all pupils, drama and, in Year 6, lessons in a modern foreign language.
39. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is satisfactory in balance and breadth. The time allowed for the teaching of English and mathematics is reduced from that at Key Stage 2, but more time is allocated to religious education, history and geography. The time allocated to modern foreign languages is doubled, providing an appropriate level of coverage. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last report in both key stages. The criticisms made then of insufficient coverage of religious education, the allocation of pupils to sets, the length of the school day and the coverage of the National Curriculum in certain subjects have all been tackled satisfactorily. All subjects now meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. There are particular strengths in the curricular provision for information technology, French, history, art, music and physical education. The range of opportunities and the quality of learning experiences are consistently good in these areas.
40. The grouping of pupils in English, mathematics and science has been organised to be responsive to their needs. In Year 5 there is an additional class for pupils who need specific help to raise their standards of numeracy and literacy. The other classes are reduced in size as a result, which provides more opportunity for individual and small group tuition. In Year 6 there is a 'fast track' class in English and mathematics as well as the additional class for those with special educational needs. In Years 7 and 8, pupils are placed in three ability bands, for

English, mathematics, science, humanities, French and design and technology. In other subjects, pupils are taught in groups of mixed ability. The grouping arrangements are generally effective and help to ensure good progress for most pupils, although a few pupils in the middle ability groups sometimes fail to reach the standards of which they are capable.

41. The pupils with special educational needs receive their full curriculum entitlement as well as receiving special support. They involve themselves well in extra-curricular activities.
42. The literacy and numeracy strategies have not yet been fully implemented, but are, nevertheless, making a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning and basic skills are generally taught well. The literacy strategy was delayed a full year until the school felt confident and able to resource it. Much hard work has been done to prepare suitable teaching materials. The approach taken is imaginative and innovative. It has many strengths in the richness and breadth of its coverage of the English syllabus. However, there are still useful aspects of the strategy, in terms of lesson planning and teaching strategies, not being tackled and some teachers lack confidence in its implementation. The numeracy strategy has also begun late and is not yet implemented fully. There are good links in the Year 5 English scheme with other subjects, including the arts and humanities. Other subjects, such as history and design and technology use methods to improve the literacy of pupils. However, there is no consistent approach across the school to ensure that all teachers develop pupils' skills in the literacy and numeracy required for different subjects.
43. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities and competitive sport. These range from choir, chess and information technology clubs to successful teams for football, cricket and netball, amongst others. A high percentage of pupils take part and benefit from these activities, which enhance the curriculum and provide good quality experiences, helping to raise the self-esteem and attainment of all who take part.
44. There is, in general, equal access to the curriculum for all, with particularly good opportunities for disabled pupils, those who have been placed on stage 2 and above of the register of special educational need and pupils in extension groups. The booster classes in the core subjects are providing good additional teaching for those offered places. Pupils are selected on the basis of the information available from assessment, currently those who, with additional help, may attain level 4. Not all high or low attaining pupils have equal access to these courses, however. The school has been considering how to motivate boys and has been successful in developing methods that are used in many classrooms. As a result, there is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
45. All pupils have personal and social education lessons as part of their curriculum and these cover, amongst other things, sex education and drugs awareness education. This provision is well organised and planned. It is taught by a dedicated team of teachers, whereas in previous years it was taught by all form tutors, and this helps to ensure that members of staff are confident and competent when teaching it.
46. The school makes effective use of local and more distant resources, with organised visits to local manor houses, museums at Poole, the adjacent ancient technology site and many outside visitors. There are good links with the community that enhance the curriculum for all, providing good learning experiences through contacts with, for example, local sporting centres and the county cricket team. The local 'pyramid' of schools enjoys effective liaison arrangements and this school prepares pupils well both for entry and for their passage to their upper school.

Personal development

47. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good overall. Aspects of their personal development are fostered well. There is considerable emphasis on developing a sense of responsibility, caring for others and being courteous, considerate and polite. Self-esteem and self-confidence are developed well. There are many opportunities for pupils to understand and take part in activities that involve them accepting responsibility for teamwork, learning to work with others and not letting others down. Some good use is made of tutor/registration time to reflect on themes in assembly and to consider

issues of responsibility and care for others. Opportunities for pupils to demonstrate initiative in lessons or to take responsibility for their own learning, however are inconsistent. Nevertheless, the high standards of the last report have, overall, been maintained.

48. Opportunities for spiritual development are satisfactory overall. The school does not comply with its statutory obligation to hold a collective act of worship for all every day. Lessons in religious education provide opportunities for spiritual development and for learning the importance and value of religious belief. There are opportunities in a number of subject areas for pupils to experience moments of spirituality, when responding to poetry in English for example, listening to great music, wondering at the mysteries of science and experiencing the power of significant works of art. The ethos of the school, which encourages and enables pupils to listen, observe and respect, to open their minds to new experiences in a positive way, helps to foster spiritual development, but it is not planned for across the curriculum and is inconsistent across classes and subject areas.
49. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The home school diary includes a clear statement of the school's code of behaviour. Good manners are insisted on at all times and the staff model good behaviour and set implicitly high expectations of how pupils should behave. A very strong culture has developed in the school of trust and highly moral behaviour. This is so deeply embedded in the ethos of the school that it is difficult to point out explicit examples of how it works. Nevertheless it is very successful. As an example, there is nowhere for Year 5 pupils to keep their coats and bags in school so they are left outside, without any instances of damage or theft. In physical education, high standards of fair play are expected and displayed by all pupils.
50. There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Most lessons are planned to include time when the pupils work in small groups or pairs, usually mixed in gender, and this helps to develop a range of social skills. Pupils learn how to work with others, be co-operative and collaborative, listen to the views of others, respect them and adapt their own ideas to fit in with them. They also learn good team skills in the many sporting opportunities they enjoy, as well as a sense of responsibility to the group or team with which they are working. Pupils are given a wide range of social responsibilities. Year 8 pupils mentor pupils in Year 5, helping and guiding them. Year 8 pupils are monitors on the buses, there to advise and help more than to check on behaviour. Pupils welcome parents on open days and show them round the school, impressing parents with their courtesy and self-confidence. Every class takes it in turn to do a dining room duty, a duty that is taken seriously and carried out well, reliably and responsibly. The many trips and residential experiences make an important contribution to social development. History and geography make good contributions through the many field trips the teachers organise. There is a major contribution from the physical education department, with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, heavily supported by pupils, including visits to local sporting clubs, as well as camping, sailing and outdoor activities. Every two years, an activities' week also provides new and effective opportunities for collaborative working.
51. The provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall. Some aspects of cultural development are catered for well. Western European culture is strongly provided for in art, music and English lessons. There are many trips to places of historical and cultural significance in the area. Some, like the visit to the stately home associated with 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', combine a number of subject areas. There are regular visits from theatre groups and the Activities Week allows a number of cultural aspects to be explored in detail, such as crafts, art, theatre and dance. The teaching of the richness and variety of other cultures, criticised in the last report, is still not strong. There is coverage of major world faiths in religious education lessons and occasional visits from members of ethnic minority groups. There is good coverage of world music in music lessons, but overall this aspect of cultural development still receives too little emphasis.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

52. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel valued. Child protection is very well organised with clear procedures for all

members of staff who have been made aware of their individual responsibilities. There is good liaison with the educational welfare officer and contact with social services. The school uses its policy and procedures well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities are very well cared for. A major characteristic of the school generally and the special needs department in particular is the high degree of personal care for each pupil. All staff are made aware of any needs and so can plan their work accordingly. The school works with a range of outside agencies including the Education Psychological Service, the school nurse and speech therapist to promote pupils' welfare and medical needs.

53. All issues related to health and safety in the last report have been resolved. The health and safety policy is comprehensive, well used and is monitored by the governing body. Risk assessment in all areas is up to date and equipment is well maintained with recorded checks. The head teacher, working effectively with the site manager, keeps a daily check on the building and the large site. During the inspection no health and safety concerns were noted. High quality school meals are served in the school hall; the accommodation is light, spacious and very clean. Overall, the school and the grounds are a safe place for pupils and staff. There are clear notices in classroom and corridors to support procedures and to promote health, safety and first aid.
54. There are effective procedures to promote discipline and good behaviour; staff and pupils are fully aware of expectations and procedures to maintain a well-behaved school where pupils feel secure from bullying or harassment.
55. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Registers are correctly completed both morning and afternoons and are returned to the school office. The education welfare officer regularly monitors registers. Parents and pupils are aware of the responsibilities to comply with legislation and successfully fulfil their obligations. The school has a very effective lateness routine.
56. The school has satisfactory provision for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance. Very good procedures have been developed to measure the progress that pupils make as they move through the school. For English, mathematics and science, each pupil has a record of his or her attainment on entry and the progress they make over six month periods. Nationally standardised tests are used to gain this information. The information is then used to predict the level pupils are likely to achieve at the end of the key stage and is beginning to be used to set targets. The system also gives good information about the relative performance of the three subjects and of the progress of groups of pupils of differing attainment. All staff have access to the records for the classes they teach, but many lack confidence in how to use the information to ensure that their teaching reflects the needs of pupils of differing attainment. These procedures offer very good information about the value that the school is adding to the performance of its pupils. In addition, most pupils know how well they are attaining as they receive the information.
57. An effective system is also being used in French. Pupils keep a record of their academic progress by marking off, with the teacher, what aspect of the attainment target they have covered. This started in September and is developing well. Good practice is developing in art and history. However these procedures are not yet consistently used across the school in all subjects or by all staff.
58. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. All pupils are aware of where to seek help in the school. Most identify their form teacher as that person. Pupils in Year 8 felt the programme of personal and social education supported them very well. Continual monitoring and evaluating of the programme is supporting pupils' pastoral and social education. Progress is well assessed and parents are informed through pupils' daily diaries, regular meetings and school reports.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

59. The school has very effective links with parents. There is very good parental involvement in pupils' home school learning and this has a significant impact on their children's attainment

and progress. Parents are very satisfied with the school overall, this includes academic achievement and pupils' welfare. The school keeps particularly good links with those parents who have children with special needs. The statutory requirements of annual reviews are met and links are always available to resolve any concerns and to indicate particularly good progress.

60. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. The school prospectus is very informative and easy to read. Regular newsletters encourage a response from pupils and parents. They also give information on pupils' achievement in school and in extra curricular activities. Curriculum information evenings, daily contact through pupils' diaries and the governors annual report to parents all help keep parents involved and in touch. Year 8 pupils commented that they feel their parents are well informed by the school. Parents say pupils' annual reports are excellent and appreciate the opportunity to respond to the reports at the follow up meeting. Termly meetings for parents are very well supported, as was the meeting at which parents were informed about the national tests at Key Stage 2. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt they are able to approach the school with any queries or problems and are equally confident they will be promptly and sympathetically heard. They feel the head teacher and staff are very approachable. At the last governors' annual meeting, parents were given an opportunity to discuss the home school agreement; their views are now being taken into consideration for the parents' section before it is adopted by the governing body.
61. Parental support for the school is very good. A large number of parents help in a number of ways such as the *Better Reading Partnership* which began in September as a means of raising standards in reading. Parents feel this is not only improving reading standards but also parental links. Parents are involved in extra curricular activities; they help with as many as nine clubs. They support music especially when taking pupils to concerts, to give performance in competitions and for the community. Parents are very supportive going on school trips and residential visits. They make a very good contribution to pupils' learning at home; there is a regular dialogue with teachers through pupils' diaries and a real commitment to hearing pupils read and to signing the diaries weekly, A thriving Parent Teachers' Association raises considerable funds for the school and also provides social events. The contribution is greatly appreciated by all.
62. Overall the partnership between parents and the school and parents' commitment to supporting pupils' learning at home has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. The overall leadership and management of the school is satisfactory and some aspects of leadership are very good.
64. Very good leadership by the headteacher has ensured that the ethos that was commended in the last report has been maintained. There is a strong sense of community to which all adults contribute and of which both pupils and adults are proud. As a result, pupils have highly positive attitudes towards their work and they respect the views and opinions of others. These areas feature strongly in the aims of the school.
65. Together, the headteacher and deputy have ensured that the standards achieved by most pupils are high in terms of their prior attainment. Many of these pupils have been supported effectively and as a result have reached standards that are expected nationally. The highest attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science have generally achieved higher levels in the national tests. Senior management have been less successful in ensuring that a small number of pupils who could attain more highly reach standards of which they are capable. This has been recognised and there are plans to use some of the methods that have been successful with the lower attaining pupils.
66. The governors give much of their own time to the school and make a highly effective contribution to its ethos. They receive a great deal of information from the school through methods such as presentations by staff and frequent visits. A few have shadowed pupils or staff as part of collecting information. As a result, they know the school well. They are not,

however, using the information in a critical way to ask questions about the school's performance. The monitoring is informal and lacks rigour. They have not ensured that staff are appraised thoroughly, that the school meets the requirements for the daily act of collective worship and they have not yet set targets for the senior management team.

67. Co-ordinators have worked hard and successfully to review their subject documentation and new and helpful guidance is now in place. Co-ordinators for English, mathematics, humanities and science have carried out some monitoring of their subjects, but as in the last report, the procedures are not well developed. For many subjects, there are two co-ordinators and the links between the roles are not clear.
68. The special needs co-ordinator is a teacher of considerable experience and ability. These qualities are recognised by the school and she is supported appropriately. She has organised the particular provision in English and mathematics effectively with testing procedures and the writing of individual education plans. Her influence does not pervade the whole curriculum and hence there were few indications of special provision in most subjects. She has, however, had a distinctly positive effect on the school and provided a secure basis for future developments.
69. The senior management team has used the school review of last term to set highly appropriate priorities for the school's development. The school development plan has been reviewed and a more useful one is in draft form. This sets priorities for the whole school, to which all staff will contribute. A good process of monitoring teaching and the curriculum has been established and is going to start with a review of the teaching of literacy next term. Monitoring of pupils' progress over six monthly periods has developed over the past eighteen months and as a result, staff know how well each pupil is progressing, and what their anticipated performance is likely to be. This information is most useful and has been used to identify pupils who could improve their performance with extra help. It has also been used by some, but not all staff, to set targets for pupils.
70. Senior management has monitored teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work from across the school. This has led to the development of a policy which outlines an approach to marking for the whole school. The monitoring of teaching has not yet begun, although it is planned for next term. The lack of monitoring has resulted in the inconsistencies in teaching not being picked up. Both headteacher and deputy headteacher teach for much of the week which limits their time for monitoring. The monitoring system that is planned takes account of this and includes delegating responsibility to subject co-ordinators.
71. Good progress has been made on the key issue of setting the budget to match the priorities of the school development plan. The budget is now planned ahead and the day to day procedures are effective due to the efficiency of administrative staff. Grants are used effectively, such as the money for booster classes being used successfully to improve the performance of pupils in English and mathematics. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. An example is the research carried out by the governing body into how best to resource the national numeracy strategy.
72. Taking account of the attainment of pupils on entry, the high number of pupils with special educational needs, the good personal development and the attainment of pupils when they leave in Year 8, the school offers satisfactory value for money.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

73. The numbers, qualification and experience of the teachers are generally matched satisfactorily to the demands of the curriculum. However, there are no specialist teachers for religious education and geography and this adversely affects the quality of learning in these subjects. The induction of new staff is satisfactory. The match of the support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and there is good technical support for information technology. The appraisal system that was operating in the school has been not been implemented as a result of the national dispute. However the headteacher meets staff annually for a review of their performance. Targets are set at these meetings and the targets become part of the school development plan.

74. The quality of the accommodation overall is satisfactory. However, the accommodation ranges from very good in some areas to insufficient or in need of renovation in others. In humanities the accommodation is generally good and there is a good hall and dining room. However, the school is short of permanent accommodation. There are six temporary classrooms and a temporary toilet next to them. There are antiquated design and technology facilities for resistant materials; wood, metal and plastics. The science laboratory is in need of refurbishment and there are no music practice rooms. However, there are very good outdoor facilities, a good gymnasium, and good changing areas and good storage. The main art room is small but well appointed and very effectively run and provides a stimulating environment for pupils.
75. Resources in the school overall are satisfactory and some areas are well resourced, for example, information technology. In music the resources have improved since the last inspection, as pupils are now making appropriate use of electronically generated sound sources, and are recording their own work. There is an excellent range of published materials in history, although in geography there are not enough atlases. The library has adequate stock and is used effectively to support the learning of the pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. In order to raise attainment further and improve the progress of pupils, the headteacher, senior management team, governors and staff should;
- Ensure that the monitoring of teaching that is planned to begin in the summer term takes place, in order to use the expertise within the school to improve the consistency of teaching, (paragraphs 36, 67, 70, 88, 90, 91, 97, 99, 101, 102, 135, 158, 163)
 - Ensure that in all subjects, all pupils are challenged by the work that they are given so that all attain as highly as possible, (paragraphs 1, 2, 40, 65, 78, 79, 85, 98, 99, 103, 104, 108, 136, 150)
 - Improve standards in geography and at Key Stage 3 in religious education by increasing subject specialist knowledge in the subjects, (paragraphs 13, 24, 129, 130, 131, 164, 167, 169, 170)
 - Make use of the wealth of information that governors receive about the school to critically evaluate how well it is doing. (paragraph 66)
 - Continue to develop the system of measuring the progress that pupils make and ensure that the good information that is being collected is used by all staff when they plan their lessons. (paragraphs 56, 57, 69, 110, 111, 112, 126, 141, 142, 163, 169)

77. Other areas for development that governors should consider in their action plan are;

- Improve the opportunities for spiritual development, including the implementation of the requirement to have a daily act of collective worship for all pupils (paragraph 48)
- Review roles of responsibility of all staff, (paragraph 67)
- Raise pupils' awareness of Britain as a multicultural society, (paragraphs 50, 118)
- Ensure that pupils are given the opportunity in all lessons to develop independence in learning (paragraphs 47, 117, 139)
- Continue to develop the approaches to literacy and numeracy that are recommended by the national strategy, including promoting literacy and numeracy consistently across the curriculum (paragraphs 42, 84, 91, 92, 93)
- Improve accommodation for design and technology, science and music as resources permit. (paragraphs 157, 159)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	111
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	18	47	28	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y5– Y8	Sixth form
Number of pupils on the school's roll	413	
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	19	

Special educational needs	Y5– Y9	Sixth form
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	9	
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	146	

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	6.0

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.4

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	61	47	108

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	44	45	50
	Girls	43	40	40
	Total	87	85	90
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (61)	[78] (53)	83 (70)
	National	70 ([65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	38	45	52
	Girls	40	41	41
	Total	78	86	93
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (64)	80 (60)	86 (78)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	2
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	411
Any other minority ethnic group	

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y5– Y8

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.05
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff: Y5 – Y8

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146.58

Deployment of teachers: Y5 – Y8

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	80
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Average teaching group size: Y5 – Y8

Key Stage 2	24
Key Stage 3	24.6

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	742418
Total expenditure	787471
Expenditure per pupil	1916
Balance brought forward from previous year	75573
Balance carried forward to next year	30520

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	181

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	45	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	46	50	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	49	2	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	57	14	2	2
The teaching is good.	39	58	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	53	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	29	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	53	8	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	65	28	3	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	39	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	58	38	3	0	2

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

78. Standards of attainment on entry are in line with the national average overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, 81 per cent of pupils attain level 4 or above in the National Curriculum tests, 11 per cent more than is the average for schools nationally. However, the proportion of pupils who attain the higher level, level 5, is below the national average. Partly as a result of this, the average point score, the measure of how pupils attain overall in these tests, is in line with the national average. Pupils' attainment is below that of pupils in similar schools. Low attaining and mid attaining pupils achieve reasonably well in the school in English and most of these pupils make good progress. The setting arrangements ensure that the highest attaining pupils achieve in line with their prior attainment but there is some underachievement amongst higher attaining pupils.
79. The finding of the inspection is that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8 reflects the pupils' performance in the 1999 National Curriculum tests. More pupils than is the average nationally attain the expected standards for their age. However, there is a small number of pupils with the potential to attain highly who underachieve. Nevertheless, the teachers of English have responded well to whole-school priorities, which included raising the proportion of pupils who attained at least level 4, and the result is that attainment is satisfactory overall and so is the progress that pupils make. Both boys and girls attain equally well and make similar progress. The large number of pupils with special educational needs make good progress, because of the good provision made for them.
80. Standards in speaking and listening are above average overall at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. Almost all pupils are fluent and articulate speakers of English and many pupils in Year 8 speak with confidence and assurance in formal situations, such as when addressing the whole school, staff or parents. They have a wide vocabulary and the ability to formulate and express ideas which is above average for their age. A small minority of boys perform less well, valuing the playground credibility of non-standard English. Almost all pupils listen well. They listen carefully to the instructions and teaching points made by teachers. When working in groups, they listen to each other and are able to adapt their ideas to include the points made by others and discuss and work collaboratively well as a result. There is a small minority, both boys and girls, who appear to be listening, but who then make mistakes in their work that show that were not actually paying full attention to what they were told.
81. There is a strong and consistent emphasis in every teacher's planning, on providing opportunities for discussion and collaborative working in almost every lesson. This is a strength in the school, along with the way in which all teachers value the oral contributions that pupils make. No answer or comment made by a child is ever dismissed as worthless by any teacher and this builds up an atmosphere of trust in which self-esteem and self-confidence are fostered. Pupils follow the good examples set by teachers in valuing and respecting the ideas and opinions of both children and adults. In discussion, pupils are therefore willing to try to express complex thoughts and feelings and challenge themselves to extend their vocabulary and powers of expression. They are not afraid to make mistakes. In a Year 8 English lesson, a boy wanted to use a complicated word that he had seen written down but never heard pronounced. In front of the class, he broke it up into separate syllables and sounded it out. No-one thought any the worse of him and his efforts were praised by the teacher.
82. Attainment in reading is average overall at the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 8, but almost half the pupils attain above average standards in some aspects of this. Almost all pupils read well for meaning and can retell stories or the main points of non-fiction extracts well. Many can read aloud with expression. The detailed work done on textual analysis of literature and literary extracts means that a significant number of pupils can understand traits of character, comment on relationships between characters in plays, novels and short stories and have a good understanding of motive. Higher attaining pupils understand some of the effects that authors attain through stylistic devices. Year 6 pupils study genre and, in so doing, analyse how writers of, for example, horror stories or humour, choose their adjectives or use similes to

achieve the atmosphere they want. Having done this work, the pupils then practise using similar devices themselves with success. Pupils can read persuasive texts, such as advertisements, analytically, demonstrating a good understanding of how the media uses language and imagery to try to influence our purchasing decisions. They use information technology well and read information from computer programs and CD ROMs, adapting it to their purposes.

83. Skills in writing are average overall at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8. Many high attaining pupils write very well, adapting their style to a wide range of purposes and audiences. A Year 8 class was observed trying their hands at a formal writing task. They had to imagine that they were social workers preparing a report on a character in a novel they were reading. First they made rough notes, in a colloquial style, using information from the book as if they had made a home visit. Then they studied the difference between informal and formal prose in order to help them to convert their notes into a report for an important audience. They were very perceptive, noticing how comments such as *run down* and *covered with graffiti* translated to words like *dilapidated* in a formal text. All pupils can write expressively and creatively, some to a high standard. A poem written by a Year 8 girl shows considerable sensitivity in the use of language. Her poem is entitled *Sleepless Nights* and a part of it describes the house as she lies awake:

*..The room vibrates from the distant hum of an aeroplane.
As the radiator bubbles away like a lullaby
You drift off to sleep..*

84. Written work is of an average standard rather than above average because, although many pupils write accurately to an above average standard, there is a significant number in both key stages who make technical errors in their written work. Almost all can construct simple sentences accurately, but punctuation becomes increasingly erratic as sentences become more complicated. The greatest problem is encountered with spellings. Unfamiliar words are often spelled wrongly by average and below average attaining pupils and mistakes are too common even with some common shorter words.
85. Progress is satisfactory overall, but varies from class to class. Lower attaining pupils and many mid attaining pupils make good progress in many lessons. The booster classes, aimed at pupils in Year 6 who are close to level 4 but have not yet reached it, are successful in moving pupils forward rapidly in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress in their setted classes, because of relatively small numbers and work that is targeted to their needs. Pupils in the top sets were observed to make good progress in many aspects of their work. A few pupils in mid attaining classes are capable of being further extended. The work is sometimes inappropriate for them and on occasions they are seen to be marking time. There is little difference in the progress made by boys and girls.
86. Learning skills are generally good. Pupils are always ready to apply intellectual and creative effort in class, as a result of their own positive attitudes, the positive learning ethos in the school and the good relationships that teachers sustain and foster in class. They show interest and concentration and sustain concentration well, except when the work is inappropriate. Pupils understand what they are doing and know how to improve their work, partly because of the good feedback on their work that they get from their teachers. They are keen to succeed and want to do well. As a result they are not afraid of making mistakes but are willing to learn from them and will tackle difficult and demanding work with perseverance.
87. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are areas of strength. They have good attitudes to the subject and their behaviour is very good. There are very good relationships in all classes and personal development is fostered very well. In all lessons, pupils are co-operative and collaborate well in small group and pair work. They listen to the views and opinions of others and treat them with respect. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and form good relationships with their teachers and each other. There are no instances of intimidation or aggressive behaviour.
88. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons observed it was unsatisfactory in five per cent of lessons, satisfactory in 28 per cent of lessons, good in 43 per cent of lessons and very good in 24 per cent. The scrutiny of work indicates that there is much good teaching, but overall it is

satisfactory. The teaching of English by the subject specialists is almost always good or very good but the teaching of the subject by non-specialists is much less strong. Many classes are taught for all their English lessons by non-specialists, and this can have an adverse effect on the progress they make. There are strengths in all lessons. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and control and manage the pupils well. The weaknesses are in the strength and depth of subject knowledge. The non-specialists do not have the depth of subject knowledge or the familiarity with the materials they are teaching, which are prepared for them, to always explain it well or to extend the higher attaining pupils.

89. In the many instances of good and very good teaching, teachers have a good command of the subject, plan effectively and set clear objectives. The planning is structured to enable pupils to attain the objectives, taking them through a logical and well - structured sequence of tasks to build the skills progressively that they need. In a good lesson on Greek myths and legends, the teacher encouraged pupils to recall facts they had learnt in earlier lessons and to use these to help them in their learning. Assessment is used well. Teachers, for example, set spelling tests at different levels. In one lesson observed, three different tests were carried out simultaneously in order to ensure that all pupils were challenged effectively. In a demanding lesson on character study, the teacher had prepared an excellent range of materials that helped the pupils to understand and master the skills they had to acquire. They were learning to convert informal notes into formal reports and the examples were very well structured to enable them to explore and realise how some kinds of language are very appropriate for one purpose but not for another. Such was the relationship and trust engendered within the class that pupils were even able and confident enough to make critical and perceptive comments on the teacher's materials. She used these comments skilfully and positively to move their learning forward.
90. There are strengths in some aspects of the management of the subject. The support for teachers is good, especially for non-specialists, in terms of the course materials that have been produced and the long and short term planning that has been done for teachers. A varied, broad and balanced programme of work has been produced that provides a good range of structured and progressive tasks based on literary texts of quality. The two co-ordinators are always available to give useful guidance and support to the teachers who need it and they are responsible for the assessment of work in English across the school, which is developing into an effective process that helps pupils and teachers to set and understand individual targets. The co-ordinators have carefully thought through plans to begin to monitor teaching in the summer term. Currently, there are weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching.
91. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last report. High standards have been maintained in speaking and listening and there is good emphasis on the development of reading skills. The weaknesses in spelling and in the monitoring of teaching are still present.

LITERACY

92. The national literacy strategy has not been fully implemented in Years 5 and 6, but is, nevertheless, making a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning. The implementation of the literacy strategy was delayed a year, until the school felt confident that it could teach and resource it well. The approach taken is imaginative and innovative and is impressive in the way that it provides a cohesive course in language development. It has many strengths in the richness and breadth of its coverage of the English syllabus. However, there are still useful aspects of the strategy, in terms of lesson planning and teaching strategies, which are not being used and a few teachers lack confidence in its implementation. There is insufficient focus on explicit, shared learning objectives. In a significant minority of lessons, the teacher does not spend sufficient time working with a small group of pupils. A few teachers, once group work has started, misunderstand their role and use the time to oversee the class and mark work rather than to teach literacy skills.

93. Generally, pupils use skills of literacy well across the curriculum, particularly in history. There are some good links with some other subject areas. Literacy skills are reinforced well in music, where poetry is sometimes used, for example, as the stimulus for musical composition or performance. The Year 5 English scheme integrates well with other subjects, including the arts and humanities. Overall, however, there is inconsistency in the way other subject specialists teach the literacy skills that their subjects demand.

DRAMA

94. At the end of Year 8, pupils use a range of drama techniques effectively in their work, and understand the meaning and purpose of drama terms such as *improvisation* and *freeze frames*. Pupils' progress is good. The nature of teaching in drama is such as to support good progress at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs. In the best lessons, pupils gain understanding of the dramatic process through participation, for example, when they explored the impact of conflict introduced into a previously harmonious family relationship. They show high levels of concentration, can form and maintain a character and interact well with others in their group.
95. Pupils respond well to the open-ended opportunities that drama gives them to explore ideas and create performance through improvisation as well as through the interpretation of scripts. Good teaching that is planned to recognise and build on the pupils' own ideas, refining and developing them skilfully to extend their skills and understanding, brings the most positive response from pupils, and this has a direct impact on the quality of their work. In these good lessons, group work is good, and pupils not only respond well to the teaching, but to the others in their groups, with whom they collaborate effectively.
96. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good in just over half the lessons and sound in the rest. The subject is taught by a teacher with specialist skills, who is secure in both subject knowledge and understanding of appropriate teaching methods. The high expectations, implicit in the teaching, of standards, work rate and behaviour, lead to a very positive response from the pupils. Work is planned to challenge pupils of all abilities. In the best lessons, preparation, planning and target setting are all good, and clear and well-understood criteria are set with pupils, who respond well with determination to fulfil these criteria. Feedback is very good, and helps pupils to further develop their work and to gain in understanding.

MATHEMATICS

97. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 was broadly in line with national averages for pupils reaching level 4 and above. However, when compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average. The improvement in the performance of pupils in mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 2, in the past four years is broadly in line with the national trends. Over the past four years, there has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls.
98. The inspection found that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 8 is broadly average. The school has concentrated its efforts on raising the achievement of the average and lower attaining pupils, and ensuring that those in the top sets attain in line with their prior attainment. However, the school is not yet catering with similar determination in raising achievement of the higher attainers in the middle ability sets. Pupils have good mental skills at both key stages. They use and apply their skills in mathematics well to solve problems. Year 6 pupils enjoyed the challenge of making boxes to store all the odds and ends found in the teacher's drawer and made good use of their understanding of nets of cuboids and cubes. Investigative skills are developing well in Year 8, where pupils used their results of an experiment to predict the probability of something happening. At Key Stage 2, pupils can name two-dimensional shapes and know their properties. At Key Stage 3, they understand volume and know the properties of some three dimensional shapes. Progress in Year 8 is satisfactory. Pupils make good use of mathematical language. They make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress in all their lessons, except in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were not sufficiently challenged. In another

Year 5 class pupils made good progress in the lesson learning to draw a grid and plot co-ordinates. The pupils in the Year 7 class that were making cuboids from nets also made good progress. Good consolidation of previously learnt work was had when pupils were asked to guess the 2D shape that was appearing from behind a screen. Very good progress is made by pupils in their understanding of volume by using cubes to make a structure. Pupils with special needs make good progress in their smaller setted groups, and particularly when they have an individual support assistant with them.

99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and in two thirds of the lessons, teaching is good or very good. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed. The strengths in the teaching include the very good relationships between the teachers and the pupils. Many teachers plan their lessons well; have stimulating mental mathematics sessions at the start of the lesson and work through the lesson at a brisk pace. Where apparatus is used well, pupils are helped to understand volume and can build their own cuboids and cubes. Many teachers stress the use of mathematically correct language, and often supplement this with important words displayed around the room. Some lessons are inspirational and pupils respond very well in these lessons, work hard and make good progress. Pupils were excited to look at the contents of the teacher's drawer and then to draw nets to hold each item. There are some inconsistencies in lessons that are sound or unsatisfactory. Occasionally the teacher is insecure in the subject of the lesson or gives misinformation to pupils. In a few classes, there is insufficient extension work for the higher achievers in the class. Teachers' records of pupils' progress in lessons and for homework is inconsistent, and for some teachers the only records kept are test results. These are not always used to set targets for pupils. Occasionally the pace of the lesson is too slow to support pupils' progress sufficiently. Record keeping is not sufficiently consistent across the school or each year group. Pupils are tested every six months and teachers keep records of these results, usually in their planners. Some teachers keep good records of day-to-day progress of pupils, whilst others know their pupils well but their records of pupils' progress is insufficient. In some lessons there was insufficient pace for pupils to make good progress.
100. There are four "booster" classes for mathematics, offered to pupils who are borderline level 4. Last year these pupils all reached level 4 in the national tests. Booster classes are improving attainment significantly for the pupils attending them. The National Numeracy Strategy began later than in most schools, but parts of the strategy that have been adopted are improving the quality of teaching, particularly the quick mental mathematics start of lessons, which contribute to pupils' enjoyment of lessons and are improving their quality of learning in number work. Pupils have worked on Rangoli patterns, which supports them in understanding and appreciating other cultures. Pupils' work on ICT contributes to numeracy across the curriculum as pupils use the computer to draw graphs and make links with a study on how formulae are used in "everyday life".
101. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved. Teachers are piloting a new mathematics scheme and this has led to some insecurity amongst a few teachers. However, at the same time, teachers are learning new techniques particularly for mental mathematics sessions. These sessions are contributing to pupils' enjoyment of their lessons and are improving the quality of their learning in number work. It is also contributing to the quality of teaching overall. Teaching is not yet monitored across the school. The need for teachers to discuss new ways with each other prior to delivering the new material is helping teachers to rethink their techniques. There has also been a concentration on raising attainment which has had a positive effect on the quality of teaching.

SCIENCE

102. By the end of Key Stage 2, the 1999 national test results showed performance in science was average. The number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 was average and the higher level 5 was below average. When compared with similar schools, results were well below average. Results over four years to 1999 show performance has been sustained at national averages, with above average performance in 1997. The 1999 comparisons indicate girls and boys perform at average levels, but girls perform slightly less well than boys. Pupils are at national expectations at the end of Year 8.

103. The inspection confirms the 1999 test results. Attainment is within national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils do not always reach good standards in knowledge and understanding because lesson plans do not take account of how to extend higher attaining pupils. Generally, pupils' skills in investigation have improved since the last inspection. Their understanding of the process of planning an investigation and considering and evaluating experimental evidence is less well developed. They reach good standards in the appropriate use of number, but writing skills are developed less well. Although pupils write to a scientific format, they find it more difficult to engage in reasoned argument about why things happen. They do not reach appropriate standards in the use of information technology to record and display experimental results, and do not analyse information sufficiently. However, standards in information technology are improving in Key Stage 2. Pupils are in line to reach appropriate standards in information technology at the end of Year 8.
104. Pupils in Year 6 reach appropriate standards in lessons. In some lessons they are encouraged to speak extensively, using scientific vocabulary, to explain their thinking. For example, in one class, they discussed the rate at which objects fall when they are different in size and composition. They gained a good grasp of investigation and worked well in teams to measure the diameter of different objects and record results, improving practical skills very well. They found it more difficult to explain the scientific principles involved, but understood that size and composition affect the rate of fall. Higher attaining pupils do not always explain clearly in their writing the criteria that govern the investigation.
105. The quality of learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. One class prepared a water cooling investigation and time was used well to give them the practical skills of measuring temperature. Their writing shows they are beginning to understand how to keep a scientific test fair. In contrast, although Year 5 pupils used numerical skills well in constructing the scale of a thermometer, they were not given the opportunity to gain practical experience in measuring temperature change and so their learning was not extended.
106. Learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 3. Year 7 pupils gain a good understanding of force exerted by a windmill by preparing models and recording the speed of rotation, comparing each other's rate of success on computer generated graphs. In discussion, they do not engage in analysing the results, only a small group having confidence to answer questions. Similarly in Year 8, although teachers pose good questions, they do not always ensure full participation in answering, reducing pupils' understanding and use of scientific language. They make good gains in understanding rates of chemical reaction, some deducing symbolic representations of chemical compounds. Lower attaining pupils make good gains in knowledge and understanding and in investigation skills as a result of good encouragement from teachers. They improve skills in information technology by using computerised information to identify the characteristics of chemical elements, including their place of origin and abundance in different parts of the world.
107. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages when they are well supported by adults, but tasks are not always planned to give them additional support in the absence of classroom assistants. For example, they do not have guidance for writing which would reduce the pressure of keeping up with the rest of the class. However, they work fully with others, achieving similar levels as their peers in scientific skills and gaining confidence in knowledge and understanding.
108. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well in every lesson. They are attentive and listen well to questions. They are enthusiastic, enjoying practical experiences to the full and excited by personal discovery. Relationships between pupils are very good, as are relationships between adults and pupils. They are developing a good sense of responsibility and gain considerable maturity by Year 8.
109. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of very good teaching in both key stages. One unsatisfactory lesson arose because the pace and challenge of the lesson were too low. Specialist teachers have very good subject knowledge and this generally results in high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teacher expectations by non- specialist teachers are sometimes too low, failing to extend average and higher attaining pupils sufficiently. They do

not have sufficient confidence to engage pupils in challenging discussion about scientific ideas. There has been an improvement in teachers' understanding of how to develop skills of inquiry and investigation.

110. Lessons are almost always stimulating but the quality of discussion is variable between classes. When pupils are required to include clear scientific terms to explain their thinking, they consolidate and extend learning effectively. When teachers review lessons by asking pupils to explain key learning points, this is effectively extending the learning of the class as a whole. However, when key facts are simply copied from the board, they provide a less useful tool in linking important concepts to the practical work conducted.
111. Planning has improved since the last inspection. Schemes of work have been reviewed and work in classes of the same year group is more consistent. However, planning is not sufficiently refined to take full account of the needs of different groups of pupils within classes. Better information is now available through tracking pupils' progress and the school is in a position to use the information to refine planning further for groups of pupils.
112. In the very best lessons, teachers monitor the progress pupils make as they work, encouraging them to persevere and take pride in their work. On occasions, discussion between individuals or small groups of pupils with the teacher is of very good quality, encouraging them to extend thinking. However, this needs to be more consistent to ensure pupils make good progress each lesson, each year and throughout the school.
113. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly, but do not use the information to set new targets for each topic taught. Consequently some pupils move from one topic to the next without correcting errors. Teachers do not note difficulties particular pupils may have had or change plans accordingly. Such information needs to be more detailed.
114. Teachers manage pupils very well, developing very good relationships. They foster very positive attitudes, developing a strong sense of responsibility, expecting pupils to take initiative. Teachers use other adults well. Learning resources are used very well, giving pupils good opportunities for first hand enquiry and research from books and stimulating videos. Homework is set on a regular basis, giving pupils a continuing sense of purpose.

ART

115. At the end of Key Stage 2, the standard of pupils' work is above average compared with schools nationally. Pupils make good use of their sketchbooks to research themes and ideas for paintings, including the study of work by other artists. The higher attaining pupils develop good skills in the use of colour and line. Standards are also above average for pupils at the end of Year 8, with many pupils producing lively and imaginative designs. Pupils who visited a local sculpture park produced some particularly impressive drawings based on natural forms. Work in ceramics is also good. In one instance, Year 7 pupils used a study of refugees to make detailed free standing figures in clay. Since the last inspection, the school has raised the standard of pupils' achievements in art generally and also maintained its high standards in ceramics and 3-dimensional work. At both key stages, progress is generally good, including the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
116. Attitudes and behaviour in art lessons are very good. The pupils enjoy art lessons and work hard. The lower attaining pupils show perseverance and very little unfinished work was seen. Pupils take pride in their work. At both key stages, pupils are able to organise themselves and their workspace without fuss. They respect one another and respond well to the teacher at all times.
117. Art teaching is good, particularly by the specialist co-ordinator who has very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and inspires the pupils with lively and challenging tasks. Pupils are given a good grounding in a range of media and basic design. They learn to express themselves imaginatively in a warm and relaxed atmosphere in which the contribution of all pupils is valued and developed. Pupils show a mature approach when the teacher asks them to evaluate each others' work as well as their own. One weakness is the tendency for some lessons to be rather prescriptive. Here, the pupils rely too much on the teacher for

ideas, instead of exploring and developing their own. A strength, on the other hand, is the high expectation that the teachers have of all pupils. In one Year 8 lesson, the teacher explained very clearly, what they would need to achieve and then gave individual support. This, coupled with the very good behaviour and attitude of the pupils, enabled them to make swift progress in learning about scale and proportion. Teachers use homework imaginatively to enhance or prepare for work done in class. They assess the pupils' progress and record personal details to help with planning further work and writing reports for parents.

118. The art curriculum, which is firmly based on the National Curriculum programmes of study, is enhanced by further opportunities at lunchtime and after school when pupils are free to work on projects of their own or set by the teacher. The school organises visits and workshops which extend the pupils' experiences and offers them opportunities to develop personally and socially. Sound cultural development is provided through the study of various themes in art such as portraiture through the ages, the work of L S Lowry or with links to periods in history such as the ancient Greeks. The curriculum is, however, somewhat biased toward late Western European art and craft.
119. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for art. She maintains close links with the first and the upper schools which has enabled the department to develop useful assessment procedures which accurately reflect the pupils' achievements. In addition, joint art projects have enabled pupils to enjoy good continuity in their learning. Since the last inspection the art department has made good improvements. These include raising standards of attainment, providing opportunities for discussion and evaluation during lessons, improving the time available for art and improving the resources for art history.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. Pupils reach good standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are in line to reach appropriate standards by the end of Year 8, with good standards in design. They have not gained such good practical skills over time, resulting in average standards when they make objects.
121. Year 6 pupils measure accurately and reach good standards. They have expressed originality in designing and making a fairground, resulting in a very good range of products. They used control technology to drive the motor, evaluated the quality of movement and suggested improvement. Several decorated the base with attractive computer generated designs, paying good attention to the quality of finish. In textiles, pupils at Key Stage 3 considered the need for waterproof materials for making peg bags, understanding the importance of strengthening and taking care with the final appearance of the product. They benefit from the use of specialist machines, enabling them to improve precision in cutting and sewing. They organise themselves successfully, making very good gains in skills, cutting and joining a good range of materials successfully. Those who prepare food produced good pizza faces, carefully matching the pattern of salt dough designs.
122. Pupils make good gains in design throughout the school. Year 5 pupils are well motivated to improve basic skills in textiles and construction. In designing a jointed toy, they traced and enlarged a drawing to achieve a model that met their initial intentions. In textiles, they have transferred a design for a bookmark from paper to fabric. Year 7 identify errors in their prototype design to connect mechanical, electrical and pneumatic systems and try to solve them. Higher attaining pupils reach good standards in evaluative writing. Others find this more

difficult, but gain very good experience of evaluation in exchanging ideas about difficulties they have encountered, showing very good intellectual development.

123. Pupils reach good levels of planning, using a helpful proforma for writing designed by the teacher. They prepared a good range of alternatives, gaining experience in using clear criteria for making decisions. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. As a result of effective support, they gain a sense of real pride in achievements.
124. Teaching is good. A particular strength is the extent to which staff foster equality of opportunity for boys and girls. Good subject knowledge, with strengths in conveying positive attitudes to pupils, helps them take care in attention to detail, developing a wide range of practical skills. The emphasis on the design process is strong. When engaging in design tasks, pupils are required to think about the purpose for which products are made and which materials to use. For example, when asked to design cushions for a special occasion, they show initiative in which design elements are important. In considering the person who will receive items, teachers inspire pupils in use of colour and range of design, particularly in toys that are made for younger children. Good discussion helps pupils to consider safety and to improve their skills.
125. The expectations that teachers have of their pupils are high. It is assumed that pupils will give their best and they rise to the occasion. Opportunities for them to gain independence are good. Teachers ensure that pupils extend their learning by suggesting that they work in small groups. They use resources very well, enabling pupils to benefit from a wide range of materials and from using equipment, including computers, to very good effect. The technician provides very good support particularly for computing, enabling pupils to become quickly proficient. Classroom assistants give very good support to pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make very good progress.
126. Effective planning ensures pupils make good progress over time. Control technology and modelling is developed well in lessons, enabling pupils to apply mathematical skills to control tasks. Teachers are developing appropriate systems for assessment. Pupils are not routinely involved in assessing their achievements. They do not set clear personal targets for improving work, limiting the value of evaluation. Homework is used well to help pupils develop their ideas in preparation for lessons.
127. Attitudes to learning are very good and pupils enjoy design technology. They ask good questions, wanting to achieve the most from their efforts. They are highly motivated by tasks, generally taking good care in construction, giving consideration to organising work well, checking measurements and the quality of cutting as they proceed. They become increasingly accurate in the use of equipment and tools. The oldest recognise that efforts made in developing skills improve the quality of their work. Most pupils work very independently in Year 6; others learn to become more independent by enjoying good relationships with adults and sustaining concentration because of good support. They generally behave very well in specialist rooms and take full responsibility for working safely with tools and clearing away equipment.

GEOGRAPHY

128. No geography lessons were timetabled at the time of the inspection. Judgements are based on pupils' work, documentation and discussion with the subject co-ordinators.
129. Attainment of pupils is inconsistent from class to class, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and it is unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. Many pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not acquiring sufficient basic geographical skills to provide a foundation for effective progression in their learning. Consequently though progress is satisfactory through Key Stage 3, standards at the end of Year 8 are below national expectations. Younger pupils are able to interpret simple scales correctly but the majority do not measure or estimate longer distances accurately from maps. Basic mapping conventions have not been learned by many pupils and as a result maps often fail to communicate information clearly. Pupils are competent in Year 7 in the use of four figure grid references but have not learned to use six figure references. Average and higher

attaining Year 8 pupils can interpret simple contour maps but only the very able can construct a cross-section from this data. By Year 8, most pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the basic processes that shape land forms and the significance of rock structure though few pupils distinguish clearly between erosion and weathering. Pupils have a good understanding of basic settlement patterns but do not use terms such as residential and commercial appropriately. Some higher attaining pupils produce individual studies of an excellent standard based on good quality field work. However a lack of basic geographical skills handicaps many pupils from making the most of these opportunities. The knowledge of places of many pupils is weak. The standard of presentation of pupils work is good overall and writing fluency is satisfactory.

130. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the strategic management of resources and some units within the schemes of work have been better developed to assist teachers to plan and structure lessons. Information and communication technology is more systematically used by pupils to access and present information. There is now a set of common assessments in each year and pupils' work is given a National Curriculum level. However there is now no specialist geographer on the staff and the pupils' overall grasp of basic geographical skills is weaker than at the time of the last inspection.
131. There are some weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and understanding. The quality of marking ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. The best marking is systematic, constructive and very informative, often posing questions to help extend pupils' thinking. Some marking is inconsistent and fails to correct inaccuracies and also marks incorrect answers as correct. The curriculum is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 as the time provided is insufficient to give satisfactory coverage to topics. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is broader and more balanced. Very good quality field work enriches learning in both key stages but local study opportunities are insufficiently developed, particularly at Key Stage 2. There are inconsistencies in the coverage of topics in all years. Monitoring is developing and there is an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. However there are no systems in place through which weaknesses can be tackled.

HISTORY

132. Attainment of pupils is good through all years and by the end of Key Stage 2 and the end of Year 8 pupils are producing work of a higher standard than the national average. Pupils in Year 5 quickly acquire a good grasp of chronology and their written work on Ancient Greece is detailed and pupils display some knowledge and a good understanding of the culture and social structures of this period. Pupils' skills of inquiry are good and develop well through all years aided by many opportunities to explore a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Year 6 pupils studying good quality illustrations of artefacts recovered from the Mary Rose are able to speculate confidently about occupations and the status of different crew members. Written work is mostly well organised, fluent and rarely incomplete. Pupils undertake extended writing on all topics and higher attaining pupils produce detailed and empathetic work of a high standard in all years. Good examples of this come from topics on Life in the Trenches, Thomas Becket and Slavery. Pupils are building up a good vocabulary of technical language, for example Year 7 pupils use a full range of words correctly in their descriptions and explanations of the features of Norman castles. Year 8 pupils can sort, classify and prioritise information well, often working collaboratively and many have developed annotation skills.
133. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The proportion of lessons that are well taught has increased as have overall standards of attainment. Resources have been further enriched and pupils are now making some effective use of information technology in all years. Support for non-specialist teachers has improved, some topics are supported by clear and detailed schemes of work and there is clear guidance on the use of resources to support learning in some topics. Arrangements for monitoring are now more formal and structured and the key stage co-ordinators are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.
134. Teaching is good overall, although one of the lessons observed was unsatisfactory. The management of pupils and the relationships between pupils and staff are consistently very

good with praise invariably offered for achievement. A very good range of learning experiences are provided and these are mostly well matched to the learning objectives and the ability of the pupils. The teacher of a Year 7 class carefully matched the choice of material from a library collection to the abilities of small groups of pupils who were researching into people's experiences in the Crusades. Pupils are provided with well chosen opportunities to manage their own learning in all years. For example after looking at slides of artifacts, Year 6 pupils were given the opportunity to work in small groups with "real" artifacts. They correctly identified a trencher, an oil jug and a seal and they speculated intelligently on the design features and materials used. Lessons often start with an activity that quickly claims pupils' attention and interest, for example Year 5 pupils were highly motivated by a game which required them to take turns in describing the detail on a piece of pottery. The knowledge and understanding of all teachers is at least satisfactory and mostly good and sometimes very good. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were largely passive and the ideas being explored were only meaningful to the higher attaining pupils.

135. The curriculum is broad and balanced and supported by very good resources for nearly all topics. Currently it claims more time in Key Stage 2 than is nominally allocated. There are very good fieldwork opportunities which complement and enrich learning. Marking is largely satisfactory but there is some insecurity in assigning National Curriculum levels. The monitoring of progress is developing but as yet the systematic tracking of the progress that individual pupils make is not in place. The co-ordination of teaching and learning is largely effective though the separation of the two key stages has more disadvantages than advantages. Development planning in particular is hampered by this arrangement and it is as yet ineffective.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

136. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards which are in line with national averages. An above average proportion of pupils is able to use a computer to produce word-processed or desktop-published text which is in line with national expectations. Posters, letters and documents that contain pictures are within the capabilities of most pupils. A small number of higher attaining pupils do not make the progress they should, but they do produce well-designed and attractive work and can save and retrieve their files without help. In addition, pupils can use control programs, spreadsheets and graphs. They understand how information technology (IT) can be used to help them in other subjects they study and are beginning to explore its use in a wider context as they use the Internet. Both boys and girls attain equally sound standards.
137. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils are well on the way to achieving standards which are expected in Year 8. They have developed the use of spreadsheets and databases and have a sound understanding of the way these programs can be used to solve problems in subjects such as mathematics, science and design technology. Year 8 pupils of all levels of attainment are making multi-media presentations designed to introduce the new Year 5 pupils to the school. These make use of some of the latest advances in technology as well as being informative and amusing.
138. Attitudes to IT are very good. Pupils enjoy the respect of the teacher and each other and are able to work with the minimum of fuss or supervision. They are prepared to help each other and this is encouraged by the teacher. Behaviour is very good and the teacher can give each pupil individual help in the knowledge that the other pupils are continuing to work hard.
139. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often good. The basic curriculum is covered very effectively by the knowledgeable and experienced co-ordinator. The projects are relevant to the pupils because they are linked to the studies that pupils are covering in other areas of the curriculum. For instance, pupils develop a good knowledge of history by using simulation and database programs and producing posters. In one very challenging lesson, Year 7 pupils showed that they could employ knowledge from mathematics by using a spreadsheet to solve a problem involving shape and space. This was a well-organised lesson, typical in that the teacher used high quality resources, such as a computer projector, with assurance. She provided help and support so that pupils of all levels of attainment could make good progress.

Higher attaining pupils showed initiative. Less successful, are the lessons where the teacher has not provided enough different levels of challenge. In one lesson where pupils used a computer simulation, the lower attaining pupils struggled to understand the problems the program set them and tended to click the mouse at random. In the majority of lessons, the higher attaining pupils are not stretched by giving them the opportunity to develop independence in choosing appropriate software for a particular task.

140. Other areas of the IT curriculum are taught in other specialist subject areas such as science, technology, history and music. In one design and technology lesson, the teacher had generated a very enthusiastic response from pupils who were designing control systems for a model fairground. In a science lesson, pupils were determining the efficiency of a wind generator by using IT to measure and plot the speed of the turbine. In both instances the teachers offered very good support, enabling pupils to consolidate and develop skills and understanding. The special educational needs teacher uses a spelling practice program very effectively to help pupils develop skills in reading and writing. This enables individualised targets to be set for each pupil.
141. The co-ordinator has devised a good system for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils know how this works and can make a contribution to it through a regular review of their work. The school has not yet made use of the data that these processes generate to discover, for instance, where changes may be made to the programme or schemes of work to improve attainment.
142. A very thorough coverage of the National Curriculum for IT and the effective use of grants to provide up to date resources have contributed to the good progress the school has made in this area since the last inspection. Both pupils and teachers have risen to the challenge of coping with the development and reorganisation of resources. This has meant a recent period of consolidation rather than rapid progress, as everybody learns new systems and software. However, because of the energy and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator the school is well-placed to make progress in pupils' attainments in the near future. To do this, the teachers will need to ensure that the older and higher attaining pupils are given more opportunities to work independently.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

143. Pupils begin to learn French in Year 6. They make good progress and receive a good grounding that enables them to continue to make good progress throughout Years 7 and 8. Higher attaining pupils make good progress because they are suitably challenged by extended questions or they are expected to give longer answers. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported by teachers, support assistants and resources which give them extra help. The progress of boys and girls is equally good as the teachers motivate boys well and use methods which encourage them to contribute to the lesson.
144. Strengths in French at both key stages are in pupils' speaking and listening skills. This is because all teachers speak the language as part of their everyday teaching so that pupils become accustomed to hearing it. A few pupils are prepared to use the language themselves, when, for example, asking for classroom equipment, but this is not widespread. By the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils understand common classroom instructions, they can say where they live, use numbers in a sentence and can give a brief description of what they like and dislike. By the end of Year 8, attainment is in line with what is expected for thirteen year olds. Many pupils understand instructions and requests when the teacher speaks at a near normal speed. Lower attaining pupils still need support, but they are confident when speaking and listening. The accents of most pupils are anglicised but can be understood.
145. At Key Stage 2, many pupils read simple phrases and sentences accurately and with understanding. Lower attaining pupils are hesitant but will try. At Key Stage 3, most pupils read texts that they have met before with confidence and understanding. They use dictionaries

to check words. Staff are aware of the need to encourage pupils to read widely and have a small, but inadequate collection of reading material to help.

146. At Key Stage 2, pupils write brief pieces generally accurately, although a few average and many lower attaining pupils forget about masculine and feminine genders and verb agreements. By Year 8, many pupils write competently. A higher attaining pupil used word processing skills to produce a well written and extensive piece about herself. She stated her preferences and gave reasons for them. The writing of average and below average pupils is often inaccurate, particularly in relation to verb agreements, plurals and masculine and feminine endings. It is however, recognisable and extremely well presented.
147. Most pupils enjoy learning French because the lessons motivate them. Staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour, so that pupils are well behaved and their attitudes towards the subject are most positive. As a result, they are able to listen and to learn. The positive ethos of the school is reflected in the language classrooms. Relationships are generally very good, so that pupils feel confident to try speaking the language. Pupils are courteous to adults and to each other; they listen when peers respond. In one class, a pupil moved a curtain so another was out of direct sunlight, another asked courteously if a pupil could move so that he could see the board. They collaborate well when working in pairs or groups. As they move through the school, pupils respond to the good encouragement to become independent; they use resources around the room to check their answers, they use dictionaries and they always arrive ready to work.
148. The quality of teaching is good. All staff, including the non-specialists, have a good understanding of the teaching of modern foreign languages, so that there is a good consistency of approach. A particular strength is the very good use of the time within the lesson. A Year 7 class learning the vocabulary to do with cafes consolidated and extended its learning well because of effective planning, good preparation and a brisk approach. There is a good mixture of individual, class, group and pair work, which adds to the motivation. Much of the teaching is enthusiastic so pupils enjoy the lessons and want to learn. This feature is complemented by a wide and interesting range of activities, such as games and role-play which involve all pupils and thus extends their learning. Another Year 7 class began with a number game which motivated them highly as they were anxious to contribute to their team's success and eager to see their team win. In this lesson, pupils consolidated their knowledge of numbers and became quicker at recognising them in French. There is good coverage of the four language elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
149. A particular strength in the teaching is the use of assessment to improve the performance of the pupils. Staff listen carefully to pronunciation and grammar and correct it. A teacher of a Year 6 class had observed that many lacked confidence in asking questions in French. This became the focus of her lesson. Homework is set regularly and extends the lesson and work is regularly and accurately marked. Effective systems are developing to ensure that pupils know how well they are doing. Each pupil has a sheet in their book printed with the stages of the National Curriculum. As they succeed on an element, it is ticked or highlighted. This system encourages pupils to take an interest in the progress they are making and to know what they need to do to make further progress.
150. Although staff encourage pupils to use French for their own questions, pupils are usually reluctant to try. Information technology is occasionally used, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to extend this and is currently looking at resources. Occasionally, groups of higher attaining pupils finish work before others and mark time as they do not know what to do next. This is usually quickly noticed as staff are good at circulating around the classrooms to offer individual support.
151. The subject is effectively led. The co-ordinator makes good use of the links with other middle and upper schools for her own professional development and is developing good subject guidance using this support. Another strength is the planning which is beginning to identify how well pupils of different attainment should achieve and to use the criteria when assessing the pupils' work. This system enables the staff to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

152. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The match of task to the attainment of pupils is usually effective, all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered and there is a wide range of approaches to teaching. The subject documentation has been reviewed and offers good guidance.

MUSIC

153. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain higher standards than would be expected for their age, although there are some variations according to pupils' individual abilities. Most pupils are comparatively strong in composing and in listening and appraising. For example, pupils in Year 6 have produced short overtures inspired by the music and poetry of "Cats", based on scalic patterns over a bass part and a backing beat. The highest attaining pupils can debate finer points of tempo, dynamics, and different rhythm patterns before making final decisions about which to use. Pupils' performing skills are not generally quite as strong as composing, though still sufficiently good for them to be able to compose confidently, because they can repeat musical motifs accurately and edit them until they are satisfied with the sounds.
154. High standards are maintained at Key Stage 3. By the end of Year 8, pupils are well advanced, indeed some of the most able musicians are already close to expectation for the end of the key stage in appraising and a few also in composing and performing. Within a single lesson, all Year 8 pupils can produce short melodies in the style required, the higher attaining pupils can write both words and music for a short presentation, and add actions. The best groups produce a polished performance. Pupils appraise each other's work with close concentration, both identifying good features and recommending points for improvement. Singing at both key stages is usually good, sometimes very good, tuneful and expressive, with good diction, and whole-hearted in public performance as well as lessons.
155. Teaching is good overall and a high proportion is very good. Lessons are carefully planned, containing a variety of activities so pupils' interest is consistently engaged. Lessons always include a balance of listening, appraising, performing and composing work, so pupils make progress in several skills within each lesson. Carefully prepared pupils' workbooks sustain and extend their interest. As a result, pupils enjoy music lessons. They quickly become involved through the warm-up activities which provide a good focus at the start of each lesson. Much of the composing work is done in pairs, developing social skills of listening, negotiation and compromise as well as enabling them to share musical skills. Pupils work effectively together to polish and extend their compositions. Teachers circulate to give support to pupils who need it, or to encourage higher musical attainers to tackle extension work, but pupils are encouraged to work on their own as much as they can, becoming self-reliant and taking pride in what they can achieve on their own initiative. Teachers make good use of the keyboard laboratory central console, to check that all pupils are learning, and whether or not they need help. Occasionally, a single activity is allowed to continue too long, either leading to loss of concentration among a minority of pupils, or squeezing out a planned plenary activity at the end of a lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are supported through a positive approach: for each project, initial tasks are set within the capability of all pupils, but with clearly stated extension work for every activity, so all pupils can achieve the required minimum. Many more progress well beyond it, and a few very considerably beyond. This means that all pupils' needs are appropriately met.
156. The schemes of work are of good quality, a particular strength is the cross-curricular links with humanities, art, dance, drama, and science. There is a good contribution to literacy through the consistent use of subject specific vocabulary, a wide range of song words, and encouragement to pupils to write words for their own compositions, for example Year 8 write jingles for advertisements, which are set to music and performed. Music also makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' understanding of many cultures, for example through singing African songs. Music is used in assemblies and concerts are given regularly. The band offers good provision for the higher attaining performers to extend their skills, pupils are encouraged to join it as soon as they can manage even a simple part.
157. The ongoing shortage of specialist accommodation means that pupils working on group

projects have to work unsupervised in one of the technology rooms, and in the dining hall. Inadequate storage space means that instruments sometimes create an obstacle course on the floor of the music room. These problems generate safety risks. Insufficient space for group work also inhibits further progress, particularly in the dining hall when the noise of tables that are being put out for lunch affects listening!

158. The department continues to be well managed. Short-term planning is sensible, with appropriate focus on completing a Wimborne Pyramid project on assessment and on National Curriculum review for September 2000. However, time is lacking for the music teachers to evaluate each others' work and to learn from one another. The piano in the teaching classroom is reaching the end of its life and contributes little to singing standards.
159. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have risen slightly. Curriculum time has been increased and regular weekly lessons have had a beneficial effect on standards. Recent installation of a keyboard laboratory means the department now has ample ICT equipment to fulfil National Curriculum requirements in Key Stages 2 and 3. Some health and safety risks have been eliminated. However, the accommodation is still insufficient.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

160. The attainment of pupils is good at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils continue to progress well through Years 7 and 8. At the end of Year 8 they are working at levels above the national average in nearly all activities. Pupils work in mixed groups and there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls overall. In gymnastics, sports acrobatics and dance, pupils collaborate well in the planning and development of short routines. Year 5 pupils understand terms like mirroring and symmetry and their paired gymnastics work displays these movements accurately. Their work is largely dynamic, though a little unrefined. Nearly all Year 6 pupils can sustain short rallies playing short tennis with soft balls. Higher attaining pupils can place their shots with consistent accuracy. Pupils are familiar with the scoring system and referee games correctly. By Year 6 pupils are conversant with the rules of all the field games they play. The higher attaining pupils in Year 7 perform a good range of gymnastic movements and balances with poise and confidence including cartwheels, arab springs, hand stands and head stands. Pupils of average attainment perform some of these but with less security. Most pupils evaluate the quality of the work of others with fair precision and offer their views clearly and confidently. They are less secure in self-evaluation, which is just satisfactory. Playing badminton within a very confined area, Year 8 pupils were largely safe and considerate of each other. All could sustain short rallies and average and more able pupils are starting to develop playing strategies to move their opponent about the court. The most able play a variety of shots accurately including the smash.
161. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The great majority of lessons are now taught by qualified staff and the overall quality of teaching has improved. The level of challenge in tasks set is now never less than satisfactory, there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to plan, refine and evaluate their work and to referee. Consequently the rate of progress is now consistently good across a broad range of activities. Criteria for the assessment of pupils are now consistent with national guidelines and good quality extra curricular opportunities have been further enriched.

162. A good standard of teaching is provided. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of all activities they lead. Lessons are well structured, learning objectives are clearly communicated and a good pace is sustained. All these qualities were demonstrated in a Year 8 dance acrobatics lesson where, after a hesitant start, sympathetic review and skilful guidance by the teacher built up the pupils' confidence and the variety, imagination and quality of group work improved very rapidly. Careful progression and good demonstration are features common to most lessons. Their use in a rugby lesson enabled Year 6 boys to develop a good technique in successfully slipping the ball to another team member when tackled, enabling attacking moves to be sustained. In all lessons observed, the management of pupils was very good, and there was an appropriate balance between theory and practice. In some lessons a systematic review of the progress made was used well to consolidate learning.
163. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by a very good range of extra curricular activities and excellent community links. Participation rates are very good and these experiences are making a very good contribution to the social development of pupils. There continue to be well structured links with feeder primary schools and the upper school which ensure good continuity and progression. This includes the use of the schools' facilities for primary school lessons. Management is effective and non-specialists are well supported. Assessment is more systematic but it does not yet provide a profile of pupils' progress through school. National Curriculum level judgements are now used but have not as yet been standardised. Monitoring of teaching and learning is too informal.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

164. By the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 8 the attainment levels of pupils are below what is expected from pupils studying the Dorset Agreed Syllabus.
165. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection. The new schemes of work based on the Dorset Agreed Syllabus and the numerous resource developments are beginning to have good effects on the standards achieved. At Key Stage 2, attainment is rising perceptibly because the Agreed Syllabus is being well developed by the subject co-ordinator of that stage. This provides highly structured course materials on which the pupils work well.
166. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a general introductory knowledge of such topics as Christmas, Jesus and creation stories and study fundamental aspects of Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity. In particular, pupils can recall key stories such as the Hindu myth of Ganesh and central facts such as the five K's of Sikhism. At Key Stage 3, attainment is just beginning to rise but it is still well below that expected from pupils in Year 8. They have a basic but undeveloped knowledge of Jesus, Judaism, moral issues in the major world faiths, contemporary Christianity and topics such as sacrificial love, beauty and the holocaust. Much of the work seen showed that the pupils' knowledge was basic and had not been raised to a more critical level. This was illustrated in the study of capital punishment in which the pupils displayed good oral skills but did not advance their skills of religious critical thought and the relative validity of various religious views. Pupils with special educational needs tend to do better at Key Stage 2 than those at Key Stage 3, because the work in the materials produced by the school is appropriate for them.
167. Progress is improving at Key Stage 2 and is now approaching satisfactory rates. This is due to the materials which the co-ordinator has produced, the range of artefacts which are beginning to be collected and used, and the development of work which gives pupils experiences of other religions. This was exemplified by the useful visit of a Sikh lady who showed the Year 6 pupils Sikh artefacts and who, by answering pre-arranged questions from pupils, developed their previous work appropriately. This had a good impact on the pupils' learning. In Year 6, pupils only receive half the amount of time normally allocated to religious education. Progress during Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory. The Dorset Agreed Syllabus is imaginative and demanding but the lack of specialist teachers forces its potential to be severely curtailed.
168. Pupils at both key stages have a positive approach to the subject and work enthusiastically when the lesson is interesting. For example, when pupils in Year 5 saw artefacts, pictures and

clothing related to the Hindu religious ceremony of the puja, they watched and listened carefully and were keen to answer questions before doing simple written work and drawings. Year 8 pupils sustained vigorous oral discussion for an hour regarding the issue of capital punishment. The pupils not only want to learn but they have significant self-control and flexibility to quickly change from whole class to group and individual work.

169. Teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory but is unsatisfactory at Key Stage 3. The teachers are now being given detailed lesson schemes and appropriate resources so that the basic knowledge can be taught effectively by the non-specialists. There is, however, a tendency for some of the adventurous tasks in the Agreed Syllabus not to be attempted. Many of the written exercises consist of labelling pictures and inserting words in short sentences. The pupils do, however, acquire a range of new knowledge and more restricted skills. Their willingness to concentrate when reading stories, listening to information and writing is impressive. This is continued into Years 7 and 8. The teachers are thoroughly competent in their sphere of expertise but these new areas of work are very demanding for them. The pupils' written work consists largely of orderly notes and inserting information on worksheets. Where the work is imaginative, it can be difficult to relate it to religious issues. When pupils were studying the topic of beauty, they looked at and compared a wide range of photographs of people and identified what they saw in them as beautiful. This useful exercise became a personal and social education lesson. The need for specialist knowledge was apparent. Thorough assessment procedures are not yet in place.
170. The two co-ordinators are working hard to develop the Dorset Agreed Syllabus into appropriate schemes of work. The planning at Key Stage 2 is particularly impressive and provides teachers with good support. The co-ordinator for Key Stage 2 does not teach religious education which minimises the effectiveness of her leadership. The co-ordinator of Key Stage 3 has a particularly difficult problem. Although standards are normally expected to rise significantly at this stage the problem of having a team of non-specialist religious education teachers is accentuated. The use of two co-ordinators who teach little or no religious education themselves is counter-productive, especially as they have other competing responsibilities. They have been very effective in developing and improving the resource base.