

INSPECTION REPORT

SEMLEY C of E VA FIRST SCHOOL

**SHAFTESBURY
DORSET**

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126439

Headteacher: Mrs V Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Sinclair
19824

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 January 2001

Inspection number: 186654

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Semley C.E. First School Semley Shaftesbury Dorset
Postcode:	SP7 9AU
Telephone number:	01747 830427
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judi Godeseth
Date of previous inspection:	January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19824	Mrs Janet Sinclair	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English; Science; Art and design Design and technology; Music; Special educational needs.	Standards, teaching and learning, characteristics, leadership and management.
9388	Mr Anthony Mundy	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Attitudes behaviour and personal development, care of pupils, partnership with parents; aspects of leadership and management.
26292	Mrs Helen Mundy	<i>Team inspector</i>	Under fives; Equal opportunities; Mathematics; Information and communication technology; History; Geography; Physical education.	Curricular opportunities including personal; Spiritual, moral cultural and social development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a Church of England Voluntary Aided First School for boys and girls of four to nine years of age. There are 68 pupils on roll. The school draws most of its pupils from the villages of Semley and Donhead St Andrew. Many pupils come from privileged backgrounds. Levels of attainment on entry are above average, with many children having pre-school experience. Pupil mobility is fairly high with pupils leaving the school for private education at varying points in their school career. Sixteen per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average, and there are no pupils with a statement of special educational need, which is low. Currently 5 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well below the average of nineteen point 1 per cent. The school does not have any pupils with English as an additional language, a situation which is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where the staff are working hard to improve the quality of education they provide. Standards are well above expectations in English and above expectations in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils make good progress in English and ICT, and satisfactory progress in all other subjects except geography and history, where progress is unsatisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership and has made significant improvements since the last inspection. Teaching is finely balanced between satisfactory and good, and is satisfactory overall. The school's pastoral care of pupils is very good. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment. They are taught well and make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their learning. Expenditure per pupil is above average, and the school therefore provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The headteacher's leadership is good; she provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school.
- The school achieves very good standards in English and good standards in mathematics, science and ICT.
- The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good, and they are promoted through the very good relationships that exist in the school.
- The very good provision for pupils' moral development helps them behave in a mature and responsible manner.
- There are very good links with parents, and reciprocally parents contribute very well to the work of the school.
- The school very successfully ensures that it gets best value for money and this contributes to provision.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Teaching where it is weaker.
- Marking, and the sharing of features with the pupils.
- Standards in geography and history, so that pupils attain in line with their capabilities.
- Pupils' independence and involvement in their own learning across the curriculum, so that they have greater ownership of the work.

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 last inspected in January 1996 and was found to have serious weaknesses. Since then the headteacher and staff have worked extremely hard on all the key issues raised in the last report and have made good and sometimes very good progress in addressing them. There has been a significant improvement in standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and this has led to improvements in the curriculum. Teaching has improved; there is a much greater proportion of good teaching and much less is unsatisfactory. All subject co-ordinators now monitor their areas of the curriculum to ensure appropriate coverage and effective teaching. The school is committed to continued improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	B	A	B
writing	B	A	A	A
mathematics	B	C	A	B

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	
<i>B</i>	
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

This table shows that the school's results are well above average, and improving year on year. The school has effectively put into practice the numeracy and literacy strategies, and this is having an impact on standards.

In comparison with similar schools, the school is attaining well above average in writing and above average in mathematics and reading. Overall, pupils achieve well.

Children enter the school with above average levels of attainment. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in Reception and Key Stage 1 and good progress in the Year 3/4 class.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the effective support they receive. During the inspection, pupils aged seven were found to be

attaining well above expectations in English and above expectations in mathematics, science and ICT. In all other subjects pupils are attaining at the expected level for their age, except in geography and history, where standards are below expectations. There was insufficient evidence to permit a judgement on music.

By Year 4 pupils attain above expectations in mathematics, science and ICT and in line with expectations in all other subjects, except history and geography, where standards are below expectations. Although pupils are making good progress, the current Year 4 cohort has a larger than average number of pupils with special educational needs and this is adversely affecting standards, particularly in English.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They work hard and are interested in their lessons, and this has a positive impact on their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Pupils generally respond well to teachers' expectations, and the school is an orderly, hard working environment.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils co-operate closely with each other and with their teachers. Older pupils show considerable maturity in their responsible attitude and care for younger pupils.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school.

Relationships are very good and are a strength of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Fiftythree per cent of the teaching seen was good, 42 per cent satisfactory, and five per cent unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English is good. In mathematics, 50 per cent is good and 50 per cent is satisfactory. Teaching is generally satisfactory in all other subjects except music, where it is good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in all classrooms. Planning is generally good. Pupils are well managed in most lessons, although teachers tend to tolerate a high level of fidgeting from pupils. Questioning is used to good effect to check pupils' knowledge and extend their thinking, particularly in English, mathematics and music. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through their individual education plans and the good

teaching of support staff. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen, and this was linked to slow pace, lack of subject content, and ineffective questioning to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. Teaching is generally didactic and does not give pupils enough opportunities to question, explain and discuss the content of their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively supports academic and personal development, except in history and geography. There are good links with the community and very good links with partner institutions.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs through the systems in place and the good support given by the learning support assistants. Parents are kept well informed and included in this support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good overall. Provision for moral development is very good. Provision for knowledge of other cultures lacks sufficient depth and is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good provision for pupils' welfare within a happy community. Procedures for assessment are very good. Marking does not help pupils to improve their work.

Provision for outdoor play is not sufficiently regular to benefit the children who are under five. The partnership with parents is strongly developed across the school. Parents are keen to support their children and teachers use this effectively so that pupils' learning benefits.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators is good. All staff are working hard to improve the quality of education the pupils receive.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors fulfil their statutory duties conscientiously. They are actively involved in the work of the school and are keen to improve their knowledge and expertise.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has sound systems in place to evaluate its performance. Progress is monitored against the priorities set in the school development plan. The success criteria, however, are not specific enough to permit rigorous monitoring.
The strategic use of	The school has adequate resources that it uses effectively to promote

resources	learning. Financial decisions are based on very good planning. Fiscal control is very good.
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Overall, there is a good match of staff to the demands of the curriculum. Learning resources and accommodation are satisfactory. The school very effectively applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and behave well. • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible. • The school works effectively with parents. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school expects the children to work hard. • Teaching is good and the school is well led. • There have been good improvements since the last inspection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities. • Greater amount of information on the curriculum.

The inspection team agrees with most of the positive views expressed by parents but found that teaching was finely balanced between satisfactory and good rather than good overall. The team found that the range of activities outside lessons was satisfactory, but agreed with the view of the parents that the amount of curricular information they receive is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Since the last inspection the school has made good, and sometimes very good, improvements in all subjects, except history and geography, which have deteriorated. It has made particularly good improvements in science, design and technology and ICT at Key Stage 2.
2. The results of the assessments when children start school show that attainment on entry is above average. They make satisfactory progress throughout the Reception year, and most are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in all of the areas of learning. Children are confident and well behaved, and they concentrate well. However, within the classrooms they are given only limited opportunities to take part in independent activities through which they can develop their own initiative, and investigate and explore the environment. Most children know their phonic sounds and letter names but have too few opportunities to use this knowledge in their independent writing. Many form letters correctly and produce writing that is consistent in size. The children enjoy reading and do so with teachers and other adult helpers. Most count to 20 and beyond. They carry out simple addition and understand the concept of more and take away. They weigh objects and understand the concept of heavier.
3. The Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests results for 2000, in terms of average points, are well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with those in similar schools, pupils are well above average in writing and above average in reading and mathematics.
4. The school's results have improved gradually over a three-year period. This is due to the effective implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and of the good planning to support them. Over time, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The results of optional tests taken in Years 3 and 4 show that the school gradually improves on standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1.
5. On the evidence of lessons seen, pupils' work, and displays, standards at Key Stage 1 are being maintained in English and are slightly lower in mathematics. In mathematics, pupils achieve well in their practical work and satisfactorily in their written work. Standards for the current Year 4 are above expectations in mathematics and in line with expectations in English. There is a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in this cohort, and this causes lower standards in Year 4 than in previous years.
6. Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations. Pupils are articulate. They have suitable, if infrequent, opportunities to develop their speaking skills through a variety of discussions across the curriculum. They speak confidently and accurately, and readily employ the technical vocabulary entailed in different subjects. Pupils listen well in lessons, and this contributes to their learning. Pupils are confident and expressive readers, and reading is well above expectations. Pupils have good levels of understanding except in Year 4, where the

lower attaining pupils are less confident and have weaknesses in their understanding. Standards are well above expectations in writing. Pupils very quickly learn to write and spell correctly, and creative aspects of their writing are well developed. They write well in a variety of contexts and by Year 4 write appropriately for a variety of different audiences. However, not enough attention is given to ensuring that pupils punctuate their written work accurately and this affects its overall quality.

7. In mathematics, pupils achieve above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. By the end of Key Stage 1 they order numbers to 1000, and have a clear understanding of place value to 3 digits. In Year 4 they are able to recognise and name number up to 10,000, recognise doubles, and explain rotational symmetry and simple fractions.

8. Standards in science are above average at the end of both key stages. By the end of Year 2 pupils can make good observations, record these and label the accompanying diagrams accurately. They know some of the requirements of a healthy lifestyle. Higher and average attaining pupils in Year 4 understand how to carry out an investigation, showing the process required, recording their results and using this information to reach conclusions. Lower attaining pupils find more difficulty in reaching a conclusion based on their evidence.

9. Standards in ICT are above expectations at both key stages. The school has worked very hard to improve pupils' competence, and has been successful. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know how to word process their work using a variety of fonts. Using bricks, they make a course for a floor robot to travel along, and they record the instructions required. Pupils in Year 2/3 use 'Pages' to type text, delete words, and leave spaces for calligrams to be inserted. They use 'Dazzle' to illustrate different woodland images. Year 4 pupils download pictures from the Internet to illustrate their work.

10. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum. For example, pupils write evaluations of their work in design and technology, and write up their experiments in science. Their numeracy skills are less well developed, though they use their measuring skills in science.

11. Standards in all other subjects of the curriculum are in line with expectations, except history and geography, which are below expectations. There was insufficient evidence to allow a judgement on standards in music.

12. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support from the learning support assistants, enabling them to make good progress within these sessions. In class lessons, they make progress in line with that of their peers.

13. In Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment in English and ICT, and satisfactorily in almost all other areas of the curriculum. Pupils generally achieve well in Key Stage 2 as a result of the good quality teaching they receive in the Year 3/4 class. Pupils at both key stages make unsatisfactory progress in history and geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Ninetyfour per cent of the parents who returned the parents' questionnaire confirmed that their children like school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. The good attitudes noted in the previous inspection report have been improved.
15. Children in the Foundation Stage learn positive attitudes by observing the very good relationships between their parents, carers and teachers. They enjoy meeting other children, and are confident and secure in classroom and school routines. The children relate very well to adults, listen to them attentively, and are well behaved. When working alone or in groups they are encouraged to complete activities.
16. Pupils come to school enthusiastically. They enjoy lessons and, when given opportunities, can work independently without needing close supervision. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, and are keen to answer questions and participate in discussions. Very good attitudes were observed in a Year 3/4 English lesson, where higher attaining pupils were reading playscripts aloud, with expression and some vivacity, without disturbing the calm learning environment in the classroom.
17. Pupils work well in groups, readily exchanging ideas, sharing materials and often making very good use of time. For example, in a Year 3/4 physical education lesson, pupils working in pairs quickly choreographed and performed simple dance sequences, allowing the lesson to progress at very good pace. Very good attitudes were seen in an extra-curricular chess club, where three parent volunteers supervised eight pupils.
18. No unsatisfactory attitudes were observed but, in many lessons where attitudes were satisfactory or good, pupils fidgeted and gossiped intermittently. In a satisfactory Year 2/3 mathematics lesson, some time was wasted because pupils had failed to listen attentively to the teacher's instructions. There are no differences in attitude between pupils of different levels of attainment. In discussion with visitors, pupils are all proud of their achievements.
19. Behaviour in classes and in the open areas of the school is good, and has maintained the standard noted during the previous inspection. Pupils are thoughtful, and mutually respectful. Behaviour is sometimes inconsistent in classrooms when pupils are grouped on small carpeted areas to receive instructions at the beginnings of lessons. Very good behaviour was seen in a Year 2/3 physical education lesson where pupils were practising hockey skills in the confined space of the school hall. The behaviour of the youngest pupils in the Reception class is often very good. Behaviour is particularly good in the playground at morning break and lunchtime, when pupils' choice of activities is very limited.
20. Brief 'golden rules' for behaviour are displayed in most classrooms. Pupils conform to the rules, and behaviour is consistently impressive in the Year 3/4 class, where the class teacher understands and practises advanced skills in behaviour management.

21. At the pre-inspection meeting, some parents expressed concern about occasional incidents of bullying or aggression. Discussions with parents and pupils during the inspection indicated that pupils have no personal concerns about oppressive behaviour by other pupils. Parents confirmed that reported incidents are dealt with very effectively.

22. Pupils' personal development is good overall. All pupils willingly carry out everyday duties in classrooms and, when given opportunities, as monitors throughout the school. An informal 'special friend' system allocates older pupils to look after new children in the Reception class at morning break and lunchtime, until they are settled in school routines. Each year group is represented on the school council, and several initiatives proposed by pupils of all ages have been implemented. For example, playground equipment and litter bins have been provided as a result of their recommendations.

23. Within the curriculum, opportunities for personal development are sometimes limited by classroom layout. Where tables are arranged in long rows, collaboration between pupils is generally restricted to paired working. For example, in a Year 3/4 English lesson, where pupils were successfully performing playscripts, one group of six was standing because the classroom table arrangement was not easily adaptable.

24. Relationships are very good in the Reception class and throughout the school. Pupils respond politely and confidently to each other and to adults. They are not afraid to be seen to make mistakes, and they are mutually supportive. Each member of the school community has equal status and receives sensitive and effective support at work and play.

25. Attendance is good, and has a positive effect upon pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils arrive punctually at school, and they settle quickly to work. Registration periods are efficient. Lessons begin promptly during the day. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

26. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, when 25 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. Of the teaching seen, 53 per cent was good, 42 per cent satisfactory, and 5 per cent unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in English and in the Year 3/4 class. In all other lessons it is mainly satisfactory.

27. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy is good across the school. Planning in most classes is detailed and shows good evidence of assessment being used to inform planning for groups and individuals. Work is firmly based on guidance from the national strategies, and ensures that pupil's skills are developed systematically. However, In one class the planning for literacy is insufficiently detailed to provide a good basis for lessons.

28. There is a good level of challenge for pupils, and teachers effectively explain new concepts. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson the teacher explained, step by step, strategies for adding large numbers. This greatly helped pupils' learning because they were able to explain in the plenary how they completed similar addition sums. Good questioning by teachers generally

encourages an enthusiastic response from pupils. They are keen to demonstrate their skills and explain their thinking. Teachers make good use of technical vocabulary, and pupils internalise, use and understand the terms. For example, in a Year 2/3 literacy lesson pupils clearly understood the term 'anthology' and referred to its meaning during their group reading. The teachers manage the literacy and numeracy lessons well and this leads to a good work ethos, sustained concentration, and a quiet atmosphere. This occasionally lapses when the class teacher does not give clear instructions and pupils are uncertain of what to do. For example, in a Year 2/3 mathematics lesson, pupils were uncertain of how to carry out the weighing activities. Most lessons are well managed, although sometimes pupils continue talking while the teacher is giving instructions or explanations. This adversely affects the concentration of the entire class. In lessons, teachers make good use of parents and support staff to help groups of pupils. For example, in guided reading in Year 2/3, parents and support staff are used well to provide help for small groups of pupils.

29. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of opportunities to develop literacy through other subjects, particularly design and technology and science. Numeracy is less well used across the curriculum, although there is some evidence for its use in science. Teachers make good use of on-going assessment to ensure that work is matched to pupils' needs, and this helps learning. Most teachers mark work conscientiously, but marking is not well used to set clear and specific targets for improvement that can be shared with pupils, and it is not monitored for outcome.

30. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support. Work is matched to their needs through the targets identified in their individual education plans.

31. In many lessons there are good features which contribute to pupils' learning. Most teachers expect pupils to behave well and have a responsible attitude to work. This is clearly reflected in the many lessons where pupils concentrate, listen carefully to the teacher and have good motivation to learn. For example, in a music lesson in a Year 3/4 class, pupils were determined to play a simple rhythm on their recorders in unison. They listened carefully to the teacher, then practised the notes individually and finally as a class. They were delighted when they achieved their objective. Teachers' good relationships with their pupils create good learning opportunities. Most teachers make good use of demonstration and explanation to help pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2/3 dance lesson, the teacher's demonstration of dance movements improved pupils own dance sequences. In the good lessons, teachers are well prepared and have good subject knowledge, and lessons are challenging and proceed at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils and make them think. For example, in a Reception/Year 1 literacy session the pupils were encouraged to think about the persona of the Wolf when discussing his characteristics; how he looked, how he behaved, and his good and bad characteristics. Planning is generally good, with learning intentions clearly defined, and this provides a good basis for teaching the lesson.

32. Weak features in some lessons affect the rate of pupils' progress. Occasionally, teachers tolerate high levels of interruption by pupils, which breaks the continuity of the lessons.

33. For example, in a science lesson in Year 2/3, pupils continually interrupted the teacher after they had been asked specifically not to do so. This resulted in many of the class losing interest. In lessons where teachers do not focus effectively on the subject content and skills, pupils do not learn

as much as they could. For example, in a Year R/1 geography lesson pupils did not learn a great deal about transport, the specific characteristics of an island or the particular types of transport, because the teacher did not focus on the geographical elements.

34. In the unsatisfactory lesson, pupils were not questioned effectively to draw out their subject knowledge, relevant words were not displayed to help children record their work, and the follow up activities were colouring activities rather than subject-based.

35. Effective use is made of regular homework, such as reading, spelling and tables. Older pupils are encouraged to carry out projects at home. Parents generally support their children's work at home.

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

36. Curriculum deficiencies were a key issue in the previous inspection report. Design and technology was not firmly established, many programmes of study were superficial, and schemes of work were inadequate. Although these issues have been successfully addressed, some weaknesses in the curriculum remain. The curricula for history and geography are superficially covered. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory but children are often required to be passive learners, rather than allowed to discover things for themselves. Planning for multicultural education is inconsistent through the school, and is unsatisfactory overall. The predominant cultures are western and Christian.

37. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented, and time is well used in all sessions. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is very effective, and includes specialised content for relationships, personal safety and drugs misuse. Overall, the curriculum is adequately broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Staff make good use of curriculum advice from many sources, including guidance from the local education authority.

38. The school's long term planning is satisfactory. All subjects have policies and relevant schemes of work. Planning for teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school, though it does not always include separate activities for each year group in mixed age classes. The use of teaching assistants is good. They participate fully in lessons, and their skills and experiences are used to the full.

39. The provision of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory in this small school, where all staff have numerous responsibilities. An activity is offered on most days in summer term, and on many days in other terms. These activities are open to all children, and attendance is good.

40. Equality of access and opportunity is good in the planned curriculum. The school provides well for pupils of both genders and all ages. Pupils with special educational needs are identified soon after they start in the Foundation Stage. Provision is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice for these pupils are well met, ensuring good quality access to the curriculum.

41. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good, and maintains the standards noted in the previous inspection report. A variety of trips, visitors and events broadens pupils' experiences and encourages their personal development. The school hosts the annual village fete, a major local event, but community use of the site and buildings is otherwise limited. Day visits are arranged to local places of interest, including Salisbury Cathedral, a theatre, a farm and a water treatment works. Biennial residential visits to Poole are arranged for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Occasional visitors, including a local historian, are welcomed from the community. Local sponsorship contributes to the high standards of presentation of some school documents.

42. The school participates in a dual-county local consortium of schools, and has very close and productive links with other first schools. Good links are established with an on-site playgroup, and with a number of middle schools. The isolated location of Semley village means that student teachers rarely undertake teaching experience in the school.

43. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and maintains the standard noted during the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development is good. School assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness. Each assembly begins with the lighting of a candle to remind pupils that God is with them. In an assembly seen during the inspection, pupils took part by acting the story of Noah's Ark. There is a very good relationship with the church adjacent to the school site. The vicar frequently visits the school to lead assemblies. Pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 made a 'pilgrimage' to Salisbury Cathedral. They photographed the event, though they were not invited to write about their feelings to help their spiritual awareness. Pupils in the Foundation Stage have good opportunities to reflect upon people and possessions that are special to them. In Key Stage 2, pupils are aware of environmental issues affecting the village. They have made posters to illustrate their view that walking to school is more environmentally friendly than being brought by car.

44. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. A sense of value is promoted in assemblies. All adults set strong moral examples, and the very positive relationships in the school encourage good behaviour and self-discipline in all pupils. Pupils are trustworthy, and have no fear of their possessions being misappropriated. All adults make good use of praise; they value pupils' ideas and celebrate individual achievement. Pupils know and respect the rules displayed in all classrooms. They have great pride in their school, and show respect for teachers and the other adults who help them every day. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the needs of others. Instances of aggressive behaviour or bullying are rare, and are dealt with sensitively and firmly by staff.

45. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good. At lunchtimes, pupils in all year groups share tables amicably. The school emphasises the qualities of care, respect for others and self-discipline. In lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils have many opportunities to work amicably in small groups, though these groups are often of single gender.

46. Pupils learn to co-operate, share ideas and equipment, and communicate effectively. Educational visits, school journeys and visitors to school contribute to pupils' social education.

47. In all classes, pupils have some responsibilities for tidiness and taking care of resources, but teachers do not fully develop their independence. Pupils raise money for several charities each year, including the NSPCC. At Christmas, they sing carols to elderly people in a local care home.

48. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Through local initiatives, including the village fete, and musical activities with other schools, pupils have opportunities to learn about their own culture. They took part in a Millennium event in Salisbury. However, they have few insights into other faiths and cultures. In classrooms, books and artefacts represent a limited variety of cultures and ethnic types. A picture of Guru Nanak is prominently displayed in the hall but, during the inspection, pupils questioned in Years 3 and 4 could not recall his name or any detail of his ministry, apart from the fact that he was 'good'.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school's safe and caring environment has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve.

50. There are good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The teacher nominated as the responsible officer for child protection is conscientious and well informed, but has not participated recently in formal training sessions. All staff, including teaching assistants and midday assistants, understand child protection issues. They have been trained in everyday procedures, and put them into practice discreetly, but midday assistants are not provided individually with written guidelines on child protection procedures.

51. The school has implemented the local education authority's health and safety policy, including procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out of school visits. Good health and safety practice is supplemented by regular risk assessments. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the playgrounds at break times and lunchtimes. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid, and all staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils.

52. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well, and are skilled in assessing their needs. Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers and from the head teacher, who is accessible and reassuring. Teachers formally record details of pupils' personal development, with additional details on checklists completed by the pupils. Some pupil checklists are linked to specific events and topics. This unusually detailed system is very effective in recording year-on-year progress, and areas for development. The school's learning assistants are skilled in curriculum and social support, and they develop good relationships with pupils.

53. A booklet for completion at home is part of the warm welcome offered to parents when their children join the Reception class. Pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines. Good procedures in Year 4 prepare pupils for transfer to middle school.

54. The behaviour policy is good, and promotes good behaviour in the school building and in the playground. Specific rules are displayed in most classrooms, and pupils conform to the high expectations of behaviour. The anti-bullying policy is not displayed, but the provisions of the policy are put into practice consistently and thoroughly. Pupils have few concerns about bullying. They know that discussions and a reconciliation process counter the few reported incidents. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy on the use of force by staff or on procedures for noting incidents of restraint of pupils.

55. The school's system of merit awards acknowledges good behaviour, good work, and effort. Each week, during an assembly, 'star' pupils receive attractive certificates signed by their class teacher and the headteacher. Additionally, class teachers use a variety of informal merit systems. The school functions very well as a happy and orderly community.

56. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. Attendance figures are monitored weekly. Unexplained absences from school are immediately investigated, and unauthorised absences are meticulously recorded.

57. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic progress is good and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was identified as a key issue for action. The school has a good policy for assessment. In the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT), teachers can accurately judge pupils' attainment and progress from day to day and over extended periods. In all subjects, teachers use the range of information to help plan lessons and improve attainment. Throughout the school, individual targets set for pupils are helpful in improving test results in Key Stage 1, and standards of work in Year 4.

58. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is good. Baseline Assessment is used to predict future Key Stage 1 results, and to identify children's strengths and weaknesses. The school's procedures for tracking children's attainment begin in the Reception class. Assessment is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and continues the good practice of the Foundation Stage. During the school year, pupils in each class are assessed in all curriculum areas. Individual achievement folders are good. Folders contain samples of pupils' academic work, and indicators of personal development. Pupils in each year group practise self-assessment by using tick sheets to record their achievements.

59. Marking in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school is unsatisfactory, and does not adequately help children to progress. Teachers' handwriting is often too small for pupils to read easily, and comments do not always show clearly how work may be improved. Consequently, mistakes in written work are not always rectified quickly. The national tests in Year 2 are supplemented by similar assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the ends of Years 3 and 4. The results are scrutinised for weaknesses or common errors. End-of-year reports for parents give a good overview of pupils' progress, achievement and attainment, but do not always indicate how pupils' work may be improved.

60. Daily assessment is satisfactory. Learning objectives are frequently shared with pupils, but are not always attained. For example, at the start of a satisfactory Year 3/4 lesson seen, the teacher made the objective clear to pupils but was unaware of the lesson losing direction and failing to

complete the objective. The provision of homework is inconsistent, and homework objectives are sometimes vague.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. Parents' views of the school are generally very favourable. At a pre-inspection meeting for parents, critical views were expressed about provision of curriculum information. These concerns were not shared by most of the parents who returned questionnaires, or by the small number of parents interviewed at length during the inspection. However, the inspectors endorse the view of the pre-inspection meeting, and conclude that although the work of the school is greatly valued and respected by parents, the provision of curriculum information is unsatisfactory.

62. The school has very good links with parents, who are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms their view of good two-way communication, and very good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. Parents and friends provide regular and valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals, and parents' special skills and interests are used to broaden the curriculum.

63. The parents' association (FOSS) organises frequent social and fund raising events, and raises significant amounts of money for the school each year. Recent purchases have included computers, television sets and numerous smaller items for classrooms. Good co-operation is established between the parents' group and the governing body, and some families are active on both committees.

64. The quality of information for parents is mostly good. Regular newsletters are informative about school events and important dates. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy were explained, and parents were invited to observe lessons. The school prospectus includes much useful information and advice for parents but does not contain all the information legally required: number of pupils on roll; percentage of sessions missed through authorised/unauthorised absence; number of pupils in last year's national tests. The most recent governors' annual report to parents complies fully with legal requirements.

65. At two consultation evenings each year, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Annual written reports to parents are of variable quality. Reports show in some detail what children know and can do, but are less consistent in setting targets for improvement. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the Reception class or join other year groups. Parents of pupils in Year 4 are well informed about transfer to middle school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all reviews of their children's individual education plans.

66. Parents demonstrate interest in their children's learning by ensuring regular and punctual attendance, and by helping them to work at home. Teachers are always available to give advice to parents on general or particular issues, but curriculum information is not provided consistently for all parents, and some homework assignments are extremely vague.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. The last inspection report found that the school had serious weaknesses in several aspects of its work. The headteacher has worked extremely hard since then to ensure that these weaknesses have been systematically and conscientiously addressed. She provides good leadership, and has a clear view of the school's direction and appropriate priorities for development. She is well supported by governors, teaching and support staff who are fully committed to school improvement. As found in the last inspection, the school has a strong ethos; relationships at all levels are very good. The school is committed to improvements across the curriculum and is aware that there is still work to be done.

68. The last inspection report criticised the head teacher and co-ordinators for their failure to provide clear curricular leadership, monitor subjects, and for overall curriculum provision.

69. The school now has schemes of work in place for all subjects. Subject co-ordinators monitor their subjects effectively through classroom observations, scrutinising books and checking planning. At present, not all subjects have been covered in depth, as this is a small school and each co-ordinator has responsibility for several subjects. Co-ordinators do however, have appropriate action plans in place for the development of their subjects. In the last report, the school development plan was described as ineffective, and in the early stages of development. The judgement of the current inspection is that although the whole process of school development planning is now good, the success criteria are too general to permit rigorous monitoring.

70. Pupils' performance in English, mathematics, science and information technology has been raised significantly, especially at Key Stage 2. Monitoring of teaching is a regular feature of the school, and teaching has improved significantly. Only 5 per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory, as against 25 per cent at the last inspection, and 53 per cent was good, against the earlier 25 per cent.

71. All staff, including the part-time teacher, have responsibility for co-ordinating several subjects. They are all committed to providing effective leadership and support of all staff through staff meetings, guidance, and monitoring of subject coverage. Provision for English and mathematics is co-ordinated well. All co-ordinators are fully aware of the development needs of their subjects and have clear action plans to help them organise these effectively. The special educational needs co-ordinator successfully organises provision to ensure that support for pupils is well planned and organised.

72. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties thoughtfully and conscientiously. Governors are helping to shape the direction of the school through close involvement in the school development planning process, and through specific training to give them a clearer understanding of their role. For example, the chair of governors was recently involved in the appraisal of the headteacher, after attending training courses to ensure she could carry out the role effectively. She is closely involved with the work of the school and has regular meetings with the headteacher to ensure she is kept informed of all issues. Governors show their commitment to the school through regular attendance at meetings, and through structured visits to the school to observe lessons. These visits, and the work of the various sub-committees, are reported back to the full governing body at its termly meetings.

73. The local education authority, the head teacher and the subject co-ordinators have carried out monitoring of teaching and the curriculum. As a result, staff are developing a clearer understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses. They now need to set more specific targets for improving the quality of teaching, through assessing the important generic qualities required of good teaching and the more subject-specific elements. The school has its performance management policy in place; interviews have been held and targets for some staff have already been set.

74. The school's priorities for development are good and the school development plan is a very useful tool for implementing them. The process is good, involving governors, staff and the local education authority, and it has ensured good commitment to improvement. The main weakness in the plan is a lack of clearly measurable success criteria to help the school identify exactly what it has succeeded in doing.

75. The school makes good strategic use of its resources, including specific grants and other funding. Financial planning is very good, and the school has a costed three-year development plan. The administration officer and headteacher apply bargaining skills and best value principles to the purchases of goods and services. Initial budgeting is the responsibility of the administration officer and the chair of the finance committee. Governors are well informed about financial planning, and have a good overview of the process. The headteacher monitors the effectiveness of financial decisions, including spending on minor resources for curriculum subjects. She knows how the school's costs and standards compare with regional averages.

76. Administrative routines are very good, and the school office functions smoothly. The school's administrator ensures that updated financial information is available to the governors and headteacher. Good systems are established for checking and collating purchases, and paying creditors. An audit in 2000 by the local education authority required two small changes to financial procedures.

77. These changes have been implemented. The audit indicates the proper expenditure of all funds allocated to the school, including those for pupils with special educational needs. The core curriculum is adequately funded. Spending totals for each curriculum area are readily available to staff.

78. The headteacher teaches a Year 2/3 class for an average of three and a half days each week. She meticulously uses the limited time available for administration. The school does not have a deputy headteacher. The senior classroom teacher is allocated regular time for management responsibilities. Other teachers, and teaching assistants, are deployed effectively. Good use is made of the building, external areas, and learning resources.

79. The school has good procedures for inducting, monitoring and supporting teachers. The staff handbook is briefly and clearly written, and contains much essential information.

80. The number of teachers and support staff is well matched to the demands of the curriculum. The teachers are versatile. They have good knowledge of all primary school subjects and, particularly, of their curriculum areas of responsibility. Learning support

assistants are enthusiastic and well trained. In lessons, they provide good support to teachers by working independently with small groups of pupils. Administrative staff and lunchtime assistants contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.

81. Accommodation is satisfactory. The Victorian school building provides a pleasant and secure environment for pupils and staff. The building is in good decorative condition, and most classrooms feature attractive and informative displays of pupils' work. Classrooms are adequate in size for the numbers of pupils, but pupils' tables are not always arranged in a way which will help group work.

82. Classroom furniture is generally in good condition and is suitable for pupils in the primary age range. The library area is spacious, although the room is used as a through-route to classrooms. A small, modern kitchen area is available for food technology lessons.

83. Externally, the playground is in good condition, but is poorly equipped. The field and swimming pool were not in use during the inspection, but appear to be in good condition. The site generally presents no risk to health and safety.

84. The school's learning resources are satisfactory in all subjects. Provision, overall, is similar to the provision noted in the last inspection. Multicultural and multi-ethnic resources are poor, though additional books, artefacts and videotapes to support these topics, and others, are borrowed periodically from a local resource centre. Good selections of books are available for guided reading and the literacy hour. Some library stock is out of date and in need of replacement. Computers and printers are of good quality, and the number of computers available to pupils is similar to the national average for primary schools.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

85. In order to raise standards and enable pupils to make further progress, the governing body, headteacher and staff as a whole team need to:

- Improve teaching where it is weaker or unsatisfactory by :
(*Paragraphs: 28, 32, 33, 34, 109, 110, 132, 141, 163, 184.*)
 - * Improving management of pupils;
 - * Improving teachers' subject knowledge where it is weak;
 - * Ensuring that the subject's focus is clear and guides the entire lesson.

- Improve the marking of pupils' work by:
(*Paragraphs: 39, 59, 98, 122, 127, 162.*)
 - * Ensuring that marking leads to improvements;
 - * Involving pupils directly in the process.

- Improve standards in geography and history by:
(*Paragraphs: 33, 34, 160, 163.*)
 - * Ensuring appropriate subject coverage;
 - * Improving teacher expertise;
 - * Planning in greater detail, particularly with reference to the development of skills.

- Improve pupils' independence and involvement in their own learning by:
(*Paragraphs: 2, 93, 95, 107, 112, 122.*)
 - * Giving them greater opportunities to discuss their work in groups, ask questions, and pose their own problems and find solutions.

86. In addition, the school may wish to consider the following minor issues:

- * Ensuring that the use of the outdoor area is a regular feature of the under fives curriculum;
- * Providing more effectively for multicultural education within the curriculum and across the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	53	42	5	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	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	68
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	11

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	8	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10(6)	10(6)	12(6)
	Girls	8(13)	8(13)	8(13)
	Total	18(19)	18(19)	20(19)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90(95)	90(95)	100(95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10(6)	11(6)	12(6)
	Girls	8(13)	8(13)	8(13)
	Total	18(19)	19(19)	20(19)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90(95)	95(95)	100(95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	67
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	22.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff:

YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29

Qualified teachers and support staff:

Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	147830.00
Total expenditure	151252.00
Expenditure per pupil	2044.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	15823.00
Balance carried forward to next year	12401.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	68
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	17	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	34	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	46	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	43	9	3	3
The teaching is good.	74	23	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	20	9	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	11	0	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	71	23	0	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	17	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	34	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	31	17	6	3

Other issues raised by parents

Lack of information on the curriculum.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

87. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Children enter the Reception/Year 1 class in the year of their fifth birthday, and the oldest children attend full-time from September. Younger children attend part-time until January. Currently, the class includes nine Reception children, and fourteen in Year 1. Three children are identified as having special educational needs. No children have English as an additional language.

88. At the time of the children's entry to the Reception class, attainment is above average. When children begin Year 1 they have made satisfactory progress in all areas of learning. Their speaking skills are particularly good, and their high level of attainment is confirmed by Baseline Assessment. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified. They receive additional help from a trained classroom assistant, and are fully integrated into all classroom and school activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

89. Children entering the Reception/Year 1 class have personal and social skills above the standard expected for their age. They are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. All the adults are good role models. The majority of children speak very confidently to each other and to adults. They are encouraged by adults and older children in the class to take part in all activities. Consequently, they are fully integrated in the classroom and are unafraid to make mistakes. All children learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between their parents, carers and teachers. Their concentration is very good. For example, when they accurately count on in ones as they pass the teddy round the circle.

90. The warm welcome extended each day by teachers gives the children confidence in classroom and school routines.

91. All relationships are good in the Foundation Stage. Children learn to wait patiently for their turns in activities, and they amicably share equipment. Year 1 pupils' help Reception children by showing them in detail how to manipulate buttons and knot their ties. Subsequently, the more advanced Reception children help each other.

92. Children have a good understanding of their own faith. They remember to thank God each day for their food. All children have contributed to an attractive wall display of special people, including their own places in the family, school, and wider world. However, they learn little about other faiths and cultures. A selection of ethnic artefacts and other materials is available from a central source, but the school's own resources are very limited.

93. Teaching is satisfactory. The teacher constantly praises the children's kindness to each other. When given opportunities, children work independently. However, the teacher too often directs

activities, and children do not often initiate their own thoughts and ideas. The management of behaviour is satisfactory.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

94. When children enter the Reception class, their attainment in this area of learning is above average for children of similar age. They make satisfactory progress, and most are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception year.

95. Most children have good vocabulary when they enter the Reception class. They can verbalise their ideas and emotions, and sustain conversations with older children. For example, when eating their lunch they discuss their morning's work with older pupils. In lessons they respond thoughtfully to questions. The Reception class teacher extends their vocabulary by asking good questions to make them reflect on characters in familiar stories. In a good lesson seen, the character of the Wolf in the story of the Three Pigs was mercilessly dissected! In general, however, children are not given enough opportunities to discuss and plan their own ideas, although they are capable of doing so.

96. Children listen attentively to their teacher's stories and instructions. All children understand that pictures tell stories, and that print conveys meaning. They turn the pages of familiar books and remember the sequence of the words. These skills are developed when children take their reading books home to read with their parents. Some parents return books with helpful comments for the class teacher. All children respond to familiar songs.

97. All children in the Foundation stage can identify a few sounds. Phonics teaching is good, and careful records note the children's progress. Children recognise their names and the names of some of their friends. Higher attaining children can recognise some familiar words.

98. Children are learning to write their first names. Lower attaining children learn by tracing their names. In these sessions, parents and carers are invited to work with their children and reinforce at home the correct letter formation demonstrated in school. However, children are not consistently shown how to hold their pencils correctly. A few children are able to write and copy familiar words. In writing sessions, content is too often initiated by the teacher. The classroom does not have a designated writing area where children can experiment with their own writing. Consequently, they do not write pretend-letters to friends or to their favourite authors. Written work in books is neat, but marking is unsatisfactory and does not adequately help children to progress.

99. Teaching is consistently good. The teacher had good knowledge of the Early Learning Goals, and she uses good questions to explore children's understanding and guide their learning. For example, she helped children to define the unpleasant characteristics of the Wolf in the story of the Three Pigs.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

100. When children enter the Reception class, their attainment in this area of learning is above the average for children of similar age.

101. Evidence from the single lesson observed, and from scrutiny of work and interviews with children, indicates that most are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

102. Children in the Foundation stage sing and enjoy number rhymes. They count objects accurately to ten, and recognise figures from 1 to 10. They count random objects accurately to five. They estimate correctly that a tray with more objects on it is likely to be heavier than a tray with fewer objects.

103. Children have made accurate repeated patterns, using paint and stencils. Reception children understand language such as 'more' and 'take away' but do not understand 'less than'. With some help from a teaching assistant, they calculate on a number line that seven objects require the addition of three more to make ten objects. A few children can write their age. They write most numbers to ten but sometimes write them backwards. Work in their books is neat, and the teacher's marking is conscientious. However, the style and content of marking are not easily understood by the children, and do not help their progress. Reception children recognise several two-dimensional shapes, such as triangle, oval and diamond. They understand the sequence of the days of the week. They can solve simple problems, using the computer.

104. Teaching is good. Children greatly enjoyed the single mathematics lesson observed, and good teaching enabled them to make good progress. Their concentration, sustained for a full hour, was punctuated with much laughter.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

105. When children enter the Reception class, their attainment in this area of learning is above the average for children of similar age. They make satisfactory progress, and are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception year.

106. The teacher has imaginatively used the class reading book to teach the children about islands. They know that they will find seagulls near water. They know the difference between metal and plastic objects in their Treasure Island box. They explain the differences between a working ferryboat and a leisure sailing boat. A good wall display of an island reminds children of previous work.

107. When the children made cardboard faces with moving eyes to show different expressions, the teacher had too much influence on the design and making processes. Children competently use glue and spreaders, but they do not have enough opportunities to experiment with different methods of joining materials.

108. Children know that some materials and substances change when heated. However, they have few opportunities to discover how things happen and why things work. They have good understanding of the changing seasons. For example, they know the winter months of December, January and February.

109. All children have good understanding of the local environment, though in a geography lesson in which the teacher was reading a story aloud, many opportunities were missed to teach geographical skills. Planning for this lesson was inadequate. Reception children can sort vehicles into sets of land, sea and air transport, an activity which reinforces their mathematical skills. In most lessons, the Reception class teacher makes good use of the classroom computers. Children confidently use the mouse, and they have produced some good, computer-based work in English, mathematics and creative activities.

110. In a science lesson, where teaching was unsatisfactory, children were asked to describe the appearance and texture of materials, including ice and butter. The questions limited the number of possible answers, and the children simply repeated the same words, or made no contribution to the discussion. In this extended session, the children were restive and little learning was evident. Overall, teaching is satisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

111. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. The Reception teacher successfully develops children's colour awareness. They identify many colours, including purple and turquoise, and have some understanding of mixing colours. They paint and make collage pictures using a wide variety of materials. Their drawings are mature, but they have few opportunities to express their own ideas using different media. During the inspection, no music teaching was observed.

112. Imaginative play and role-play are satisfactory. During a mathematics lesson children successfully played at being ferry passengers and captain, and periodically calculated how many seats were empty. This activity was well planned and well led but, generally, children have too few opportunities to initiate their own role-play. They enjoy some imaginative play on their Treasure Island and show great excitement when demonstrating their box of jewels. They have written imaginative stories on computers about what or who they would prefer to be. For example, one child wrote that she would like to be a mermaid. Another would like to be a dragon. Teaching is satisfactory.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

113. By the end of the Foundation stage, many children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals. They make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. In summer, the Reception teacher swims with the children in the school's outdoor pool. During the inspection, children learned how to play touch Rugby. In this satisfactory lesson, the children made very good use of space. During the

warm-up session they responded well to the teacher's instructions, and they understood the significance of their hearts beating rapidly. They confidently joined in team games with the older children in the class.

114. No permanent, fixed apparatus is available in the playground to enable children to climb, slide, jump or balance. During physical education lessons in the playground, children ride bicycles and play with small and large portable equipment. However, at morning break and at lunchtime, equipment is not regularly offered to them, and playground activity is limited to talking and running about. At these times, many informal opportunities are missed to develop children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. Children's fine manipulative skills are well developed. They can button their school shirts. Although the children can use scissors, adults often cut out their work on display.

ENGLISH

115. In the Year 2000 national tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in reading and writing was well above the national average. In comparison with those of similar schools, results were above average in reading and well above average in writing. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection. There were no significant variations in attainment related to gender. Standards in reading and writing have gradually improved over a three-year period. The school has worked hard to achieve this through a number of initiatives, and the results are evidence of its success. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The inspection findings are similar to the test results for pupils in Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, standards are in line with expectations. Cohorts are fairly small, and the fact that Year 4 has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs affects the overall standards achieved by this year group.

116. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is above expectations. They enter school with above average skills, and make satisfactory progress in developing them as they move through the school. Most pupils listen well in lessons; when given opportunities they are keen to ask and answer questions. In a Reception/Year 1 lesson when discussing the character of the wolf, the pupils listened very attentively to the teacher's introduction and were very keen to offer their contributions, such as 'horrible', 'clever', 'sly'. By the time they are in the Year 2/3 class pupils listen and offer more detailed explanations of the work they are doing. For example, when talking about the qualities that describe animals, pupils use words such as 'powerful' to describe the elephant and 'fierce' to describe the rhinoceros. The teacher makes good use of technical vocabulary which pupils clearly understand. For example, pupils clearly understood the terms 'compound words' 'anthology' and 'fable' and were able to talk about their use. Pupils in Year 3/4 clearly understand terms such as 'verb', 'adjective', 'dedication' (in a book), and explain their meanings clearly and concisely. They listen very well to their teacher and, in responding, they can adapt their language to the needs of the listener. In one lesson, good use of the plenary enabled pupils to read their poems to the class and to receive suggestions for improvement. However, pupils have too few opportunities within lessons to develop their speaking skills. Across the curriculum, pupils are given too few opportunities to explain their thinking, or to talk about what they are doing.

117. Attainment in reading is well above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with expectations by the end of Year 4. Pupils enter the school with good pre-reading skills and, through effective teaching and good support from parents at home, they make good gains in this area of learning. The school makes good use of well-structured group reading sessions to improve pupils' reading skills. For example, in the Year 3/4 class some pupils act out parts from a play while others consider the use of words within the text. However, this good focus on reading is not supplemented by effective reading records to monitor progress and provide specifically for the next steps in pupils' learning. This hampers progress. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 read competently and with expression. They use phonic skills to decode unknown words, and are already familiar with many book conventions and punctuation marks. Average and lower attaining pupils have acquired a reasonable sight vocabulary. They read simple texts accurately, if hesitantly. They are less keen to use phonic skills to help with their reading. By Year 2, most pupils are confident readers and are keen to discuss the books of particular authors. For example, one pupil enjoys Roald Dahl's books 'because they are exciting' and describes some of the exciting parts. Higher attaining pupils read non-fiction texts competently and extract information via the contents page. Most pupils in Year 3 are able readers. They read fluently and with expression, and use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate and find information. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use inference and deduction. They refer to the text when explaining their views. Pupils in Year 4 vary widely in their reading ability. Some are very confident and able; others are hesitant and lacking in fluency. Higher attaining pupils read well, clearly express ideas about the stories, and have good understanding of a range of written work. Lower attaining pupils read hesitantly, and have difficulty explaining the text. One pupil completely misunderstood the whole thrust of the Mrs Pepperpot story because its concept was too difficult for her level of understanding.

118. Attainment in writing is well above expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, and in line with expectations in Year 4. However, pupils are generally much better at the creative aspects of writing than at the mechanics, and this is linked to the lack of emphasis on the latter in the teaching of writing. Although teachers note weaknesses in punctuation when marking pupils' work, they do not always follow them up or set specific targets to help pupils improve their work through small, measurable steps. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher and average attaining pupils use capital letters and full stops inconsistently. Pupils write sentences of good length and use a variety of good connections such as 'because' and 'while'. Sometimes, good use is made of vocabulary such as 'quiet footsteps' or 'whistling wind'. Writing is lively, and links between ideas and events are clear. Handwriting is not joined and letters are not always well formed or consistent in size. The school is now using a handwriting scheme to address weaknesses in handwriting. Spelling of a range of regular words is generally correct, and the school provides effective support to develop pupils' spelling, through dictation and spelling tests. By the end of Year 4, the writing of higher attaining pupils is generally neat, joined and legible. Spelling skills are well developed. Writing is organised and ideas are developed logically. Many make good use of descriptions in their work. For example, in their extended writing on 'Meeting The Iron Woman' they used good descriptions such as 'My bones shivered', 'I said fearfully'. However, some average and lower attaining pupils are still not using capital letters and full stops consistently, and their writing is not always joined.

119. All pupils correctly use different forms of writing, as, for instance, when reporting on scientific experiments.

120. Progress is good as pupils move through the school, and most pupils enjoy the literacy sessions. In all lessons they stay on task. During whole class and group work they show a good level of commitment to their work and are keen to participate.

121. Teaching in both key stages is consistently good. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and is used well to inform and improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. Questioning is used effectively to focus on important aspects of literacy. For example, through imaginative questioning by the teacher, pupils in Reception/Year 1 learnt how to set out a letter to send to the Wolf.

122. Pupils make good gains in their learning through explaining what they mean, or suggesting improvements to their own or others' work. Most lessons contain a good level of challenge for pupils and they contribute well. In all lessons pupils are managed well and this gives them confidence to contribute. This was a particularly notable feature of the Year 3/4 class. Teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to ensure that work matches pupils' needs. The main weaknesses in teaching are that teachers are mainly didactic in their approach to teaching and do not share targets, to help pupils improve their work in the short term.

123. English is well managed by the co-ordinator, who is aware of the areas within the subject still requiring development. She has ensured that structured group reading is in place in all classes, and that there is a focus for learning in each group. She has introduced the 'First Steps' tracking record, which highlights what pupils can do and helps teachers identify the next steps in pupil learning. She has undertaken monitoring of teaching, and has clearly identified areas for improvement. The school has good procedures for assessment and uses this information to set targets for pupils or identify areas of weakness within the curriculum, but these targets are general rather than specific. Individual and group reading records have limited value, as they are not based on a developmental profile of pupils' emerging and developing reading skills.

124. The school has an attractive library but individual classes make limited use of it for research purposes or to develop library skills. The school has a good level of books to support group reading activities. Books overall are generally of reasonable quality and quantity. Literacy is used well across the curriculum. For example, pupils write evaluations in design and technology, instructions for science investigations, and expressions of their feelings about particular colours in art.

MATHEMATICS

124. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000 for Year 2 pupils, the proportion achieving the expected Level 2 was significantly above the national average for all schools, and well above the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level was well above the national average for all schools, and above the average for similar schools. These figures represent significant improvement since the previous inspection. There are no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The trend in results over time is upwards. The inspection findings are lower than the test results for Key Stage 1; attainment is above, rather than well above, expectations. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Pupils' attainment is good

when they leave the school at the end of Year 4, and they make good progress in the Year 3/4 class.

125. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils of average attainment can read numbers to 999. They know that units are unchanged when 10 is subtracted from a number exceeding 10. When writing numbers, pupils of below average attainment sometimes write digits back to front. Similar errors are repeated on many successive pages of pupils' workbooks. In written work, where progress is generally satisfactory, teachers' marking is inconsistent and is sometimes poor. For example, misspellings are not always corrected and, where comments are applied, teachers' writing is often too small to be easily read by children.

126. In Key Stage 1, pupils of average attainment can identify lines of symmetry. Using a computer, they have designed and printed symmetrical mosaics based on Roman originals. They can recognise many two and three-dimensional shapes, and can describe some of them. Pupils of above average attainment know the characteristics of various pyramids. However, they cannot confidently tell the time. Many believe that ten minutes equal half an hour. They can estimate values of weight and length. For example, granulated sugar in a cup was fairly estimated to weigh 100 grams. Pupils used a computer data-handling program to compile block graphs of their foot sizes, and they attractively printed the results.

127. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in mathematical skills. For example, in numeracy, pupils of above average attainment in Year 2 understand place value in hundreds, tens and units, and can manipulate three-digit numbers by mental arithmetic. In measurement, their understanding improves greatly as they learn to weigh in grams and kilos.

128. In Year 4, pupils of average attainment can add or subtract 10 from a four-digit number. They have satisfactory knowledge of fractions, and can calculate how many objects are represented by a fraction of the whole number. For example, they know that $\frac{3}{8}$ of a row of twentyfour houses is nine houses. Pupils of above average attainment apply good knowledge of tables to their calculations. They know that a heptagon has seven sides, and a decagon has ten sides. They confidently use the symbols for *more than* and *less than*. The school hall contains a good display about problem solving, which includes mathematical problems devised by pupils in each year group, and word-processed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4. However, pupils of below average attainment are not always provided with adequate counting aids to supplement their mental calculations. Pupils develop numeracy skills by compiling a variety of tally charts. For example, in a Year 2/3 geography lesson, they tallied types of litter in the school playground. In written work in history, in Year 3/4, they show good understanding of the Roman system of numerals. Throughout the school, pupils play mathematical board games, but some opportunities for teaching numeracy are missed. For example, teachers do not involve pupils when counting attendance during morning and afternoon registration periods.

129. Pupils work well together, often collaborating in pairs or groups across the class age range. In all year groups, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by trained teaching assistants. Occasionally, they are taught individually or in small groups away from their classrooms.

130. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Fifty per cent of the lessons seen were good and 50 per cent were satisfactory. In a good Reception/Year 1 lesson seen, the teacher used imaginative games to improve pupils' mental arithmetic, and she provided advanced work for older pupils. In this lesson, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were very good. They sustained concentration for an hour, and

completed successive activities without disturbance or loss of time. In a good Year 2/3 lesson, individuals in all attainment groups were asked specific, targeted questions. In a satisfactory Year 2/3 lesson, where pupils were estimating and checking the weights of quantities of sand and water, time was lost through unsatisfactory classroom management. Pupils' organisational skills and independence were inadequate for the complexity of the task. In this lesson, although pupils' attitudes were satisfactory overall, the class gossiped while the teacher was talking, and some pupils were unclear about the lesson objectives. In a satisfactory Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher followed up an initial estimation by pupils, explaining very clearly how a large number could be totalled by a series of simple steps. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good in all year groups.

131. The mathematics policy and scheme of work are detailed and relevant. The school has responded very well to the requirements of the national strategy for numeracy. Teachers' planning is usually satisfactory, and assessment is good. Samples of each pupil's work are filed in individual achievement folders, and achievements noted on a cumulative record. Regular whole-class assessments are completed, and test results are analysed to identify weaknesses.

132. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has other major curriculum responsibilities. She attends many courses, and has arranged training sessions for staff in school. Her own teaching is a major strength of the subject. She monitors teaching regularly, but she does not have time to work closely in classrooms with other members of staff.

133. The range and quality of resources for mathematics is satisfactory. All resources are in good condition, and are accessible to staff and pupils.

SCIENCE

134. In the year 2000 teacher assessments, pupils' attainment both at the expected Level 2 and at the higher Level 3 was high in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection.

135. The inspection findings show that this current year group is attaining above national expectations but not as high as those achieved in the Year 2000.

136. The school has introduced a new scheme of work and teachers are still learning to use it; this is having a slightly adverse on both teaching and learning.

137. Pupils begin Key Stage 1 with a good knowledge of the world, and they make satisfactory progress in developing their ability to observe and record scientific experiments. For example, in Year 1 they complete a table of their favourite fruits and vegetables. They are developing their ideas of a healthy lifestyle. They know that swimming and keeping the main body parts clean are important. By Year 2 they competently complete tables of results on their investigations into smells. Higher and average attaining pupils draw labelled diagrams to show their experiments, and make simple predictions of the outcomes. For

example, in a lesson to find out how materials change when placed in the freezer, one pupil responded 'If you put the tomato in the freezer it will freeze because the juice will freeze'. They weigh objects accurately to ensure testing is fair. Pupils use scientific vocabulary to describe materials, including, 'liquid', 'fair test', and 'predict'.

138. By the time they leave school, pupils' attainment is above average. Higher and average attaining pupils are clear about how to conduct an experiment into the relationship between height and leg length and record their measurements accurately. They draw accurate conclusions from their findings. Most pupils have clear understanding of the human life cycle and illustrate this clearly through their diagrams. The good learning which takes place in the Year 3/4 class is helped by the class teacher's thorough coverage and planning for science.

139. Only two lessons were seen in science. One was satisfactory and the other unsatisfactory. The school is currently implementing a new local education authority science scheme of work, and teachers are finding some difficulties with delivering its content. The strengths in the teaching of science are the opportunities given to pupils to carry out experiments and investigations, and good questioning that encourages them to think scientifically. For example, pupils were asked to 'think of your senses' and this helped focus their responses. Pupils are given good opportunities to estimate, measure and make simple predictions. Good use is made of resources to help with investigations, and all attainment targets are covered appropriately. The main weaknesses in the teaching are in the planning, which does not clearly provide for support or extension activities for pupils of differing abilities, and in the lack of clear focus within lessons. In the unsatisfactory lesson the teacher failed to question the pupils effectively to extend their scientific knowledge. The lesson was slow, and lacking in direction. Follow-up activities were related more to colouring than to furthering scientific knowledge.

140. Pupils enjoy the practical scientific activities. In the lesson in the Year 2/3 class pupils were keen to get on with their experiment to find out what was going to happen and to test their predictions. Pupils in this class collaborated well and were keen to carry out their tests carefully. Behaviour is generally good, although pupils became fidgety when introductions are overlong or the content of the lesson is insufficient to engage them.

141. The co-ordinator for science is keen and hard working, as are all the staff. However, the co-ordinator is aware that she needs to ensure greater clarity about the content of the new scheme of work in order to help staff implement it more effectively.

142. Staff meetings are due to be organised to deal with this. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor teaching and learning, but is aware that she needs to have a more specific focus to improve the quality of teaching. This also applies to the science action plan, where outcomes are rather unfocused. Assessments are regularly carried out, and pupils are given an indication of their achievement with stickers praising them for being good scientists. Assessments, however, do not clearly show where pupils are in their learning, as teachers do not level them.

143. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvements in the content of the curriculum and in the opportunities it provides for pupils to carry out scientific investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

144. Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4, and this situation is similar to that in the previous inspection. However, as children achieve good standards in their work in the Reception/Year 1 class there is some underachievement across Key Stage 1 and 2. No lessons were seen during the inspection but evidence was obtained from scrutiny of work on display, samples of work, sketchbooks and teachers' plans.

145. Pupils in Reception/Year 1 make good use of a variety of collage materials to create faces of 'special people'. They draw and paint, showing good attention to detail, and demonstrate good use of their imagination when creating aliens and dragons. They know how to mix primary colours to make colour palettes. In the Year 2/3 class, after studying the work of artists such as Picasso and Warhol on faces, pupils draw faces of their family members, using pastels or soft pencil.

146. These drawings show sound observational skills and techniques. Pupils used the computer programmes 'Page and Dazzle' to illustrate their woodland poems. This term they are making clay 'runes' to link with their work on the Vikings, and papier maché sculptures, using three-dimensional binding techniques. Much work has been done in Year 3/4 on colour and its effect on mood and feelings. Pupils put tones of colour together and then describe how these colours affect them. They use comments such as 'These colours make me feel all lonely because they are dark colours'. They have studied the work of Peter Bruegel, and used his ideas for trees as inspiration for their paintings of trees in winter. Pupils used the Internet to find out about Paul Klee. They reproduced good work in his style, and this has been displayed throughout the school. All pupils have sketchbooks, in which they practise techniques. However, many of the books have little evidence in them to show what pupils have practised or how they have developed their ideas. In a few instances in Year 3/4 there is evidence of shading, effective observational drawings, and sketches of the school building.

147. The scheme of work to support the teaching of art lacks sufficient detail to help teachers in planning for the development of skills across the subject, and this accounts for the underachievement in Years 2, 3 and 4. However, the co-ordinator is aware of the weaknesses in the art curriculum and is keen to improve provision. An audit has been carried out, and improvements in art are a focus for the next school development plan.

148. The school makes effective use of visits to enhance the art curriculum. For example, pupils visited Oysters Coppice to watch local craftsmen at work and have worked with artists at Stourhead gardens.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

149. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, where the subject requirements were not met at Key Stage 2 and standards were variable at Key Stage 1. The school now has a scheme of work in place based on topics, and pupils develop skills in design and technology.

150. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on scrutiny of planning, samples of work and pupils' designs, plans for their work, and activities.

151. Pupils in Year 1 have designed monsters, reproduced them on the computer screen and then made them according to their plans. Finished work closely matched the original designs. In the Year 2/3 class, pupils planned and made a healthy sandwich and completed an evaluation form with questions such as 'What was my making of the sandwich like?' 'What have I learnt?' Responses were relevant: 'I worked hard so I got everything right and accurate so that was good' and 'I must wash my hands because germs might spread'. This year group also completed a design and make task. The designs were labelled and the required materials, tools and process all accurately recorded.

152. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 made bread. They listed ingredients and wrote down the instructions to be followed. Evaluations clearly explained their views on taste and texture. One pupil put too much orange in her bread, which she did not like, and another very much enjoyed the taste of currants in hers. Most clearly explained the process, and how their bread could be improved. Many were surprised to find that the bread making process required sugar. Pupils have made belt bags where sewing was the main joining technique. Some evaluations by pupils indicated that smaller stitches would have improved the work. As pupils move through the school there is evident progress in skills of designing, making and evaluating. Their responses through drawings and comments on evaluation sheets indicate that they enjoy the subject.

153. The co-ordinator is fairly new to her role but is keen to update the scheme of work to bring it in line with curriculum 2000.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

154. One history lesson and one geography lesson were observed during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, scrutiny of completed work and photographs, and interviews with pupils indicates that standards are unsatisfactory in each subject at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4.

155. Pupils in Year 1 can identify various types of transport, and they know they difference between passenger transport and goods transport. The focus of the geography lesson observed in Year 1 was unclear, and the geography content was not developed well by the teacher.

156. Pupils of average attainment in Year 2 have some understanding of a time line. Pupils in the Year 2/3 class remember the words 'invader' and 'settler' when talking about the Vikings. In the history lesson observed, pupils were following, on individual atlases, the teacher's description of the Viking route from Norway to Britain. In this lesson, a good selection of artefacts was shown to pupils, and a good selection of research books was provided. However, pupils had no opportunity to use the computer to find information about the Vikings, and few other opportunities to develop their investigative skills. Pupils in Year 3 recalled previous work on the Romans. They know that wealthy families lived in villas, and that Bath is a famous Roman town. However, pupils of average attainment believed 'Julia Caesar' to be a woman, and that a psychologist dug up some of her artefacts.

157. Pupils in the Year 2/3 class and the Year 3/4 class have made folders about Roman life in Britain. Some of the folders contain good work, including mathematics based on Roman numerals. Pupils were encouraged to work on the folders at home. Average pupils in the Year 3/4 class make satisfactory progress in use of an atlas, and can interpret some symbols. In history, they know that town names ending in -chester, -cester and -caster are derived from the Latin word 'castra', meaning army base. A pupil of above average attainment in Year 4 recalled some facts about Gambia, and understood differences between schools in Gambia and Britain. Overall, standards in history and geography have declined since the previous inspection.

158. Progress is often unsatisfactory in both subjects. For example, completed work in the books of pupils in Years 2 and 4 on the topic of the environment is similar. Presentation in all year groups is satisfactory but content is generally unsatisfactory. Teachers' marking does not make clear to pupils how their work may be improved. Numerous photographs show pupils visiting places of historical or current interest, but there is little evidence of subsequent work recounting visits or extending research. Pupils of all attainments have satisfactory attitudes to the subjects, though in one of the lessons observed, pupils were periodically inattentive.

159. Schemes of work are satisfactory. Long term plans are satisfactory, but daily lesson plans are often too brief. The co-ordinator is committed, but she has a very large and varied workload and has not received recent training in the subjects.

160. Some use is made of information technology in teaching history and geography. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 have designed and printed mosaic patterns based on Roman originals. Pupils in Year 4 have downloaded from the Internet some facts about the Romans. Homework is set erratically, and is sometimes unrelated to the curriculum. For example, when pupils in the Year 2/3 class were asked to find out about one important historical incident in the past 2000 years, a pupil completed a detailed file on the battle of Waterloo. Visits and visitors stimulate interest but pupils have little depth of knowledge, and tend to focus on irrelevancies. For example, a number of pupils in Years 2 and 3 were keen to march in Roman style but could not identify parts of a soldier's armour.

161. Satisfactory resources are available for both subjects, and additional artefacts and other materials are available from a central collection used by schools in a co-operative scheme.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

162. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Year 4. Progress is good in all classes, and throughout the school. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

163. In Year 1, pupils use the keyboard and mouse confidently to control activities on the screen. They use an art programme to create line drawings in a variety of thicknesses and colours. They have some word-processing skills, but their use of the shift key is inconsistent and goes uncorrected.

Pupils in Year 2 successfully program a robot to follow a designated route. In word-processing, they select from a variety of typefaces, vary the sizes of fonts, and rearrange simple text.

164. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have written poems about the sea, using many typefaces and layouts. They colour-printed their poems, using contrasting colours for additional emphasis.

165. They designed wallpapers, and printed small scale representations of large designs. They downloaded and printed material from the Internet to compare large play equipment from the USA with simpler domestic equipment available in the UK. They assembled the material attractively in a folder. In all activities, pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

166. Many opportunities are provided throughout the curriculum for pupils to use information technology. For example, all year groups have contributed to a good mathematics display about problem solving. Similar good examples of the use of information technology were seen in English, art and history, though research opportunities are limited in history and geography. A digital camera is used extensively by all classes. Pupils are skilled in assessing the quality of photographs and printing the best examples.

167. Attitudes are very good. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, and are enthusiastic about working with computers. Behaviour is good, and they usually work in pairs. Teaching is good, and all teachers are very keen to develop information and control technology through the school. Planning is good, and ensures that pupils have enough time to use the computers. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They encourage pupils to experiment with a variety of programs.

168. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She shares her expertise with staff and pupils. The subject policy is good, and a new scheme of work is to be introduced. Assessment is good. Pupils consistently update their individual records of attainment. The number of computers in classrooms is close to the national average for primary schools. Most equipment is modern, and all is in good working order. Accommodation is satisfactory.

MUSIC

169. In the last inspection, standards in music in relation to national expectations were judged to be at least average or above at both key stages. During the current inspection only one lesson was observed in the Year 3/4 class and pupils achieved above expectations in this lesson. No judgements can be made on standards in Key Stage 1.

170. Pupils sing tunefully, with real enjoyment, and this enhances the school's times of Collective Worship. Collective Worship is also used well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of music and composers. Currently, the focus is on music of the British Isles. In the lesson seen, pupils listened carefully to a piece of Indian music and were able to detect how the pitch of the music changed. One pupil described it very well as 'sliding up and down'. Through a carefully planned and developed lesson, they learnt how musical notation was constructed to show high and low notes. They then used this knowledge to play several

bars of music on their recorders. The teacher made good use of resources and very effective questioning to enable the pupils to make good gains in their understanding. The pupils quickly used technical language such as 'stave', 'pitch', 'tenor', and 'descant'. They were keen to state at the end of the lesson that they could read notes to perform patterns, or could now understand pitch.

171. The Year 3/4 teacher who is the music co-ordinator teaches music across the school. She is very keen and conscientious, besides being a musician herself. Her planning for music across the school is meticulous, ensuring that all pupils receive their curriculum entitlement. Additionally a large number of pupils in Year 4 receive individual violin tuition, and the co-ordinator runs recorder clubs for older pupils. Their confidence with this instrument was demonstrated when all pupils played the recorder in the lesson observed. Visitors such as The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the cellist Anne Hetherington enhance the music curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to perform at events such as local concerts and services, and this develops their performance skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

172. Standards in physical education are similar to national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Year 4. All pupils participate in all areas of the physical education curriculum. Standards of dance have improved since the previous inspection. In other areas of the subject, the higher levels of attainment have not been sustained.

173. In Year 1, pupils listen carefully to their teacher's instructions. They warm up enthusiastically, and know that exercise causes the heart to beat faster. They have good awareness of space and, without reminders, they find adequate floor space for their movements. They understand simple terms of rugby, such as 'scrum' and 'touch'. They play simple team games with the Reception-age children in their class. Relationships are good, but these games are played at the attainment level of Reception children. Inadequate challenge is provided for Year 1.

174. Pupils in Year 2 play hockey, and develop their skills in coaching sessions. They grip the hockey stick correctly, and are learning to dribble and pass the ball. In a satisfactory lesson seen during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were practising with the Year 3 pupils in the same class. Generally, the older pupils played with better style, and provided good examples, but the level of skills was similar across the age range of the class.

175. In dance, pupils in Year 2 can match movements to music and percussion sounds. They dance enthusiastically, often with good control. In a good Year 2/3 dance lesson, the older pupils had clear objectives. They danced thoughtfully and with restraint, until releasing their energy in an 'explosion' triggered by a cymbal clash. Pupils are not encouraged to develop skills and understanding by evaluating their own performance, and performances of others, although many are clearly capable of doing so.

176. In the Year 3/4 class, pupils can create and perform a dance with a partner. In a good lesson seen, pupils choreographed a dance to eight beats, combining travelling, pausing, jumping and turning. Their dances were imaginative, and their interpretation of the music

was good. Pupils were motivated by the fast pace of the lesson. When they were evaluating one another's work, the teacher did not add her own comments to the bland assessments of the pupils. Consequently, opportunities were missed to sharpen the performances.

177. Pupils in all classes swim in the school pool during summer term. In Years 3 and 4, thirty two of thirty eight pupils can swim 25 metres. This is significantly above the expectation for their age group, and is largely attributable to the commitment of teachers that pupils should be safe in the water. The co-ordinator for physical education has written a good, informative booklet for staff and parents, dealing with all aspects of water safety.

178. Four lessons were seen during the inspection. Teaching was good in two dance lessons, where teachers used their expertise to develop pupils' performance, knowledge and understanding. Progress was good in these lessons. In two games lessons, teaching was satisfactory. Pupils attitudes are generally good, but in two Year 2/3 lessons the class sometimes pre-empted the teacher's instructions, and many pupils gossiped intermittently until firmly reprimanded. In all classes, when given the option, pupils usually choose to work with partners of the same sex. Teachers do not decisively pair boys and girls, or ensure that both sexes are represented in groups of three or more.

179. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated. In lessons, they make similar gains to other pupils.

180. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and enthusiastic. She monitors teaching in all classes, and gives written feedback. She has welcomed the specialist support provided by the outreach scheme of a local sports college

181. In a good blending of physical education and English, pupils in the Year 3/4 class have devised activities, and written instructions for other pupils to follow. The physical education policy, scheme of work, and long-term planning are satisfactory. Assessment is good. Records of individual and class progress are up to date, and are used as the basis of annual report to parents. Extra curricular activities are satisfactory. In the summer term, the co-ordinator leads after-school clubs. The mixed cricket team were runners up in a competition entered by 15 schools.