

## INSPECTION REPORT

**Preston CE Primary School**  
Yeovil

LEA area: Somerset

Unique Reference Number: 123819

Headteacher: Bob Steele

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 29 November – 2 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707759

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Toose Abbey Manor Park Yeovil Somerset BA21 3SN
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Watkins
Date of previous inspection:	January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Michael J Cahill, Rgl	Mathematics	Characteristics of the school Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Helen Barter, Lay Inspector	Special educational needs	Attendance Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency
Glenys Bramley	Religious education Geography Music	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Sanchia Pearse	Equal opportunities English History	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Carolyn Powell	Under-fives Science Art Design and technology	
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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- More than half of the teaching is of good or better quality.
- The acts of collective worship in both key stages are of high quality.
- There is a positive working atmosphere and the headteacher is providing strong leadership directed towards further improvement.
- The school promotes a strong partnership with parents and the local community.
- Pupils are successfully encouraged to behave well and to have good attitudes towards their learning. Relationships are good.
- The school provides a good, caring and supportive environment for its pupils and there is a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, organised by staff for the pupils.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The curriculum and provision for the children who are under five years of age is unsatisfactory.
- II. The governing body does not have a formal structure for monitoring the consequences of its decisions, and there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom.
- III. Pupils' personal development is not well promoted and monitored and there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills.
- IV. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures.
- V. There is no regular programme of development for staff responsible for supporting pupils' learning and school administration.

**The strengths of the school outweigh its weaknesses. The governing body will be producing an action plan for further improving the attainment of pupils and will be sending a copy to all parents of pupils at the school.**

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

The school has shown good levels of improvement in almost all respects since the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching has improved, with 95 per cent of lessons graded at least satisfactory compared with 75 per cent in 1996, and 51 per cent of lessons graded good or better. The requirements of the National Curriculum in information technology are now met and standards in this subject and in mathematics and geography have been raised to national expectations. The roles of the senior management team have been clarified and the school development plan has been made more effective. All statutory requirements are now met. There remains the need to emphasise further the role of monitoring and evaluating in raising overall standards.

The strong partnership between the governing body, headteacher, staff and parents provides a

good foundation for further improvement.

## Standards in subjects

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

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

Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band with respect to the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, in this case less than eight per cent. The inspection team looked at a wide range of work from the last school year as well as the present one and observed 87 lessons or parts of lessons. On the basis of this evidence, the judgement of the team is that standards are in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science, at the end of both key stages. In both key stages, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in information technology and in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education.

Achievement and progress in design and technology at Key Stage 2, geography, history, music and physical education throughout the school are in line with what is expected of pupils of primary school age. In design and technology at Key Stage 1 and art throughout the school, standards are below those expected, mainly because insufficient emphasis is given to planning the progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding in these subjects.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Science	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Teaching is at least satisfactory in 95 per cent of lessons, and in 11 per cent it is very good or excellent. Five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory.

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



**Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are also good.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is rare. Punctuality is good for the majority of pupils.
Ethos*	There is a friendly, welcoming and supportive working atmosphere and pupils are effectively encouraged to have positive attitudes towards themselves and their work. There are, however, few opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their learning. There are good relationships within the school and with the church and local community.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear sense of direction for the school. He is well supported by the active and committed governing body and by the senior management team. The role of subject co-ordinators does not sufficiently emphasise monitoring teaching and learning.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced although aspects of design and technology and art are not consistently taught. Planning has improved greatly although the curriculum for the under fives is inappropriate. Assessment procedures and their use are satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is sound provision overall, with strong moral guidance. The key stage assemblies are an important source of spiritual development. The multi-cultural aspect of pupils' cultural development is under-developed.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The hardworking and committed teaching staff are well supported by the team of learning support assistants. Accommodation and resources are sound except for the lack of an adequate library and a secure area for independent play by the under fives.
Value for money	The school provides sound value for money.

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

## • The parents' views of the school

The views of the 150 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 16 parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
VI. The school promotes positive attitudes and values. VII. The welcoming atmosphere promoted by teachers. VIII. The information they receive about the curriculum. IX. They are well informed about their child's progress. X. Extra-curricular provision.	XI. The school's provision for homework. XII. The way in which some of their concerns,

Inspection findings support parents' positive views. The inspection team is satisfied that the school deals effectively with disputes, which occur between pupils, and offers appropriate support. The school has an agreed policy for the provision of homework and is taking appropriate steps to improve the consistency with which it is carried out.

## Key issues for action

In order to achieve the targets that the school has set itself in its continuing efforts to improve the quality of education provided and to raise levels of attainment, the governing body, with the headteacher and staff, should:

### **Improve standards of attainment in all subjects by:**

- XIII. developing the role of the co-ordinator by introducing a rolling programme of focused monitoring of teaching and learning (see paragraph 75);
- XIV. providing more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, exercise initiative, develop and use independent learning and research skills (see paragraph 25);
- XV. improving library facilities and the provision of book and electronic information sources (see paragraphs 84, 90 and 144);

### **Improve the quality of early years education *for children under the age of five* by:**

- XVI. developing and teaching a curriculum which is based clearly on all of the recommended desirable areas of early learning experience;
- XVII. providing in-service training for teachers so that teaching methods and classroom organisation better meet the needs of young children;
- XVIII. organising the accommodation and resources so that the children have opportunities to learn to make choices and work independently;  
(see paragraphs 100-130)

### **Improve the range and quality of education for a multi-cultural society by:**

- XIX. providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about the richness and diversity of other cultures;
- XX. making sure that all co-ordinators identify and promote the contribution that their subject can make in this respect.  
(see paragraphs 51 and 234)

### **The governing body should make clear in its action plan:**

- XXI. How it intends to monitor the school's progress towards the targets set in the development plan for raising standards of attainment and improving the quality of education provided (see paragraphs 71 and 87);
- XXII. How it intends to identify and meet the staff development needs of learning support and administrative members of staff (see paragraph 80).

## Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

1. Preston CE Primary School takes most of its pupils from the large estate of private housing within which it is situated. The parental background includes people working in the professions and in local manufacturing and service industries. Less than eight per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is well below the national average of 20 per cent. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and only two who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is around the national average of 18.3 per cent.
2. The school has 436 pupils on its roll (226 boys and 210 girls) and they are taught in two single-age classes per year group. One of the two classes for Year 6 pupils has been taken by supply teachers for the whole of the term, due to the long-term absence through illness of the class teacher. At the time of the inspection there were some 50 pupils who were under five years of age in the reception classes alongside 10 who passed their fifth birthday since the start of the school year. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is around the national expectation.
3. The aims of the school emphasise the importance of all members of the school community growing in self-esteem and developing their potential as human beings. The school has a strongly Christian and welcoming ethos.
4. The school was last inspected in March 1996 and the key issues at the time related largely to the lack of adequate curriculum leadership and planning and to an unsatisfactory senior management structure. At that time the school was failing to meet National Curriculum requirements and other statutory obligations.

#### 4. Key indicators

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	32	28	60

4. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	27	29	31
	Girls	26	28	27
	Total	53	57	58
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	95 (98)	97 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

4. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	28	31	28
	Girls	27	27	26
	Total	55	58	54
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	97 (92)	90 (98)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

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

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	33	31	64

4. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21	24	29
	Girls	26	23	27
	Total	47	47	56
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	73 (65)	74 (55)	78 (72)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

4. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	21	25	28
	Girls	22	21	26
	Total	43	46	54
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	68 (70)	72 (73)	84 (85)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

#### 4. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised	School	4.9
Absence	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised	School	0.1
Absence	National comparative data	0.5

4.

#### 4. Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

#### 4. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	11
Satisfactory or better	95
Less than satisfactory	5

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

### 4. **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

#### 4. **Attainment and progress**

5. The results of the 1999 assessments for seven year olds show that their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. In science, overall attainment was in line with national expectations, below the standard in the other three areas. Inspection evidence based on the work of the pupils concerned, who are now in Year 3, suggests that this is the explanation. Most pupils enter the school with levels of achievement which are in line with national expectations, although there is significant variation from year to year.
6. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, test results at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics are above the national average, while in writing they are well above. The overall trend has been one of small but consistent improvement. The school's test results in reading, writing and mathematics are near the average for schools with pupils with similar backgrounds. In science, they are below the average. The school's 1999 results are broadly similar to those of previous years and confirm the overall steady improvement.
7. Inspection judgements are based on examination of a wide range of work from the last school year as well as from the current one, observation of lessons and discussions with pupils. Attainment in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, and science are all judged to be in line with national expectations. The current Year 2 is recognised in the school as being generally less able than last year's cohort, which achieved some well above average test results.
8. The results of the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds were in line with national averages in English and mathematics, and above average in science. In all three subjects, more able pupils did well and the school had above average proportions of pupils achieving the higher than expected National Curriculum levels.
9. The trend over the period 1996 to 1998 shows a steady decline when school results at the end of Key Stage 2 are compared with national averages in English and science. In mathematics, the drop in 1997 was followed by improvement in 1998. The 1999 results show that the improvement in mathematics has continued and that the downward trend in English and science has been reversed.
10. When compared with the results of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the proportion of pupils at Preston CE Primary who achieve at least the nationally expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 is well below average in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. The school is setting targets for improvement, which are soundly based on pupils' present attainment. These targets are realistic, given the variations of ability between year groups, but are insufficiently challenging to lead to improvement in comparison with similar schools.
11. The judgement of the inspection team, based on evidence as noted above (paragraph 7), is that levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, and science



(see paragraphs 133-177 for further details).

12. Progress in information technology throughout the school is now satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages (see paragraphs 178-186). This represents good improvement from the time of the last inspection, when the school failed to meet National Curriculum requirements in this subject.
13. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations expressed in the locally agreed syllabus (see paragraphs 187-194). Pupils make sound progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2.
14. Pupils' listening and speaking skills are at least in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and progress is sound. There is sound development of vocabulary and confidence in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 5, for example, contribute fluently to the shared writing of a story.
15. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed sound reading skills and more able pupils read independently. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read fluently and with expression. Overall levels of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations and progress is sound.
16. Writing and handwriting skills are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and progress is sound. Pupils in Year 2, for example, form their letters well and write sentences with due regard to full stops and capital letters. Pupils in Key Stage 2 write for a wide range of purposes and are developing their descriptive skills well, considering the impact of the words they use. More detail on attainment and progress in the different aspects of literacy can be found in paragraphs 132-148.
17. Attainment in mathematics, including numeracy, at the end of both key stages, is in line with national averages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, developing, for example, a sound grasp of number bonds to 20 and of money. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to improve their computational skills and enjoy the challenge of mental arithmetic. For more detail about attainment and progress in the different aspects of the mathematics curriculum, see paragraphs 149-165.
18. In science, attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress is satisfactory, both in developing a good range of scientific knowledge and in developing the skills of planning, carrying out and writing up experiments. See also paragraphs 166-177.
19. Achievement in design and technology at Key Stage 2, geography, history, music and physical education is in line with what is expected of pupils of primary school age, and progress is satisfactory. In art, and design and technology at Key Stage 1, there are examples of work of a sound standard. However, skills and knowledge are not developed in a systematic way from year group to year group, and so progress overall is unsatisfactory. For further information about all of these subjects see paragraphs 195-243.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in literacy lessons, and make sound progress towards their individual targets. See paragraphs 93-99 for

further information about the provision for pupils with special educational needs.



20. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

21. Overall, behaviour, attitudes, and relationships show improvement from the satisfactory standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. These aspects are now developing into a strength of the school.

22. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. At both key stages, pupils show an interest in their work and are keen to take part in lessons by giving answers or joining in planned activities. They are well motivated and are beginning to develop skills for independent learning within the classroom. Most pupils concentrate well. The few who find it difficult have relevant individual targets and benefit from good additional support within lessons. This leads to a positive learning atmosphere in most lessons. Pupils enjoy active lessons, such as those involving role-play, or searching for clues in history. As in the previous report, pupils are friendly, confident, and enjoy sharing their work and experiences with visitors.

23. Behaviour is also good, both around the school and in the vast majority of lessons seen. Pupils co-operate well with adults and each other, for example in science and maths, or when taking part in shared reading or writing in English. Most parents are at least satisfied with the standards of behaviour, with parents at the parents' meeting describing it as 'normal'. Three parents mentioned incidents of bullying which they felt were not well dealt with. However, the school now has firm guidelines, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and is taking appropriate action with respect to such incidents. The one exclusion in the last year was linked to an incidence of bullying. Exclusion remains an ultimate sanction and is used very rarely.

24. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils show and are shown respect, and benefit from an atmosphere of care and trust. They are courteous. For example, they automatically find chairs and hold doors open for visitors. They show consideration for others, especially pupils with specific impairments or needs. They listen well to each other and willingly share experiences and ideas. Girls and boys work well together and there is no indication of any pupil feeling excluded.

25. Personal development is sound. Pupils take on the usual responsibilities of returning registers, collecting vouchers and helping in the library area. There are a few planned opportunities, using drama or in 'circle time', for pupils to explore issues related to personal and social development. For example, a Year 4 group focussed on conflict resolution in one drama lesson. Pupils do benefit greatly in terms of personal and social development from the very good range of extra-curricular activities and good provision for residential and educational visits. However, there is insufficient time allocated to the formal teaching of the personal and social education programme as described in the policy. Pupils lack a wide range of opportunities to take on real responsibilities or take part formally in the decision-making in the school.

25. **Attendance**

26. Pupils' attendance at school remains at the good level reported at the last inspection. Levels of attendance are above the national average and there is very little unauthorised absence. In the past three years, there has been an improvement in the levels of unauthorised absence and these have now reduced to well below the national average. Pupils' absences are accounted for, mainly by illness and some family holidays during

term-time. Unauthorised absences occur because some parents do not account correctly for their child's absence by letter or telephone call. Since the last inspection, the school has recorded attendance figures correctly in both the prospectus and the governing body's annual report.

27. Pupils' punctuality is also good. A few pupils arrive after the register has been called, particularly on a Monday morning, and this lateness is clearly recorded. Registrations take place at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions. Pupils are expected to respond politely and quickly to their names so that very little time is wasted and lessons and assemblies can get underway. During the day, timekeeping is good and the school day runs smoothly.

27.

## 27. **Quality of education provided**

### 27. **Teaching**

28. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the lessons observed 51 per cent were judged to be good, very good or excellent, a further 44 per cent were satisfactory, the remaining five per cent were unsatisfactory. This represents a substantial improvement compared with the previous inspection, when one quarter of all lessons observed were less than satisfactory.
29. Consistently high quality teaching is most evident in Years 1, 3, 4, and 5, and in the teaching of English, mathematics, science and religious education throughout the school. The teaching of children who are under five years of age in the two reception classes is almost always satisfactory. The previous inspection team noted that at pre-Key Stage 1 there was *insufficient opportunity given for purposeful play activities to enable pupils to explore and investigate*. Little improvement is evident in this respect because the curriculum being taught is inappropriate.
30. In Key Stage 1, some 52 per cent of teaching is good or better and in Key Stage 2 the corresponding figure is 59 per cent.
31. The teaching in the Literacy Hour is at least satisfactory in all lessons except one, and around 58 per cent of those observed were good or very good. The teaching of mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, is always at least satisfactory and almost always good or very good.
32. The improvements in the overall quality of teaching owe much to the good relationships between teachers and their pupils and to the establishment of good classroom routines. The further key ingredient of most of the better teaching observed is that the lesson planning makes it very clear what it is the pupils are to learn, and this information is often effectively shared with the pupils. Where the lesson intentions are clear and appropriate and the teacher sets tasks that are also appropriate, the learning and progress of the pupils is enhanced. Where the planning is less focused and learning intentions are too broad, the teaching does not always build as successfully on what is already known.
33. Most teachers have benefited from the experience of introducing the literacy and numeracy strategies and lessons are well structured. Most lessons start effectively and many include a plenary session. At best, the introduction to lessons includes a revision

of earlier learning, and questioning which enables the teacher to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding before moving on. The plenary part of the lesson, when it is well planned and has sufficient time given to it, serves to consolidate and extend learning and anticipate the work of the next lesson.

34. A strength of much of the good and very good teaching observed was the skilful questioning with which teachers challenged and extended pupils' learning. Another strength was the balance struck between whole class, group and individual work as a means of maintaining pace and interest. On the few occasions where introductory, discussion sessions went on too long, pupils' attention wandered and the quality of learning suffered. Afternoon lessons which last too long sometimes also lead to lack of pace and inefficient use of time and resources.
35. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory and teachers mark books conscientiously. However, there were few examples of teachers making written comments that would help pupils and their parents to recognise what needed to be done to achieve further improvement.
36. Some parents were critical of inconsistencies in the setting of homework. Inspection evidence supports this view although there is much good practice to commend. The school is taking steps to improve practice in this respect so that homework makes a full contribution to raising standards. Further information about teaching can be found in each of the subject sections, paragraphs 105-242.
36. **The curriculum and assessment**
37. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils in both key stages. The curriculum as a whole is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. It provides equal access and opportunity for all pupils to make progress in relation to their prior attainment, including those on the register of special educational needs. All foundation subjects are taught with due attention given to the National Curriculum programmes of study. Pupils receive a sound preparation for the next stage in their education, with Year 6 pupils having the opportunity to spend a day at their new secondary school.
38. Children under five years of age follow a largely subject-based curriculum. Although there is extensive planning, there is no early years curriculum framework to ensure that appropriate experiences are provided in each of the six areas of learning. This is unsatisfactory.
39. The school meets its statutory requirements. There is an appropriate policy for religious education which follows the locally agreed syllabus. Sex education is clearly planned for, with a policy which relates it to Christian values and family life. It is taught through both science and religious education, with the involvement of the school nurse as needed. Parents are fully informed and have the opportunity to see the materials used. There is a policy for drugs education, but at present there is no whole-school planning to show how its aims are going to be put into practice. A meeting with parents is to take place in the next term, by which time the school will have clarified its intentions.
40. The school has dealt successfully with most of the issues raised by the previous inspection. There has been considerable curriculum development, and subjects either

have completed schemes of work or these are being developed through teachers' planning. More able pupils are being challenged through setting by ability in English and mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6, and also by the provision of work to extend them in other lessons. The planning for information and communication technology is much improved, although the provision for monitoring external events is not yet in place. Teachers now assess their planning on a regular basis, and this is beginning to have an effect on their decisions for the next step.

41. The provision to meet the full range of pupils' special educational needs is good and is effective in ensuring that pupils make sound progress (in line with other pupils in the school) towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. For further information about the provision for pupils with special educational needs see paragraphs 92-98.
42. There is sound curriculum planning. The curriculum framework provides an appropriate overview of what is to be taught. Medium-term planning is based on units of work in each subject which cover half a term. In some subjects these are still being written by co-ordinators on a termly basis, which allows for on-going development and improvement. Pairs of teachers from each year group complete weekly planning. This ensures that there is parity between the classes in the content of the curriculum. At the same time individual teachers may plan to teach the subject in different ways, responding to the specific needs of their class. Work is often matched to pupils' different levels of attainment within the class, either through different tasks, different expectations or extra support from teachers and learning assistants.
43. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities, in line with its stated aim to 'enable everyone to attain their full potential'. Ten teachers are currently involved in running a variety of clubs, which are open to all pupils in Key Stage 2. Where demand is too great, as in football, the school has responded by adding a lunchtime session for younger pupils. Sporting activities include football (with separate sessions for both boys and girls), netball and rugby. Other clubs are for recorders, choir, art, country dancing, guitar, orchestra and chess. These are valuable activities which enrich pupils' lives.
44. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory. There are effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. In science there is good practice, with each unit of work being assessed, weaknesses are identified and new strategies put in place as a result. As well as the national tests at the end of each key stage, the school carries out optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5, as well as other standardised tests. Individual records are kept of these results, but there is no clear system for tracking pupil progress. Test results are analysed, and it is planned to identify details of common gaps in pupils' knowledge and to improve the tracking of their progress by using a newly purchased information technology program. Teachers' on-going informal assessment is used effectively. Sometimes this leads to changes within a lesson, perhaps for individual pupils. At other times, planned lessons may be adapted because of pupils' difficulties in a previous lesson.
45. Teachers' weekly planning sheets have a space to evaluate the success of the week's work in each subject, and where these are used well they provide a good opportunity for reflective assessment. The school sets targets in the core subjects for its pupils in Year 6. Target setting for groups or individual pupils takes place in some classes but there is no school policy to build on this. Assessment in the foundation subjects is left to

individual teachers, with no whole-school procedures yet established.

45. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

46. Overall the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including children under five and pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
47. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactorily fostered through the daily acts of collective worship and to a lesser extent in religious education lessons. All pupils take part in acts of collective worship through key stage and individual class assemblies. Key stage acts of collective worship make a powerful contribution to the spiritual and moral life of the school. There is a clear recognition of a supreme being and awe and wonder is fostered throughout. For example, within the theme of Advent, pupils in Key Stage 2 audibly express wonder at the preparations being made by a visiting mother for the imminent birth of her baby. They draw parallels with the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus. Music and candles are used well to provide a spiritual setting as pupils enter the hall. The cross made from timber from the old school is a focal point in the hall for Christian worship. There is time for reflection and opportunities for prayer which enable pupils to develop their own spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Carefully chosen music for song and appreciation reinforces the reverence of the acts of collective worship. These occasions are carefully prepared and constantly reinforce the values of the school. Pupils of all ages make a valuable contribution to the success of acts of collective worship through singing, poetry and drama.
48. Some teachers are aware of the spiritual dimension afforded by other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 develop their awareness of the feelings incurred in their study of Martin Luther King's crusade for recognition and equality. The school's recognition of Remembrance Day includes a two minutes silence by the school community. However, opportunities to exploit the spiritual dimension across the whole curriculum are less well managed.
49. Pupils are aware of right and wrong and most are developing good habits of self-discipline. The ethos of the school provides good moral guidance from an early age. The school lays down clear expectations in the behaviour guidelines for pupils and parents. Most pupils know and respect rules. Older pupils have a well-developed sense of fairness and honesty. The school promotes and celebrates good work, behaviour, attitudes and effort well in weekly assemblies. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and the adults in the school community provide good role models for their pupils.
50. Pupils are encouraged to develop their social skills both within the classroom and at other times of the school day. Most pupils listen to each other during discussions and show respect for other pupils' opinions. Parents appreciate the values and attitudes which the school promotes. Many pupils work well collaboratively. For example, pupils in Year 5 work together to create their joint poems. Pupils take responsibility for tasks in the classrooms and around the school, but opportunities have yet to be extended to encourage initiative and develop independence. The range of extra-curricular activities, musical and sporting, is well supported by pupils. Pupils support collections for charities and contribute harvest gifts to the church for the homeless and needy single parent families. The choir sings at a neighbouring home for elderly residents. All pupils plant bulbs to enhance the school grounds.

51. Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. The school takes part in annual music and dance festivals. It arranges visits to museums. For example, pupils visit Dorchester Museum and Bath to support their work in history. Pupils visit Saint James' Church as part of religious education and other places of interest to broaden pupils' knowledge and experience of people's past achievement. Pupils gain knowledge of national heritage through their studies and visits to places of interest and they learn about religions other than Christianity in their religious education lessons. However, this area is not systematically identified in the curriculum planning and the school does not effectively foster awareness, knowledge and understanding of cultures other than the pupils' own.
51. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
52. The overall way in which the school cares for and values its pupils is effective and is a strength of the school. It is a caring community which offers a secure and happy environment. Teachers and staff provide good role models for pupils and the support they offer shows a clear understanding of pupils' needs.
53. There are good procedures for introducing children under five years of age to the school. There are visits to the pre-school groups from which most of them come and the children themselves visit the school prior to admission.
54. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress. Regular records are kept of their performance in a variety of tests and tasks, although a better structure would make them more easily accessible and make progress easier to measure. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the classroom, both by the special needs co-ordinator and by learning support assistants. There are good links with outside agencies.
55. There is no overall policy to either ensure that pupils are given opportunities for personal development or to monitor their effect. A cup for special effort by an individual is awarded in each Key Stage 2 class at a weekly assembly, and teachers keep records of this. Some teachers in Key Stage 2 keep praise books, recording positive actions by pupils. While some teachers include opportunities for 'circle time' to discuss personal feelings this is not consistent, either in its application or throughout the school. There are no records of individual achievement, and most pupils have no opportunity to make self-assessments or set themselves targets. The school lacks formal procedures for monitoring provision and assessing pupils' progress in this area.
56. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and their effectiveness is shown both by the overall good standards of behaviour in and around the school and the good personal relationships. The way in which pupils co-operate and collaborate together in lessons such as information and communication technology, science and physical education demonstrates how this helps the learning process. The behaviour policy clearly establishes the roles and expectations of each member of the school community, and all staff took part in drawing it up. It is consistently applied and is based on the positive reinforcement of good behaviour.
57. Most parents believe that the school promotes good standards of behaviour. In spite of some individual concerns from parents, bullying does not appear to be a problem within



the school. The school has a clear anti-bullying policy and deals effectively with any incidents that are identified. The school has an 'open' atmosphere in which pupils talk to staff about concerns and are confident they will be dealt with.

58. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance. A computerised system effectively picks up absences and produces letters to parents where no reason has been given. Teachers monitor the response to these. In view of the generally good level of attendance the school concentrates its efforts on the small minority of pupils with regular absences, and this is having some success.
59. There are good arrangements for first aid. Many staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have taken recent courses on emergency aid with St. John's Ambulance, and their names are prominently displayed around the school. This is good practice and represents a commendable effort on the part of the school. Only one member of staff, a teacher, is a qualified first-aider with current qualifications and this is insufficient in a school of this size. First aid supplies are adequate, accidents are satisfactorily recorded and identified issues are addressed.
60. The school has a good health and safety policy, supported by a range of other documentation. It has dealt effectively with the need to clarify policy, which was a key issue in the last inspection. Day-to-day management of health and safety matters is good and pupils are taught safe practices. An advice sheet for new lunchtime assistants is helpful and informative. Health and safety representatives of the local authority have carried out recent inspections and all their recommendations have been put in place. The premises committee of the governing body meets frequently and is given a report by the caretaker, both on actions taken and problems that have arisen. They also inspect a different area of the school at each meeting.
61. Child protection arrangements are good. The two teachers who are responsible have both completed an appropriate course of training. The draft policy still has to be adopted by the governing body, but all staff understand it and know the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns. The school is aware of the need to be both vigilant and sensitive in exercising its responsibilities. There is at present no policy on the use of force to control or restrain pupils, although the school is aware of the need for one.
61. **Partnership with parents and the community**
62. The partnership with parents and the local community is a good feature of the school and makes a positive contribution to pupils' levels of achievement. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of its reporting to parents and the information they send about the progress that children are making. Parents now regularly receive information, in curriculum forecasts and in summaries at the end of the year, about what children are learning in school. These help parents to be more actively involved in their child's education and to support learning at home. The school has also succeeded in establishing some business links in the local area since the last inspection.
63. In the questionnaires and at the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection, parents showed good support for the school. They appreciate the improvement in quality of their child's end of year reports and feel that they have plenty of opportunities to speak to teachers about any concerns they may have. They report that they feel welcome in school, to speak to teachers, to help with activities in the

classroom and to attend assemblies and school celebrations. Some parents feel that the school could be more active in its encouragement of parental help. Very few parents make criticisms of the school, although some feel that concerns are not always dealt with to their satisfaction. The majority of parents are satisfied with the school's provision for homework. However, there are some criticisms from parents who would like more structured homework for pupils in Key Stage 2 and parents who feel that their younger children in Key Stage 1 should not have homework at an early age.

64. The quality of information provided for parents is good. They receive regular, informative newsletters about events and activities taking place in school. The letters keep them well informed about any changes in teaching arrangements or developments in the curriculum. As a result of the introduction of termly curriculum plans for each year group, parents have a clear overview about what their children are learning in class and, in some examples, there is encouragement for parents to support pupils' learning with activities at home. Parents receive good information about their child's progress in their end of year reports. These clearly indicate how well their child has achieved and how much progress they have made, as well as commenting on their personal development. There are good opportunities for parents to meet teachers at formal consultation meetings to discuss any concerns they may have, although it is evident that many parents take the opportunity to speak to teachers on a more regular basis.
65. Prospective and current parents receive detailed information about the work of the school in its prospectus, which is well presented with illustrations by pupils. The governing body's annual report has sections on each of the required areas but does not contain sufficient detailed information about the development of the school and its provision in areas such as special educational needs.
66. Parental involvement in their child's learning and in the life of the school is good and has a positive impact on pupils' levels of achievement. In its documentation the school encourages parents to visit the school at any time and to help in the classroom and makes a positive commitment to partnership in its home-school agreement. A number of parents help regularly with activities such as swimming, reading, science and history and working with children in the early years class. They are welcomed by teachers and given good guidance when helping in the classroom.
67. The school has a thriving 'Parents and Friends Association' which is well supported by the staff. It holds regular fundraising events and makes significant contributions to the school's resources. Parents are encouraged to support school events and initiatives such as collecting vouchers for resources, attending sports matches and musical concerts. There is good support for school celebrations, such as harvest festival. However, attendance at the annual governing body's meeting and at occasional curriculum meetings, for example to explain the National Literacy Strategy, are less well attended.
68. The school has been on its present site for ten years and has developed its already well-established position in the local community. It uses these links very effectively to enrich the curriculum and to promote aspects of pupils' social and cultural development. The school's partnership with the church is good. There are established links with toddler groups and playgroups based at the church, and the school holds a monthly family service in the school hall. Pupils visit the church for celebrations, for example at harvest and Christmas. The vicar is a regular visitor at school assemblies. There is a well-

established link with an elderly people's home and pupils are often invited to read and sing to residents. There are good links with both the primary and secondary schools in the area. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in regular sports matches, dance festivals and music performances. There are agreed procedures in place to ensure that pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to visit their chosen secondary schools. Staff meet to discuss arrangements for pupils' transition and to ensure continuity in any educational support that is needed. Although there are good curriculum links in music, there has been little development in links in other subjects since the last inspection. The school offers regular placements for work experience to secondary pupils and student teachers.

69. Very good use is made of visits outside school to extend pupils' learning experiences, particularly in geography and history. Pupils have visited museums, local villages and towns such as Montacute House and Bath, and explored the beach at Charmouth for fossils. Good use is made of puppeteers, instrumental teachers, conservationists and people from the local community, such as the fire brigade, police, vet and school nurse to enrich teaching of the curriculum. The school has recently been 'adopted' by a local supermarket and benefits from regular donations of fresh fruit for pupils, financial contributions for resources and sponsorship of football kit. Sponsorship for the production of the Millennium Tapestry has readily been given by three local companies.

## 69. **The management and efficiency of the school**

### 69. **Leadership and management**

70. The leadership and management of the school are sound overall, with a balance of strengths and weaknesses which reflect the school's current stage of development. The headteacher, who took up the post nearly two years ago and nearly two years after the last inspection, has a clear vision of how the school needs to move forward. The school has made good progress in dealing with most of the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. These related chiefly to a lack of curriculum leadership and of a shared view of the school's sense of direction on the part of staff and governors.
71. The headteacher has successfully encouraged the proper involvement of the governing body in the work of the school. Members of the governing body now take an increasingly active part in decision making through their committees, not all of which have full terms of reference or keep adequate minutes of their meetings. Individual governors undertake some monitoring duties, although this aspect of the role of the governing body is under-developed. At present, too much reliance is placed on reports from the headteacher.
72. The headteacher has also successfully moved the school towards whole-school approaches to the curriculum and to teaching, although at the time of the inspection, the improvements have not worked through to affect the older pupils. The school has been held back in the past by an over-emphasis on classroom autonomy and lack of planning for progressive learning from year group to year group or from key stage to key stage. The vast majority of the staff recognise that schools run on good will and commitment and give unstintingly of their time in order that shared goals can be achieved.
73. Since the last inspection, the senior management team has become an effective force for improvement within the school. It has recently been strengthened by the appointment of a deputy headteacher with clear curriculum and assessment responsibilities. The school development plan is now a more useful framework for allocating resources, although it still falls short of what the school needs in respect of a medium-term plan with clear priorities, success criteria and financial implications.
74. Schemes of work and policies are now in place and the school meets National Curriculum requirements and other statutory obligations. The trend of falling standards in national tests has been turned round and indications from the 1999 results are that a greater proportion of the more able pupils are now doing themselves justice.
75. Monitoring of planning and pupils' work has improved. However, there is more to do in this respect in order to make sure that lesson planning builds securely on what has already been covered and learned. The school recognises that the essential next stage in its drive to improve standards is for co-ordinators and members of the senior management to start a programme of systematic and focused monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom.
76. The school has an appropriate mission statement and set of eight associated aims. These are well directed towards enabling all members of the school community to achieve their potential. The school has a welcoming, caring and purposeful working atmosphere and all who contribute to its work are valued. Parents expressed strong

support for the attitudes and values that the school promotes.

77. The school has moved a long way forward in many important respects since the last inspection. The good relationships between governors, staff and parents, and the evident sense of common purpose, provide a good foundation for further improvement in the quality of education which the school provides and in the achievements of its pupils.
77. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
78. The staff are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the age range of the pupils. There is a suitable range of expertise and a useful balance of experience. Two part-time teachers share responsibility for one reception class and another class in Year 2. These arrangements are satisfactory and there is appropriate liaison between the staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator has no full-time class teaching responsibilities. At the time of the inspection one class was taught by a supply teacher.
79. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by a co-ordinator and support staff who bring a range of training and experience to their work. They demonstrate commitment, enthusiasm and involvement in the life of the school. Support assistants work closely with the teachers. Their various skills are harnessed to support pupils' learning. They provide valuable support and contribute to the pupils' progress and welfare. The school also has conscientious and efficient administrative, caretaking and lunchtime staff, all of whom make a valuable and significant contribution to the life of the school and its welcoming atmosphere. There is also a number of parents who work in and for the school and give willingly of their time and effort.
80. The appraisal cycle for teaching staff has been interrupted by the National Union of Teachers' boycott. Up to this time a well managed procedure, carried out by the senior management team, was in place to identify the development needs of individual staff and the school as a whole. Currently, training focuses on curriculum priorities and the needs identified in the school development plan. Arrangements for the professional development of learning support assistants and other non-teaching staff, to enable them to evaluate and develop their practices, are not fully in place. The vast majority of staff recognise that staff development in schools needs to be, to some extent, run on the basis of the goodwill of the staff.
81. The school has clarified the role of the senior management team. This was an issue identified in the previous inspection. The senior management team now meets regularly, publishes minutes of its meetings and is making a valuable contribution to taking the school forward.
82. Arrangements for the support and monitoring of newly qualified teachers, which involves support from more experienced colleagues, are satisfactory. Job descriptions are in place and those for learning support assistants are reviewed annually.
83. The school is well maintained by the caretaking staff, who are well led and make a distinct and important contribution to the welcoming nature of the school and to the quality of life within it. The school is pleasantly situated in spacious grounds that include a playing field and large play areas with comfortable seating provision. Staff go to a lot of trouble to display pupils' work carefully and this contributes well to the creation of a

good working atmosphere.

84. Overall, the accommodation provides sufficient space for the curriculum to be taught effectively. However, the space in some of the Key Stage 2 classrooms, particularly those in the temporary buildings, is restrictive for the number of pupils in the classes. The siting of the library and the information communication technology suite in close proximity is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to use the library for independent study or research are limited when the suite is in use, and further restrictions follow when the library space becomes the dining area at lunchtime. The larger hall provides physical education facilities, but is not large enough to accommodate the whole school at any one time. Key stage assemblies are therefore timetabled at different times of the day.
85. Resources throughout the school are adequate for the curriculum on offer and the age range of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Classroom collections of books vary in quantity and quality. However, the quantity of books in the library is barely adequate to support pupils' learning and the selection of books to support multi-cultural awareness is limited. This provision is complemented by loans from the library service. Resources for geography are adequate, but a greater availability of globes and maps would further strengthen pupils' understanding in lessons other than geography. The school has sufficient good quality musical instruments, but has yet to extend the range of instruments from other cultures. The school is building up its stocks of artefacts and symbols for religious education and good use is made of the local schools' museum service. The increases in resources for religious education is an improvement since the previous inspection, but resources for multi-cultural education across the curriculum have yet to be acquired in sufficient diversity and quantity. Storage for resources, for example, in art often limits their accessibility for both teachers and pupils.
86. Good use is made of educational visits to the immediate locality and nearby places of interest, for example Year 5's visit to Burnworthy Camp and Year 6 to Kilve.
86. **The efficiency of the school**
87. The last inspection found that the school had firmly established budgeting procedures and sound financial control but that the governing body was insufficiently involved in strategic financial planning. The school development plan was *ineffective as a management aid as it lacks focus in setting realistic priorities, precise targets, timescales, costings and the phasing in of developments over time*. The school has improved on these weaknesses. The school development plan is now a document that has clear educational targets which focus on improving standards across the curriculum. The governing body is developing a strategic role in the school and is beginning to monitor and evaluate the value for money of all its new initiatives. There is still some reliance on information provided by the headteacher, rather than the governing body having its own systems for evaluating the cost effectiveness of its spending decisions against clearly stated success criteria.
88. Overall, financial planning is good. The school's budget is carefully reviewed and expenditure on staffing, curriculum review, resources and premises are regularly checked to ensure that commitments and targets are met. Additional funds that are available to the school are being used appropriately towards raising standards, for example in literacy. Towards fulfilling its strategic planning role, the governing body has begun to consider priorities and to systematically budget for new expenditure. However,

some areas in parts of the school development plan are not as clearly costed out as they might be. Although all classes receive equal sums of money to purchase consumable items for use by pupils, the criteria by which the school allocates money to different subjects in the curriculum is less firmly established. This results in overspending in some subject areas before the year end.

89. After a period of financial uncertainty due to a falling roll and subsequent cuts in staffing, the school has now achieved a more stable financial position and has established an appropriate contingency fund in preparation for the reduction of class sizes over the next three years. Good use is made of the local authority's financial services to obtain up-to-date financial reports and for governors to examine the school's income and expenditure patterns at termly governing body meetings. However, the governing body's finance committee does not have clearly stated terms of reference and does not make arrangements to keep detailed notes of discussions and decisions made at its meetings. This point was highlighted in a recent audit of the school's financial organisation and is currently being addressed by the governing body. In addition, the school's finance policy is still in draft form and has not yet been ratified by the full governing body.
90. Overall, the deployment of staff is satisfactory. Teachers are deployed appropriately across the school and most have additional curriculum responsibilities. However, they are not always provided with sufficient time to monitor the provision across the school of the subject for which they are responsible. The special educational needs co-ordinator offers effective support to groups of pupils and individual pupils who have specific learning difficulties. However, his time and expertise is less well used when teachers are conducting whole-class lessons, for example at the start of the Literacy Hour. Learning support staff are used well by teachers to work alongside pupils with special educational needs, and to help prepare resources when teachers are working with the whole class. The school's resources have been improved since the last inspection and are now used satisfactorily to support learning. However, the library is not well used. It is situated in the dining area, has no comfortable seating area apart from at the dining tables, and a limited variety of books. Pupils change their books weekly but the area is under-used as an area where they can browse, read and carry out independent research.
91. The school administration and systems for financial control are very good. The secretary is very experienced in all areas of school administrative procedures and financial systems. As a governor, she is able to provide the governing body with good information about the school's administrative arrangements. She is well supported by the local education authority finance unit which provides regular reconciliation of the budget and reports on income and expenditure. Systems for dealing with day-to-day finances, such as petty cash, ordering and invoicing, are well established and efficiently run. The secretary is effectively supported by a clerical assistant who is responsible for dealing with day-to-day administrative matters. An auditor's report received by the school in September 1999 highlighted several minor recommendations and these have now been satisfactorily dealt with, apart from the previously mentioned finance committee minutes. Arrangements are in hand for the caretaker to update the school's inventory of resources more regularly.
92. Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement in many areas. Teaching is good overall and in fact is good or very good in more than half of the lessons observed. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound. Costs per pupil are around the national

average. Pupils enter and leave the school with levels of attainment which are in line with national expectations. Overall, the school provides sound value for money

### **Provision for pupils with special educational needs**

93. At the time of the inspection there were 79 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. Twelve pupils were at the later stages of assessment, including one with a full statement of special educational need. The inspection team is presenting its findings in this distinct section as well as in references throughout the report.
94. The provision to meet the full range of pupils' special educational needs is good and is effective in ensuring that pupils make sound progress (in line with other pupils in the school) towards the targets identified in their individual education plans. The school has a good commitment to providing a caring and supportive learning environment for all its pupils, including those with special educational and medical needs, and this is valued by parents. There is good support for the school's provision from a governor who regularly meets with the co-ordinator and is fully involved in reviewing the school's procedures and policy for special educational needs.
95. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are appropriately fulfilled, and the special educational needs policy is reviewed annually by the governing body. There is an up-to-date register of all pupils in the school who require additional support, and staff are fully aware of the criteria for placing pupils on the register. The special educational needs co-ordinator has good systems of review. However, he is awaiting training on the use of a computerised system which will enable him, and the learning support assistant who helps with administration, to more effectively manage the termly updates of the register and to more closely monitor pupils' progress.
96. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has recently introduced a weekly planning system that enables the special educational needs co-ordinator to review teachers' plans. This process is an effective method of identifying where support will be needed in classrooms for groups and for individual pupils. Individual education plans, for pupils at Stages 2 and above on the special educational needs register, are well established in the school and clearly identify pupils' targets for learning. These mainly focus on literacy targets, although a few pupils have mathematics targets and some also relate to behaviour and concentration. Pupils who have been placed on Stage 1 of the register for additional support also have individual education plans. At this stage, targets often relate to a pupil's ability to concentrate in lessons, but they are less clear than those for pupils at Stage 2 and above. For some pupils, they remain the same from one term to another
97. There is a satisfactory number of learning support assistants who have a suitable range of experience and expertise in working with pupils with special educational needs. They give effective support and this enables the pupils to make progress. They demonstrate sensitivity towards and an understanding of pupils' needs. Although learning support assistants meet briefly each week with the deputy headteacher to discuss organisational matters, there has been insufficient emphasis placed recently on providing regular training for the assistants relating to special educational needs. There has also been no recent in-service training in special educational needs for teaching staff. Learning resources for teaching are satisfactory, and good use is made of advice and expertise from outside agencies and specialist support teachers to support pupils' individual needs.



98. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes towards their work. They concentrate on their work and behave well in class and around the school. They have positive relationships with their class teachers, and when working in groups and individually with the special educational needs co-ordinator. All pupils in the school relate well to others with special educational needs and show understanding and care for those with physical disabilities. The inclusive atmosphere which is promoted by the school has a positive impact on pupils' levels of achievement and the progress that they make.
99. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their child's needs and the progress that they make. They are kept aware of the targets set for their child through regular meetings and informal liaison with teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. In addition to end-of-year academic reports, parents of pupils with special educational needs also receive a summary of their child's progress. Although the school fulfils its duties by reporting on special educational needs in both the prospectus and the governing body's annual report, the information is insufficiently detailed to give parents a clear understanding of how the school makes provision for those pupils who require additional support.

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

### 99. **Areas of learning for children under five**

100. Children are admitted to the two reception classes in the year of their fifth birthday, and attend on a full-time basis. At the time of the inspection there were 59 children, 14 of whom had passed their fifth birthday, in the two classes. Children transfer from 10 pre-school providers with whom good links have been established. Early assessment indicates that attainment is in line with that expected of children of this age, with a significant number of children above this level. There is a good programme to help children enter school securely, including visits to school and talks for parents. Parents are very involved in their children's learning, with many parents supporting in lessons.
101. By the age of five, *all* children, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and reach levels that are in line with national expectations for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Children's personal and social and creative development is below the levels expected for their age and their progress in these areas is unsatisfactory. This represents an apparent decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to be good overall.
102. Children follow a largely subject-based curriculum. This curriculum limits learning opportunities, particularly within children's creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development. Although there is extensive planning, there is no early years curriculum framework to ensure that appropriate experiences are provided in each of the six areas of learning. What children are supposed to be learning is not always clearly identified, and opportunities for language or mathematical development through structured play are missed.
103. There is a good programme of continuous assessment and this helps teachers to provide children with a smooth transition into Year 1. There are well-considered plans to repeat the entry assessment at the end of the reception year in order to evaluate children's progress and identify the areas needing further attention.
104. Three children had been identified as having special educational needs at the time of the inspection. These children are well supported and teaching is effective. The support staff have a good awareness of the needs of the children and make a significant contribution to the children's learning in the two classes.
104. **Personal and social development**
105. Children behave well. They are confident and show respect for others, working happily with their friends. Children produce 'feeling balloons' and record things that make them happy and sad. 'Circle time' provides opportunities for children to share ideas and feelings in a structured way, and stories help children to become sensitive to the needs of others. However, children do not benefit from an organisation that encourages initiative and responsibility. Formal subject-based lessons do not promote independent learning for the under fives. There are very limited opportunities to initiate ideas and solve practical problems.
106. By the time they are five, children mostly reach levels that are around those expected nationally, except in the area of independent learning. However, the school does not

make satisfactory provision for this area of learning. There are many missed opportunities for personal and social development and the development of speaking and listening skills. For example, snack time is not a social occasion. Children do not have a drink at this time and snacks are eaten outside on the terrace. There is no programme of planned social and language development, which utilises such opportunities.

107. The teaching of personal and social development is satisfactory in that teachers have good expectations of pupil behaviour. Children are made aware of right and wrong and the need for consideration to others. Teachers provide a secure and friendly environment. However, the encouragement of personal and social development is not sufficiently integrated into the curriculum for the under-fives. There are few opportunities for children to take initiative and make choices for themselves. Long sessions of literacy and numeracy cause children to become restless and lose interest over time.

107. **Language and literacy**

108. Most children's speaking and listening skills are already well developed when they join the school. Due to the lack of a planned approach within a subject-based curriculum, there are limited opportunities provided for the further development of children's language in order to extend their confidence and understanding in speaking and listening.

109. In role-play, there is some adult involvement but the range of resources provided is insufficient. Although there are books, there are no clearly identified library areas to support children's learning nor areas in which children can go to write and draw independently. Children were not observed enjoying books independently. However, children do take reading books home to read with parents and carers.

110. All children know that words and pictures carry meaning and can recognise and write their own name confidently. Children use pictures and letters well to record their ideas. Most can recognise letters of the alphabet and their sounds and compile a word wall that children recognise and read. Children steadily learn to copy and write simple sentences, moving on to more independent writing which gives appropriate attention to spelling and presentation. The timetabling of the full hour for teaching literacy for children under five is inappropriate. It restricts the learning necessary to develop early skills.

111. By the age of five children, attain standards in language and literacy that are not significantly different to those found nationally, with a significant number achieving above these levels. Children make satisfactory progress.

112. The teaching of language and literacy is satisfactory. Teachers use stories and rhymes well to introduce and practise words, but some sessions are too long. In whole-class lessons, teachers use effective strategies to stimulate the children's interest in books. The knowledge gained by children is carefully extended by effective questioning and consolidated by constant repetition. However, opportunities for language development are frequently missed due to the over-structured approach. Learning support assistants and volunteer parents provide effective support during literacy sessions.

112. **Mathematics**

113. Children improve their mathematical understanding, solving practical problems such as 'Who is the tallest in your family?' when looking at tall and short. Most can count to 10 and some beyond, recognising simple numbers and basic shapes, and producing

attractive shape mobiles. Children are introduced to data handling in their pictorial recording of the weather, representing a month's weather record in various ways. In their topic 'Ourselves', children gather and record information, including the colour of their eyes and children's birthdays. In numeracy sessions, children sing songs such as 'Ten in the bed' to help with their understanding of number. However, due to the limited opportunities for children to explore everyday materials in self-chosen and planned activities, children are not making sufficient progress in relation to their abilities in mathematics. Long numeracy lessons are inappropriate for most children in terms of time and the choice of activities provided. For example, there is no regular use of sand and water to help children to develop concepts of volume and capacity.

114. When admitted to the school, most children have good levels of attainment in mathematics. They make satisfactory progress and, by the age of five, they reach the expected standards for five year olds in mathematics.
115. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. Teachers manage pupils well and, in whole-class sessions, they use effective strategies to ensure that children maintain their concentration. However 'free activities' are not planned for in a structured way in order to provide for all levels of ability and extend learning.
115. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**
116. Planning for this area of the curriculum looks appropriately towards the first level of the National Curriculum foundation subjects. For a minority of children at the time of the inspection this work is well matched to their attainment and learning needs, but for many it is inappropriate. Children are not experiencing the foundation in learning which the early years curriculum is intended to provide. For example, they are not having opportunities to explore different materials such as sand and water and through this develop mathematical concepts to do, for example, with capacity and volume.
117. Children learn about light and colour. They blow bubbles and use torches and prisms to see the colours in 'white light'. They successfully make colour spinners and look through coloured acetate sheets to see the changing colours of objects.
118. Children use computers to support their learning in the use of colour, sequencing and matching programmes. In science, children use 'Draw rainbow colours' as part of their lesson on light.
119. Children explore ways of travelling to school in their project 'Ourselves' and use the results of their explorations as a basis for drawing a graph. When looking at the passing of time, children are asked to 'look what I can do now' in comparison with their first days in school.
120. By the age of five children have made satisfactory progress in the knowledge and understanding of the world and have reached the expected level nationally.
121. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Teachers ask appropriate questions and provide interesting activities in their science lessons. Pupils have few opportunities to explore their own environment in the sort of planned and stimulating way which would be appropriate for children of this age
121. **Creative development**

122. In the reception classes, children rarely experience art in an independent way, which means that their imagination and creativity is not extended. Opportunities for cutting, folding and sticking activities together with the use of construction materials are planned for within the subject-based timetable. Children have limited opportunities to develop creatively as art activities are teacher-directed. There are very few opportunities to use creative media, including paint, due to over emphasis on table activities. Children experience bubble painting and make a tissue church window in a science activity but no other painting was observed. Children use crayons and pencils in their drawing and colouring and create shapes in their play-dough. Children use the space room and castle in their imaginative role-play and develop their cutting and joining skills when working with paper and card.
123. Music is also taught in a structured way. Children listen to loud and soft sounds indicating this with their hands; they clap in time and sway to the music. Children sing well and enjoy songs and rhymes with their class teachers. They sing songs and hymns in the hall during assemblies and sing nursery rhymes, songs or finger plays to illustrate a story. Overall, however, children make unsatisfactory progress in making music and they attain standards that are below the level nationally in this area of learning.
124. Within the limitations of what is attempted, the teaching of creative development is satisfactory overall. The children are well managed and are given clear instructions. Teachers provide 'free activity' sessions but these are insufficiently planned for in that some activities lack specific targets. Resources such as paint are not readily available and are inappropriately stored for children to access them in a creative and independent way. Musical instruments are not easily accessible or used spontaneously in children's creative development.
124. **Physical development**
125. Children in the reception class have a good awareness of space when moving around the playground. In their physical activities children have access to the hall where they use apparatus to practise climbing and balancing.
126. The outside provision for children under five is unsatisfactory. There is no safe and secure outside area. The children have access to a terrace with benches where they eat their morning snack and join the Key Stage 1 pupils for afternoon play on the main playground. A small wooden activity area is fenced separately but is only used in dry weather due to the slippery nature of the wood. There is one bike and a small amount of wooden wheeled 'Community Chest' apparatus together with a climbing construction, but again this is only used in good weather.
127. There is no storage available for outside apparatus for the under fives and fetching resources from the hall is difficult.
128. Children use tools sensibly for cutting and sticking but there are too few opportunities for children to play imaginatively with sand, water and dough. The school recognises the need to achieve a better compromise between curricular and health and safety considerations.
129. Children in the reception classes make sound progress in this area of learning and attainment for the majority of the children is not significantly different to the levels found nationally.

130. The teaching of children's physical development is sound. Children are given clear instructions by the teacher and in lessons teachers have a good awareness of children's needs. An example of this is the way in which teachers identified that children required more opportunities to develop their cutting skills and built this need into the planning of subsequent lessons.

## English, mathematics, science,

### 130. Information technology and religious education

#### 130. English

131. Pupils' attainment in English is in line with the national average at the end of both key stages. The 1998 and 1999 national test results show that Key Stage 1 results were above the national average, and in line with the average for schools with similar contexts. These results from previous years are reflected in the work seen in the present Year 3 and Year 4. However, overall levels of attainment in the present Year 2 are judged to be in line with national expectations. Key Stage 2 results in the 1999 national tests show an improvement from 1998 but they remain in line with the national average and close to the average for schools in similar contexts.
132. On entry to the school, attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations. Pupils speak clearly and express their ideas with confidence and sound fluency. Pupils in Year 1 are developing their range of vocabulary. For example, they give a range of words for different kinds of rain, including *drizzle*, *pouring*, *spitting*. They are familiar with words such as *tornado* and *hurricane* and offer clear explanations. They talk at length about their experiences of storms and windy days. Some pupils are not using standard grammatical forms, tending to say, "I done" or "We was". Year 2 pupils predict the next stage in the story using full sentences. They respond well to questions and are developing confidence when speaking in front of the whole class.
133. This confidence grows in Key Stage 2, as is evident from pupils' response to role-play and drama opportunities, such as those seen in Year 4. Pupils in Year 3 retell stories such as *The Pied Piper* with accuracy and good recall of words used in the text. In Year 5, pupils offer ideas fluently and confidently when involved, for example, in shared writing of a story. They listen carefully to ideas and offer opinions about the best choice, justifying their selection, and using persuasive language to convince others. They show familiarity with a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 were more reticent about sharing ideas in the lessons seen. Pupils throughout both key stages listen well to each other and to adults. Overall, pupils' speaking and listening skills are at least in line with national expectations and continue to reflect the judgements in the previous report.
134. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are developing sound reading skills. They sound out unfamiliar words with confidence. They read whole class texts with expression, taking note of punctuation, such as question marks and exclamation marks. Less able pupils in Year 1 read hesitantly and still need support with letter names and sounds. More able pupils show a good knowledge of the alphabet and use picture and phonic clues to work out unfamiliar words. They describe what is happening in the story and are beginning to predict what might happen next. Most pupils know what a library is and know terms such as *title*, *contents* and *blurb*. In Year 2, these skills are further developed. Pupils enjoy reading and more able pupils are independent readers. Overall levels of attainment are in line with national expectations.
135. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with confidence and enjoyment. Most read accurately, with fluency and expression. They read both fiction and non-fiction books, although the less able pupils struggle to work out words such as *dynasty* or *hieroglyphics*. Most tackle unfamiliar words with confidence. In Year 3, pupils appreciate directions given on a script and read appropriately, for example, during the class reading

of *The Pied Piper* they read solemnly and angrily. They have favourite books and authors and know why they like particular books. Year 4 pupils read instructions accurately and with understanding. They enjoy reading series such as *Goosebumps* and name Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton as favourite authors. They talk about buying books for themselves as well as borrowing from the class and public libraries. Year 5 pupils show enthusiasm for a wide range of reading, including poetry. Less able pupils still have problems with words such as *attention*, *crouched* and *squinted* but all read with reasonable confidence and fluency. Year 6 pupils tackle non-fiction books with confidence and feel able to access information. They understand library classifications and are developing some skills in skimming and scanning. Overall, attainment in reading is at least in line with the national average and some more able pupils, in the early part of Key Stage 2 especially, slightly exceed expectations for their age range. The school has rightly made improving reading a priority and this is showing in pupils' confidence and enjoyment. However, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 still lack 'a good range of techniques for retrieval of information from a variety of sources', to quote the last inspection report. This is partly linked to the weaknesses in library provision mentioned later.

136. Writing skills, in Key Stage 1, are in line with national expectations. In Year 1, most pupils already form letters clearly and are beginning to write simple sentences independently. By Year 2, they use full stops and capital letters correctly, and most are forming letters well with correct spacing and consistent size. More able pupils spell with reasonable accuracy and self-correct. For example, one boy changed *littel* to *little* when re-reading his work.
137. In Key Stage 2, pupils write in a range of ways for a variety of purposes. These include diary writing, play scripts, biographies, instructions, newspaper reporting, book cover blurbs and poetry. By Year 3, spellings of most common words are secure and more able pupils use more complex sentences. By Year 4, pupils write confidently for a range of purposes, including instructions. They appreciate the need for being brief and to the point. Less able pupils still have difficulties with spellings, such as *tide* for *tidy*; *tack* for *take*; *puncher* for *puncture*. Pupils use dictionaries appropriately when they are available to them. Pupils in Year 5 know about paragraphing and produce lengthy pieces of writing. They are developing their descriptive skills through guided writing groups. Their group poetry shows that they are beginning to think carefully about the impact of certain words. More able pupils write fluently and use their skills to deliberate ends. For example, one pupil builds up suspense by starting a story with, 'In the distance a church bell chimed twelve times. Then a deathly hush descended upon the forest.' Year 6 pupils continue to build on these skills. They know about the different key features of diary writing as opposed to autobiography or biography. Pupils of average and above average ability often write neatly and spell with reasonable accuracy. Some less able pupils still tend to spell as they speak, for example writing *feem* for *theme*. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy writing and their attainment is in line with national expectations.
138. Progress is sound in both key stages for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in the classrooms by learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator. Pupils enter the school with attainment in line with national expectations and leave in line with the national average. There are pockets of good progress in each of Years 1, 3, 4 and 5, linked to good teaching.



139. Pupils behave well in both key stages, with the exception of Year 6 where behaviour is sound overall although a minority of pupils in one of the groups sometimes have an agenda which is different from the teacher's. However, most pupils have adapted well to the requirements of the Literacy Hour. For example, they concentrate well during whole class sessions, when most pupils are keen to answer questions, and co-operate fully with the teacher. In all years, pupils work independently during group work sessions and listen carefully to the shared ideas during the final whole class summary. They enjoy reading and the opportunities for drama and role-play.
140. The overall quality of teaching is good, with more than half of the lessons seen being good or very good. Since the last report, teaching in Key Stage 1 has improved. All lessons in this key stage are at least sound, with just over half of good quality. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good in Key Stage 2. There is good teaching of mixed ability classes, maintaining above national average standards in Year 3. Where teaching is good or better, there are high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, which are supported by good use of time and a wide range of teaching strategies. The best teaching seen includes the use of imaginative ideas which motivate pupils well, such as pupils becoming *adverb agents*. Good teaching has a clear focus which teachers share with pupils and then consolidate pupils' learning well at the end of the lesson. They plan carefully to make clear links between all parts of the lesson. In these classes homework is set regularly, is appropriately demanding, and is well marked with helpful comments. In the best examples seen, teachers set individual targets for future work.
141. Homework set is satisfactory overall rather than good, as it is still not set regularly with sufficiently demanding tasks by all teachers. In lessons judged to be satisfactory rather than good, teachers rely too heavily on commercially produced materials and pupils undertake activities that involve an over-use of worksheets and exercises. There is not sufficient variety in tasks to match the range of needs of the pupils, especially the higher attainers. All teachers are assessing shared reading satisfactorily. Overall, teaching of the Literacy Hour is good. All staff have had training and show sound confidence in fulfilling the requirements. In a few cases, teachers are using group work well and encourage pupils to work or collaborate together. Mainly, however, the emphasis is on individual independent learning.
142. There is a good amount of learning assistant support for literacy, and this is carefully targeted to meet individual needs. This provision is most effective when groups are supported in the classroom where the teacher can monitor the progress of the activity. There is a small amount of withdrawal for additional literacy support with a teacher and this is being well used to improve standards for the middle ability range of pupils. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is also the English co-ordinator. He supports pupils with specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, in their normal classes. This means that these pupils are well included in the literacy hours. However, the school recognises the need to more carefully analyse the use of time in order to balance the co-ordinator's teaching role with pupils with special educational needs, and the teaching and monitoring role as co-ordinator of English.
143. As reported at the last inspection, the curriculum for English is broad and balanced. There are now a few more opportunities for pupils to undertake drama and role-play activities. Assessment is satisfactory with sound reporting to parents. However, there is a lack of individual targeting and involving pupils in their own assessment. There are some sound examples in Year 5 where pupils set their own personal targets and assess

each other, for example, by commenting on shared writing tasks. Data is collected but there is a lack of consistent, rigorous analysis to help improve individual pupils' attainment.

144. Although some old stock has been recently thrown out from the library and there are two library co-ordinators, the library, as stated in the previous report, "*is insufficiently stocked and pupils have very limited opportunities to use it effectively for genuine research*". The siting of the library, with its joint use as a dining room and an overflow area for the information and communications technology suite, also makes it difficult for pupils to see it or use it as an area for developing independent study and research skills.
145. With the advent of the Literacy Hour, resources are improving, but pupils are still taking home old books on occasions, as commented on by parents. New books do include multi-cultural images but there is a lack of planned discussion of diverse cultures.
146. Literacy is supported across the whole curriculum through speaking and listening activities, for example, in history by reading a variety of information books, and by writing in a range of ways in science. Key terms in mathematics are well displayed in classrooms and some key scientific words, and this practice is helping to reinforce spelling and extend the range of pupils' vocabulary. However, there is no policy or whole staff discussion on this that would help to consolidate good practice.
147. The school recognises the need to raise pupils' attainment in English, as a priority, by improving assessment analysis and making further concerted efforts to reinforce literacy skills in all lessons.

#### 147. **Mathematics**

148. The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicated that attainment was well above the national average for all schools and in line with the national average for similar schools. Over the three years 1996 to 1998 results have shown a consistent improvement in relation to the national average. The 1999 results show a similar pattern, with one-third of pupils achieving the above expected levels.
149. The national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that attainment was in line with the national average overall for all schools and well below the average for schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. Results over the period 1996 to 1998 show a drop to below the national average in 1997 and a return to the earlier position in 1998. The 1999 results are similar to those of 1998 but with an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the above expected levels.
150. At the time of the last inspection, the substantial majority of pupils throughout the age range were judged to achieve the national expectation, with a significant minority underachieving. The present position represents an improvement. Inspection evidence included examination of a substantial amount of work completed during previous school years, as well as lesson observations and discussions with pupils. Levels of attainment are now securely in line with national expectations, with around one-third of pupils doing better than the average, particularly in number work. The school is successfully introducing the National Numeracy Strategy and overall standards of numeracy are in line with national expectations.

151. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over time. During the inspection, pupils always made at least satisfactory progress in individual lessons. In more than half of the lessons seen, in both key stages, pupils made good progress. For example, in a very well prepared and presented lesson, pupils in a Year 1 class made clear progress as they moved from carrying out practical and oral work involving money and change, to recording what they were learning in subtraction sums. Pupils in Year 3 made good progress in their understanding of fractions through using appropriate equipment in another very well structured lesson. More able pupils came to understand that  $\frac{4}{5} + \frac{1}{5} = 1$  and that  $\frac{5}{10} = \frac{1}{2}$ .
152. Pupils move into Key Stage 1 with attainment which is in line with national expectations and make good progress in respect of numerical competence, and satisfactory progress in the other aspects of the mathematics curriculum. In Year 1, classes demonstrate confidence and accuracy in mental addition and subtraction up to 20, and the more able explain clearly their counting back methods for subtraction.
153. Pupils in Year 2 are secure in their knowledge and understanding of simple fractions and mentally work out  $\frac{1}{2}$  of even numbers up to 20. Most also recognise  $\frac{1}{4}$  as one out of four but few recognise 2 as a quarter of 8. They use appropriate mathematical language, including 'zero', correctly. Most pupils know the names of simple mathematical shapes. Examination of pupils' books in last year's Year 2 indicates that they improved their arithmetic skills. For example, pupils could work out  $56 + 16$  and  $46 - 8$  correctly. They also successfully explored the properties of shapes, including line symmetry, and learned to measure and tell the time.
154. Pupils in the Year 3 classes extend their knowledge of fractions from halves and quarters to practical exploration of fifths and tenths. Class teachers skilfully mix practical work and direct teaching with challenging questioning to help pupils to understand that fractional parts are equal parts. Pupils show that they can split a rectangle on squared paper into the required number of equal parts and colour in the required fraction, for example  $\frac{3}{10}$ . Less able pupils become convinced that  $\frac{1}{5}$  is bigger than  $\frac{1}{10}$  while more able pupils show that they recognise that  $\frac{3}{10} + \frac{7}{10} = 1$ .
155. Following the theme of fractions for all, pupils in the Year 4 classes, who are grouped according to levels of attainment for mathematics, develop their understanding of equivalent fractions in the higher attaining set. The lower attaining set consolidate their understanding of simple fractions through practical investigations. Pupils in both sets are eager to demonstrate their skills at mental arithmetic. Less able pupils rapidly identify 25p as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of £1 and pupils of average ability work out that  $\frac{1}{5}$  of £1 is 20p. More able pupils correctly work out  $\frac{1}{5}$  of £2.50 and  $\frac{1}{10}$  of 50p.
156. Pupils in the lower attaining of the two Year 5 sets make mostly correct and rapid responses to the challenge of rounding numbers to the nearest 10, 100 or 1000. They correctly add or subtract 5 or 10 to and from numbers in their heads, such as 297, and explain their methods with a clarity that shows understanding. Pupils in the higher attaining set are successfully developing their range of mental and written strategies for addition and subtraction of five or six numbers. They use and explain their mental strategies satisfactorily. They recognise and correct their mistakes in written work when they have omitted zeros, when starting to add with the most significant digit.
157. Pupils in the lower of the two Year 6 sets were methodical in their approach to adding up

sets of numbers through identifying numbers which added to 10. They use mathematical language correctly when explaining their methods, such as *partition*. Pupils in the higher attaining set show good investigative and recording skills when exploring ways of fitting together different numbers of squares.

158. The strength of attainment is in the numerical aspects of mathematics. However, even here the lack of a whole-school approach to mathematics teaching and the absence of systematic monitoring of teaching and learning means that pupils' progress from year to year is not as good as it could be. For example, there was repetition rather than extension in some of the work being carried out in fractions in various year groups. In the autumn term planning which was examined, the topic of shape and space was allocated one week out of fourteen in Key Stage 2 classes. This is inadequate in any event, but the learning objectives identified for the different year groups were mainly extracts from the programme of study. As such, they did not indicate any sense in which the anticipated learning in one year group built on that achieved at an earlier stage. This is unsatisfactory and results from inadequate monitoring of teachers' planning and their classroom practice.
159. Pupils' response to their mathematics lessons is good. Most pupils eagerly offer answers in the oral sessions and work well at written tasks, either on their own or with a partner. Where teachers have high expectations of both work and behaviour most pupils respond very favourably. Pupils' response to challenging mental arithmetic problems is very positive throughout the school.
160. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, with half of the lessons that were observed judged to be very good and none that were less than satisfactory. The best teaching is firmly based on good subject knowledge, good relationships and classroom routines. Teachers use whole-class oral sessions well to revise and consolidate earlier learning and to assess levels of understanding. Teachers are usually very clear about exactly what they want the pupils to learn, and they devise suitable practical activities and written work. In most lessons, teachers use a well-judged mixture of whole-class, group and individual work to maintain pupils' interest, motivation and pace. Where too long a period of time is allocated to an initial question and answer session, young pupils become inattentive and the momentum of a brisk start is lost. Questioning is, however, a strong feature of much of the teaching observed in both key stages.
161. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is never less than good, with over 40 per cent of lessons judged to be very good. The teaching in the two Year 3 classes provides a very good model for teaching classes of pupils with the full range of ability. Lessons are very well prepared with clear learning objectives, and work is set which matches the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment very well. More able pupils are well extended through appropriately challenging questions, for example writing  $\frac{7}{5}$  as  $1\frac{2}{5}$ . Less able pupils benefit from their teachers' focused attention when they move into the group written work activity. Both teachers make sure that the mathematics being taught is used and reinforced in other subjects. For example, the work on fractions is brought to the fore in a geography lesson when pupils need to divide their page into eight sections. This is good practice in *mathematics across the curriculum*.
162. Pupils of average and above average attainment in Year 4 are skilfully trapped into discovering the equivalence of  $\frac{32}{64}$ ,  $\frac{21}{42}$ ,  $\frac{50}{100}$ ,  $\frac{18}{36}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  through well chosen individual practical work, followed by an effective sharing of discoveries. Progress in this

lesson is good – in the earlier, oral part of the lesson, few pupils recognised that  $\frac{4}{8}$  is equal to  $\frac{8}{16}$ . Pupils of average and below average attainment in the other Year 4 set benefit from carrying out tasks that are well matched to their learning needs and consolidate their knowledge and understanding of fractions. The more able pupils in this group benefit from a practical activity that leads them towards recognising the equivalence of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{2}{4}$  and  $\frac{4}{8}$ . This has been well planned and prepared by the teacher and the learning support assistant, who gives the group well-focused and consistent supervision and guidance in a corner of the classroom. Teaching in both sets is characterised by thorough preparation, good relationships with the pupils and good questioning which is used to assess, support and extend learning.

163. Teaching in both sets in Year 5 proceeds at a very good pace, with plenty of changes of activity and a good degree of challenge. Pupils respond well to this and are becoming more confident and articulate about their mathematics. There is a good insistence on the correct use of mathematical language and both teachers use the board well to reinforce understanding. Teachers circulate well during group work and maintain a quiet purposeful working atmosphere. Pupils in the lower of the two sets in Year 6 are being helped to improve both their confidence and their arithmetic skills through well prepared work which is well matched to their present attainment, but extends their learning. The teacher is very thorough in checking for understanding and gives very good individual support. He provides good feedback to the pupils about their improvement, referring to the learning objectives that had earlier been shared with the class. The practice of telling the pupils what they are going to be learning, writing something about it on the board to maintain focus, and checking on what has been achieved at the end of the lesson is good practice in most classrooms.
164. The teaching of mathematics is now appreciably better than it was at the time of the last inspection and there is very little reliance on worksheets. Standards of mental arithmetic have improved and the school recognises the need to continue its efforts to raise levels of attainment across the mathematics curriculum.
164. **Science**
165. The results of the National Curriculum assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 showed that attainment was broadly in line with national expectations, although the proportion of pupils achieving results above that expectation was below average. When compared with the results of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's results were below average.
166. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 show that attainment was above the national average overall and well above it with respect to the proportion of pupils achieving beyond the national expectation. Attainment is average overall in comparison with schools having pupils from similar backgrounds and well above average as far as the higher attaining pupils are concerned. The trend over the years 1996 to 1998 was downward. The 1999 results show that this trend has been very successfully reversed.
167. At the time of the last inspection, standards were found to be in line, and at times above, national expectations. The present position is that overall levels of attainment across the science curriculum, including those aspects not assessed in the national tests, is securely in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.

168. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils' skills in planning and carrying out an investigation are satisfactory. They show a developing confidence both when observing and taking part in an investigation. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use torches to vary the size of shadows as they experiment with light and, in Key Stage 2, pupils observe and draw conclusions from the results of an experiment proving solubility. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils talk about a fair test but are not clear about the importance of having only one variable. They work in groups to predict the results before testing conductors and insulators in electricity. Pupils draw scientific diagrams to record the results of their experiments with attention to detail.
169. In talking to pupils it is clear that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are confident in their knowledge and understanding of the parts of a plant and what is required for animals and plants to survive. They discuss seeds and their dispersal and explain that a non-living thing does not breathe. Older pupils give detailed explanations of what is common to all plants and know the effects of temperature on a habitat.
170. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials is secure. They provide descriptive words to explain some properties of materials, such as 'squidgy' as a property of mud! In terms of properties, pupils use their knowledge and understanding to discuss how they think brick and stone are similar or different, concluding with the example, "Well, you wouldn't find a brick on a beach, would you?" Pupils discuss the changing of materials in terms of recycling when melting glass and burning paper. They know that it is metals that conduct electricity but that not all metals do so.
171. In Key Stage 1, pupils know the sources of light and how shadows vary according to where the light is. Through the imaginative use of sparkling Christmas decorations, older pupils in Key Stage 1 learn that shiny objects need a source of light in order to shine and do not shine when there is no light. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 bring objects from home to contribute towards a lesson about magnets and how they can be used in every day lives. Pupils use scientific vocabulary correctly in their explanations and record their findings in a way that shows good scientific understanding. By the end of the Key Stage 2, pupils correctly create complex circuits with obvious enthusiasm. However, in conversation pupils were less confident in their knowledge concerning friction, or how night and day are caused.
172. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. There is a structured scheme of work that consists of a two-year rolling programme of topics in Key Stage 1 and subjects in Key Stage 2. In order to meet the needs of the younger pupils more systematically and build on pupils' learning when units of science are revisited, a revised scheme of work has been implemented in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 there is a greater time allocation for science which consists of long teaching sessions and short half hour sessions, which are generally used for the evaluation of investigations. Assessment overall is good. The assessment of units of work and careful attention to test results has resulted in the identification of specific curriculum areas requiring attention.
173. The attitude of the majority of pupils in science lessons is good. They clearly enjoy the subject. They have positive relationships with their teachers and generally show a good level of respect. Pupils are well motivated and take pleasure in their successes. Pupils work together well with little fuss. They use equipment sensibly, paying heed to safety

issues when these are pointed out. Most pupils behave well in lessons and, as a consequence, time is well spent on scientific study.

174. There is little opportunity for using books or information technology in independent scientific research, although in both key stages, literacy and numeracy skills are developed well. Pupils record their findings in a variety of appropriate ways and discuss most aspects of science with confidence.
175. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. In the best lessons teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Explanations are clear and effective, and appropriate questions are asked to promote scientific understanding. The revised scheme of work in Key Stage 1 ensures that planning for lessons is well focused and is matched to pupils' needs. The government guidelines for science support the scheme of work. The newly introduced planning for investigation and experimentation is well integrated and is used effectively by teachers to improve this area of science. Resources have recently been improved and are now sufficient and stored centrally for easy access by staff.
176. The co-ordinator and the support co-ordinator provide strong leadership and are committed to improving standards in both key stages. Through the assessment of pupils' work, areas for future subject development are identified and implemented.
176. **Information technology**
177. There were significant weaknesses in the school's provision for information technology at the time of the last inspection, and the school did not fulfil National Curriculum requirements. The appointment of a coordinator, the introduction of a scheme of work, better planning for the teaching of most areas of the curriculum, more confident staff and much improved teaching have led to significant improvements. As a result, attainment in the subject now meets national expectations at the end of both key stages, and the school now fulfils statutory requirements. Progress overall is now also satisfactory, although it is uneven in some aspects of the subject.
178. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are achieving at the lower end of expectations for seven year olds and are making satisfactory progress. The pupils show a reasonable degree of confidence when using a computer, although both here and in Key Stage 2, it is noticeable that pupils with access to computers at home are understandably more competent. Pupils in Year 1 control the mouse when moving text on the screen to make a sentence. They watch their work being saved and printed so they begin to understand the process. By Year 2, pupils use a graphics program to finish a picture of a bear. They select different tools, change the size of geometric shapes and 'fill' and 'flood' with different colours. They produce short pieces of writing using a word processor, such as brief rhymes. Some pupils know how to save their work in files, with a few using correct vocabulary such as 'drag'. While pupils in one class can describe how to make a programmable robot move forwards, backwards and turn corners, others have not had this experience.
179. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have not had the benefit of a systematic programme of teaching in previous years and, as a result, there are some gaps in their knowledge. This situation is changing. The teachers have a more organised approach to planning appropriate learning tasks, and pupils are now making better progress within the constraints imposed

by resources and accommodation.

180. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 work on a graphics program, practising their skills and learning new techniques in order to produce pictures for Christmas cards. There is some visible progress between the year groups, although this is less obvious as the program is relatively new to many of them. Older pupils, however, are more confident in using computers, with many able to open and load programs and use tools with good mouse control. A minority know how to access different tools and add them to the toolbar, while most can name and save their work in their own class file. In Year 6, pupils use simple desk-top publishing techniques to produce a school magazine. While they understand techniques such as blocking text and importing pictures, their progress is slow and most accomplish little in the course of a lesson. Most pupils have limited keyboard skills as these have not been systematically taught. This hampers progress.
181. By the time they leave school, pupils are competent in using a limited range of software but not at an advanced level. They have experience of control technology through a programmable robot and a screen 'turtle', but have no opportunity to link their understanding to practical activities, such as using control techniques in design technology. They have entered information onto simple spreadsheets and have constructed graphs and pie charts. They have used simulation and adventure games, but have not explored music software. The school is now equipped with CD-ROMs but pupils have not yet used them for research to help their study of other subjects. The school is about to link to the Internet, which will give pupils a wider range of opportunities. At present, the school does not have the necessary equipment for pupils to gain an understanding of how information technology can be used to monitor external events.
182. Pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to information technology, which is obvious when they work on the computers. Their attitudes in taught class sessions reflect the quality of the teaching. Where new concepts are taught and explanations are clear, pupils pay careful attention. Most work with concentration and perseverance, although some Year 6 pupils are inclined to waste time. Most pupils co-operate well in pairs, sharing the equipment sensibly and taking turns. When asked to collaborate on a task they willingly help each other and both make and listen to suggestions. They treat equipment with respect, and the great majority can be trusted to work without direct supervision in a mature and sensible manner.
183. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now at least satisfactory, with half the teaching seen being good. This is partly due to improved teacher confidence as a result of in-service training, although this does not apply equally to all teachers. Most of the teachers are not expert users of information and communication technology, but they have sufficient knowledge to give clear explanations and guidance. The teachers' planning provides clear learning objectives. The better lessons provide an appropriate challenge for the pupils. In other lessons, while clear, the learning objectives were too easily attained and pupils made less progress. In most lessons pupils are taught new skills. The other factor which distinguishes better teaching is the teacher's level of expectation. In the better lessons pupils are encouraged to work at a good pace and have a target to aim for. Relationships between teachers and pupils are mostly good.
184. All lessons seen were taught to groups, most of which comprised half a class, in the



computer suite. This arrangement enables teachers to focus on new teaching points and to deal with difficulties as they arise. There are also computers in most of the classrooms, but there was little evidence of these being used during the inspection. The machines in the computer suite use two different operating systems. This creates some difficulties in organisation, and the school has sensibly made a firm decision on which technology it is going to develop. Many pupils have computers at home, but teachers do not exploit the possibility of extending pupils' skills through work undertaken at home.

185. The subject co-ordinator has done much to improve the delivery of information technology. There is a developing scheme of work to aid teachers' planning, and good use is being made of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority government guidelines. Teachers use assessment in lessons to check pupils' progress, but there is no framework against which pupils can be assessed to ensure they are taught an appropriate range of skills. There is a collection of pupils' work, but it is not annotated or levelled to illustrate pupils' attainment. The school recognises the need to extend its range of software to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum to a sufficiently demanding standard, and to allow pupils to use computers as aids to research in other subjects.

185. **Religious education**

186. By the end of both key stages pupils' levels of attainment are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound and often good progress. Pupils in both key stages show an interest in different faiths and many are keen to demonstrate their understanding of symbols and rituals. Most pupils have a sound understanding of the moral content of stories and can relate it to their own experience and behaviour. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' literacy skills through discussion and written work.
187. Pupils in reception classes learn about the journey to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus. When talking about God, pupils show that they know that he is the father of Jesus and that Jesus is the son of Mary.
188. In Key Stage 1, pupils have a basic knowledge of Bible stories and the life of Jesus. They develop a basic knowledge of the main festivals celebrated by different world religions. They learn about the ways in which Christmas and Diwali are celebrated and start to identify similarities in these festivals of light. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the significance of Advent and the celebration of the birth of Jesus as part of the Christian faith. However, they have yet to develop an awareness of the spiritual dimension of this festival and for some pupils their knowledge and understanding is confused. Pupils in Year 3 develop their understanding of features linked to the story of Christmas. For example, they consider the reasons for Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and think deeply about them.
189. Pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their knowledge and understanding of the different religious beliefs and world religions. They talk about personal values and recognise how people care for each other within groups and in the wider context of social responsibility. For example, pupils in Year 4 look at the commitment of Martin Luther King. They begin to understand how a strong faith can influence a person's life and the effort they make to help people. As part of their study of Judaism, pupils in Year 5 explore the similarities

and differences in faith and customs relating to food. They have a basic knowledge about holy books and of how people worship in different ways. For example, some pupils show a basic understanding of the seven armed candelabrum, the Menorah, and explain the Christian symbolism of the cross. Most pupils demonstrate familiarity with the Ten Commandments. Some pupils are aware of the Torah scrolls and understand that they should not be touched by human hands.

190. Pupils' responses to religious education are positive. They listen carefully to their teachers' explanations and most pupils respond to questions with confidence. Many show willingness to talk about God, prayer and personal values and link their own experiences to what they have learned. Most pupils show respect for the traditions and beliefs of others and also for each other in their ability to co-operate in their work.
191. The quality of teaching is good in two-thirds of the lessons observed and sound in the remainder. Unlike the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 classes. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Lessons are well paced and provide a good balance between activities and teacher exposition. Good use is made of Biblical material both in classes and in acts of collective worship. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Skilful use of questioning broadens the pupils' understanding and promotes thinking and discussion. Work in religious education supports the pupils' moral, social and cultural development, but makes a more limited contribution to their spiritual development. Pupils recite prayers at the end of the day and grace is said before meals. However, most pupils chant these without any awareness of their significance. Each classroom displays either a prayer entitled 'The Millennium Resolution' or a Christian symbol such as the Cross. Most pupils explain the significance of the Millennium, but few relate it to the birth of Christ as the start of the Christian calendar.
192. Lesson planning is systematic and based on the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Although assessment opportunities are included in teachers' planning, there is no framework to record an individual pupil's progress. The subject is well co-ordinated in both key stages by two members of staff. The Key Stage 2 co-ordinator for religious education is also responsible for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and collective worship in school. She has developed useful policies in these areas. Opportunities have yet to be established for monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school.
193. Key stage collective worship fully supports religious education and extends pupils' knowledge and spiritual development. Pupils of all ages and abilities make a considerable contribution to the success of these acts of worship through reading, drama and music. For example, pupils in Year 3 read their own poems and prayers when they present their work based on Advent to other classes in Key Stage 2. Class based acts of worship make less significant contributions to pupils' spiritual development. Religious education features in displays around the school. There are adequate resources which are well organised. Good use is made of the local schools' museum service and very good use is made of visits to Saint James' Church for study and participation in services, notably at harvest and Christmas time.

193.

193. **Other subjects or courses**

193. **Art**

194. On the basis of work seen in progress, discussion with pupils and displays and photographs of work completed, it is evident that the progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory. Although this represents a regression compared with the picture recorded in the last inspection report, many of the aspects previously reported remain the same. .
195. Pupils in Year 1 successfully experiment with collage in their pictures of angels. The teacher usefully shows how two different artists have depicted angels. Older pupils in the key stage use pencil satisfactorily to draw pictures of hats of their choice, recording their designs in their sketchbooks. Displays of pupils' work at this key stage include compositions in paint and creating a colourful poppy display using pastels. Pupils in Year 3, however, were unable to name the primary colours or to say how black and white are used in colour mixing. They were unable to discuss pattern or texture in art although they talked about examples of printing and collage they had enjoyed during their time in Key Stage 1.
196. In Key Stage 2, pupils from Year 4 successfully practise colour mixing, developing shades and tones of colour to match sample flowers. Music is played during the lesson to create a calm mood and this is a good feature used across Year 4 in art lessons. Pastels are used imaginatively in a creative display entitled 'If a picture paints a thousand words'.
197. Pupils in Year 5 create a 'National Gallery' in which they hang their own portraits drawn in pencil, using portraits by Van Gogh and Modigliani as examples. The captions provide good support to the development of a critical vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils use various materials well to create a collage incorporating objects since the 1930's, and also experience painting 'snapshots' in the 'Monet' style.
198. A whole-school project involving the drawing of a shoe has been completed as an example of observational drawing and the completed work seen is of an overall satisfactory standard. Observational drawings of wood and fossils are of a good standard. The quality of drawing with a pencil is of the expected standard, sometimes above it, but standards in all other areas of art, particularly painting, are below the expected standard for pupils of this age. The whole area of three-dimensional art is not given sufficient attention. However, another valuable whole-school project was the construction of a Millennium Tapestry to which each year group has contributed. When completed it will provide a collage wall-hanging for the library area.
199. In both key stages, there is insufficient attention given to the knowledge and understanding aspect of the art curriculum. Pupils in Key Stage 1 who were questioned were unable to recognise or name any famous artists. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 can name two artists but are unable to discuss their approaches or the methods they used.
200. Throughout the school, pupils are not building on skills and techniques in a systematic way. However, there are examples of good work to be found in all year groups, mainly in pencil drawing. There is little planned development of pupils' skills for recording ideas and feelings, or representing what they see and touch. Pupils have few opportunities to select from a wide range of resources as a means of promoting ideas and obtaining creative inspiration.

201. Although there is insufficient emphasis on developing skills, art is used successfully as a vehicle for enhancing learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 design *book jackets*, and drawings in crayon are used to illustrate a poem entitled 'Nail Soup'. Following a visit to Montacute House as part of a history project, pupils successfully use line drawings to recreate Tudor buildings and to help them appreciate the paintings in the portrait gallery. Pupils often include accurate scientific drawings in their recording of investigations. Descriptive words and paintings provide an interesting display concerning the seasons and this promotes learning. A graphics computer program is used to support pupils' learning.
202. Pupils have sound attitudes to art. They concentrate well and persevere in their planned activities. Pupils share their resources well, for example, using paint in colour mixing very sensibly. They mainly work individually but also work well together on a group collage.
203. Teaching is satisfactory overall with one example of good teaching seen in Key Stage 2. Within the limitations of what is attempted, teachers provide appropriate and interesting resources and organise their lessons well. They have good relationships with their pupils and work hard to encourage them. However, teachers' overall knowledge and understanding of the standards expected in art are inadequate. There is no portfolio of work to illustrate best practice in each year group in order to support teaching for progressive skill development at each level. There is an unsatisfactory level of expectation of pupil achievement. Class teachers, particularly at the end of the Key Stage 2, are not providing the challenge necessary to improve standards in art.
204. Arrangements for resources have not been significantly improved since the previous report. Apart from paint, resources are still not held centrally, with many materials being purchased from class budgets. This practice leads to duplication and is inefficient. The co-ordinator, who has a part-time contract, endeavours to co-ordinate displays throughout the school in the short period of time available. An art club is held on one evening each week. The five pupils who attended during the inspection week benefited from concentrating on their still life compositions and from individual support.
204. **Design and technology**
205. From the observation of three lessons, examining teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and looking at their work, it is judged that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. This is in contrast to the last inspection when standards were found to be in line with national expectations in both key stages, with some pupils achieving well above that level.
206. In Year 1, pupils gain early experience of the design process when they make a cold dessert and evaluate the results at home. Pupils in Year 2 gain useful insights into designing for a particular purpose in their project on hats. Photographic evidence shows that pupils at the end of the key stage plan a design for a 'tee' shirt, proudly wearing the results.
207. In discussion, pupils from Year 3 show that they have gained in Key Stage 1 little experience of joining materials or the use of tools. Pupils suggest *sellotape* in order to

make a structure stronger but are unable to say in simple terms how wheels and axles work. However, pupils in Year 3 are now designing and making a box and satisfactorily test ways of joining materials, evaluating the results to aid the planning process. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 describe pizzas, boxes and board games as things they have designed and made. They list a range of materials they have worked with, thinking about whether the design will work and whether it is strong enough for the purpose. They know the difference between well made and well designed. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to research for ideas and information using books and other sources.

208. Pupils have sound attitudes to design and technology. When talking to pupils in Key Stage 2, they said they, “really enjoy design and technology”. Where the lesson is purposeful, with clear learning objectives, pupils concentrate well. Pupils in Year 2 listen to and answer questions, enjoy looking at a wide variety of hats and identifying the purpose for which the hats were designed and made.

209. There is a satisfactory policy and a scheme of work which incorporates the new government guidelines for design and technology. The integration of these informative guidelines and the support of a newly appointed co-ordinator is helping to promote all aspects of design and technology, particularly in those areas where teachers lack subject expertise and confidence.

209. **Geography**

210. Geography is taught as a block of lessons at different times of the year in both key stages, rather than as regular weekly lessons. During the inspection, lessons were observed in Key Stage 2, but only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1. Judgements about attainment are based on these observations, supplemented by discussion with pupils about what they know and can do, and by examination of their work in exercise books and classroom displays. The attainment and progress made in both key stages by pupils, including those with special educational needs, match expectations for pupils of their ages.

211. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a sound understanding of simple maps. They learn how to draw and follow their route from home to school and describe what they see en route, for example, street signs and traffic islands. They compile a graph to show their means of travel to school. Many pupils know their home addresses and some know that Yeovil is in England. Pupils’ knowledge of the countries that make up the British Isles is sketchy. With some help, they name Wales and Scotland and the points of the compass, with one pupil stating that Scotland “is on top of England”. Pupils make daily observations about the weather, record what they see using weather symbols and pictures on a simple bar chart. Some pupils correctly name the four seasons and describe weather features associated with each one. Most pupils differentiate between villages, towns and cities. Some know that Australia is ‘down’ and ‘under’ and that Australia’s days, nights and seasons are different from our own.

212. Pupils’ learning in geography is enhanced by the effective links with other curriculum areas. For example, in design and technology lessons pupils in Year 1 make kites and Year 2 pupils illustrate different weather conditions. Pupils’ literacy skills are supported by their use of ‘big books’ and group readers on weather. Pupils’ growing ability to interpret data on their bar charts supports their mathematical understanding.

213. In Key Stage 2, no geography was being taught in Years 4 and 6 during the inspection. Pupils in Year 3 study how site conditions can influence the weather. They record temperatures within the school and identify the coldest and warmest areas using a thermometer. They observe sheltered and exposed sites in the playground and some give well reasoned views on how and why some exterior surfaces have been changed by the weather. By direct observation in the playground they see how soil is eroded.
214. In their study of how settlements differ and change, pupils in Year 5 look enthusiastically at the locality of the Somerset Levels and their characteristics. They develop a sound understanding of how land is used in different ways. Pupils discuss the reasons for the rise of the willow industry in the Somerset Levels and most understand the present difficulties facing the industry. Pupils study rivers and their effect on the landscape. Some pupils name and correctly locate major British rivers. Pupils use maps to gain information and find key features. However, there is insufficient emphasis on mapping skills using gradient, scale and four-figure grid references. Many pupils discuss environmental issues, for example, global warming, the destruction of the rain forests and the effects of pollution; they demonstrate a well-developed awareness of the effects on the planet.
215. Pupils show an interest in geography and most have positive attitudes to the subject. Most pupils quickly become involved in their activities, many of which encourage them to collaborate and share resources. Pupils enjoy fieldwork, which includes work around the school studying the site, the weather and its effects, as well as visits to other localities. These include Charmouth for Year 4, the Wetlands for Year 5 and The Toose and Ham Hill for pupils in Key Stage 1.
216. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is never less than satisfactory and in one lesson excellent. This is a substantial improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers tell pupils what they are going to learn. Good questioning techniques encourage pupils to think more deeply about issues. Where teaching is at its best, there are high expectations of the pupils and interesting tasks are provided. The pace of teaching is good and the good relationships based on firm knowledge of individual pupils' requirements remove the need for the teacher to spend time on pupil management. Sound subject knowledge and skilful questioning stimulate pupils' thinking and raise the level of discussion and progress.
217. There is a scheme of work that provides a coherent framework for planning and progression in learning. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hard working. She has audited the resources, compiled a portfolio of pupils' work and has prepared a 'help' file for all teachers. The co-ordination of the subject has improved since the previous inspection. However, the monitoring of the subject does not include opportunities for the co-ordinator to visit classrooms to support the improvement of learning.
218. Resources are adequate for the requirements of the curriculum. Some investment in geography resources has been made since the last inspection. For example, there is an increased range of software to support geography. However, there are still not enough classroom-based maps, photographs or globes to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

218. **History**

219. Overall, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in developing their skills and understanding across the two key stages.
220. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 appropriately identify *old* and *new*, *then* and *now*. In Year 1, they comment on the evidence that helps them decide whether a toy is old or new. They develop good observational skills and recognise that the condition of a toy may signify its age or the material or the fact that it is no longer in use. They begin to understand that a new wooden spinning top is still an example of an old-fashioned toy. They understand that children in the past did not have electric toys or batteries and make the connection with the artefacts in front of them. They work at or above the level expected for their age.
221. The same is true for pupils in Year 3, who use a range of sources to collect evidence, for example, for their topic on Roman shops. They talk with enthusiasm about facts they have found out previously and make good links between life today and then. They look carefully at pictures and artefacts and make astute observations about materials used and similarities and differences to their own experiences. For example, when looking at Roman games, they are fascinated to realise that the Romans also used dice. The careful scrutiny for clues is further developed in Year 4. For example, pupils discuss the clues in portraits of Queen Elizabeth I. They go beyond the literal to trying to understand that the portraits were designed to symbolise her wealth and power and, therefore, the wealth and power of Britain. Their understanding is enhanced by a visit to a local Tudor village, where they examine buildings and talk in some detail about the differences to modern homes. Pupils talk articulately about the local study and about topics, such as the Ancient Greeks which is tackled in Year 5. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop some independent research skills, for example, when finding out about Britain since the 1930s. They show empathy, for example, when writing from an evacuee's point of view.
222. Pupils at Key Stage 1 enjoy talking about old toys. They handle them with care and are fascinated by the simple mechanism of, for example, a wooden merry-go-round or a popgun. They show empathy with the teacher's old teddy which has lost its 'growl'. In Key Stage 2, pupils' interest develops still further. The enthusiasm generated for history in Year 3 is palpable. As one boy declared, "I feel like I could eat history I love it so much." Although his passion is exceptional, all pupils expressed a real interest in history. Year 4 pupils remember their visit to Bath and the Roman baths vividly. They, too, enjoy the challenge of finding out about history. In Year 6, pupils maintain their interest and share ideas sensibly when undertaking group research.
223. Teaching is good at both key stages in the main and always at least satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers plan carefully and use a wide range of primary and secondary sources as evidence. They use good active methods, which involve pupils in their own learning and generate interest and enthusiasm. They have good expectations of pupils to respond well to challenges and to think through more complex issues. They use good questioning techniques to elicit pupils' ideas. For example, "Why do you think that we can look at a picture of Roman Pompeii?" or "What are the differences in the image of Queen Elizabeth I in the two portraits? Why do you think this is? What are the messages behind the portraits?" Such questioning reinforces previous knowledge and helps pupils to think for themselves.

224. In the better lessons, teachers allow time for pupils to explore artefacts and pictures and provide first-hand experiences which help pupils remember key facts and ideas. The lively presentation shows good, secure, knowledge and the enthusiasm of most teachers is transferred to the pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, time is not so well used and activities do not always focus clearly enough on the historical aspects of the work. In most lessons, the provision of follow-up activities which stretch the more able pupils has improved since the last inspection.
225. A further improvement is that there is now a clear agreed policy and scheme of work. As noted in the last inspection, the co-ordinator *“has good subject knowledge and leads the subject well.”* However, the role is still *“not fully developed to allow for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum or influencing the practice of teachers in the classroom.”*
226. History contributes well to a range of subjects across the curriculum. It develops pupils' speaking, listening and observational skills well and provides a range of opportunities for writing in different styles. History contributes to learning in art, perhaps most notably at the moment in the whole-school production of a Millennium Tapestry, which represents local history through the ages.

226.

### **Music**

227. Only two music lessons were observed in each of the key stages during the inspection. Judgement is therefore based on these lessons together with discussion with the subject co-ordinator and members of staff responsible for teaching music in the school. In addition, the scheme of work and planning documents were examined. The teaching of music is shared between a newly appointed teacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the headteacher, who is the subject co-ordinator.
228. In both key stages, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected of their age group. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall and sometimes good in singing. Pupils in Key Stage 1 who attend the recorder and guitar groups make good progress in performing with others and are developing an awareness of an audience. Those in Key Stage 2 who have instrumental lessons as part of the extended music curriculum make very good progress and occasionally demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in performances and lessons to the benefit of all pupils.
229. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing their singing skills and some sing with confidence. Most pupils have a basic understanding of dynamics and tempo and are developing a good sense of rhythm. For example, pupils in a reception class gently clap on the first beat as they sing a song from memory. They use vocabulary such as *loud* and *soft* and play the cymbal and drum to accurately portray the dynamics of the music. Pupils are starting to accompany their singing using pitched and unpitched instruments. They are learning to hold and play them correctly. Pupils in Year 1 are developing a sound understanding of how to record compositions by following notation symbols.
230. In Key Stage 2, Year 5 pupils work collaboratively to compose a sequence of notes using pitched instruments. Pupils are beginning to understand simple musical structures and recognise how instruments can be used to reflect mood and feeling. Pupils improve the quality of their singing using the dynamics in their voices appropriately, increasing



expression and making a clean entry to verses. Pupils sing a wide range of songs in different styles and learn to perform more complicated rhythms. They are beginning to evaluate their own compositions and performances and those of others.

231. In both key stages pupils develop appreciation skills by listening to a range of music in music lessons and in assemblies. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are given the opportunity to express their response to *Peter and the Wolf* in their art work, but further opportunities for response are under-developed in other curriculum areas and throughout the school.
232. Most pupils enjoy music and work well in groups. They understand the importance of listening carefully in order to appreciate the sounds they hear and to help them perform in a group. However, there are times when a significant minority of pupils show a lack of concentration, leading to slow and disappointing progress.
233. The quality of teaching is good overall. Some very good teaching was observed and lessons were never less than satisfactory. Planning is thorough and systematic, with well-defined aims that clearly state what it is pupils are expected to learn in the lesson. Teachers make their expectations clear so that the pupils know what is expected of them. They give all pupils good opportunities to contribute in the lessons. Resources are used well. Teachers match activities to the needs and abilities of the pupils.
234. There is a good policy and a comprehensive scheme of work which outlines the progressive development of skills. The music team lead the subject with expertise and enthusiasm, and they provide good opportunities for all pupils to be involved in extra-curricular music. Pupils studying orchestral instruments are well taught by visiting tutors and pupils make very good progress. Pupils who make up the school choir sing with enthusiasm and enjoy their weekly sessions. Pupils have opportunities to perform for parents and each other on Music Days and when they join with other local schools to make music at the Octagon Theatre. The good quality resources enhance the curriculum provision. However, as reported in the previous inspection, they do not represent a wide enough cultural diversity.
234. **Physical education**
235. During the inspection, the lessons observed focused on gymnastics, dance and games skills. Over the school year, pupils enjoy a full programme of physical education activities which include athletics, swimming and outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils make sound progress in both key stages. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory. There has been little change in standards since the last inspection.
236. Pupils in Year 1 show good awareness of space. They move with reasonable control both on the floor and on apparatus, making narrow and wide shapes. The level of control is appreciably better in Year 2, and pupils cope with changes of direction and speed. However, pupils are not set challenges which extend them, effectively limiting the progress made in the lessons seen.
237. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils take part in both creative dance and country-dance. In the former they compose and control movements, varying both size and tension. In the latter they show a grasp of some basic sequences such as 'swing' and 'promenade' when practising traditional British folk dances, but only a few are able to dance in time to

the music. Pupils in Year 4 who improvise dance steps to music find imaginative solutions. Through practice and discussion, many pupils make clear improvements in the course of the lesson.

238. Pupils in Year 6 practise netball skills in small-sided games. They show understanding of the principles of attack and defence, but a significant minority have poorly developed skills of throwing and catching, and only about half are able to find space when looking to receive the ball. A considerable number (almost a quarter of the year group) miss these lessons because they have forgotten to bring their kit, following a timetable change from previous weeks
239. All Key Stage 2 pupils go swimming in nine-week blocks during the course of the year. The pupils observed, who are in Year 5, are making good progress, showing confidence in the water. Nearly all the pupils in the year group are swimming and are clearly on course to meet national expectations.
240. Most pupils respond well to physical education. They behave sensibly, for instance when helping to set out or put away equipment. They listen attentively to instructions and follow them carefully. Only in Year 6 do a significant minority of pupils pay little attention, often ignoring instructions or advice and preferring to follow their own agenda. However, the way in which pupils usually co-operate when asked to work together is a very positive feature. Most lessons give pupils the chance to evaluate their own and others' performance, and most pupils do this with understanding.
241. The overall quality of teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory, and there was one good and one unsatisfactory lesson. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and this creates a positive working atmosphere. Lessons start with effective warm-ups, preparing the pupils for the activities to follow. By using pairs and small groups, teachers ensure maximum activity, increasing pupils' opportunities and maintaining interest. Good use is made of exemplars, both to offer praise and to look at areas for improvement. However, in some lessons activity is at the expense of skill development, with insufficient attention paid to improving the quality of performance. Given the level of relationships and co-operation, teachers could often have higher expectations. Where this is so, with swimming being a case in point, progress is good.
242. The co-ordinator has been appointed since the previous inspection and is working hard to review the subject and raise standards. She has a good grasp of what is needed and has constructed a focused and developmental action plan, but has no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

## 242. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### 242. **Summary of inspection evidence**

243. Six inspectors including a lay inspector visited the school for a total time equivalent to 24 days. Before the inspection members of the team attended a meeting of the parents to discuss inspection issues and to hear the views of the 16 parents who attended. In addition, 150 completed questionnaires were analysed.

244. The main evidence considered by the inspection team was gathered from:

- observation of 87 lessons or parts of lessons, covering all classes and including pupils with special educational needs, for a total of some 64 hours;
- attendance at daily acts of collective worship, observation of registration periods and extra-curricular activities;
- observation of pupils' behaviour in and around the school;
- listening to a sample of pupils from across the school reading;
- examining a representative sample of pupils' work for the current year and last year from each class, work on display around the school and work in progress;
- discussions with pupils about their work;
- discussions with the headteacher, teachers and learning support staff, other staff working in the school, governors and parents;
- scrutiny of the school development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, policy documents, teachers' planning and other documentation;
- examination of attendance registers, financial statements, records of pupils' progress and reports for parents;
- examination of the use of the accommodation and resources provided by the school for the pupils.

**DATA AND INDICATORS**

**Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	436	1	79	33

**Teachers and classes**

**Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

17.2

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

25.35

**Education support staff (YR – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:

11

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

178.5

Average class size:

31

**Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/1999
Total Income	665,948.00
Total Expenditure	635,859.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,455.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,703.00
Balance carried forward to next year	56,791.00

· **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	800
Number of questionnaires returned:	150

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	21	66	8	5	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	32	57	6	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	10	50	29	10	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20	74	5	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	19	63	13	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	22	68	9	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	25	48	20	7	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	15	55	12	16	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	24	56	18	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	18	50	23	8	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	42	51	4	2	1

· **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents were particularly appreciative of the extra-curricular activities provided by staff at lunchtime and after school.