

INSPECTION REPORT

Piddle Valley Church of England First School

Piddletrenthide, Dorchester

LEA area: Dorset LEA

Unique reference number: 113811

Acting Headteacher: Mrs A. Clark

Reporting inspector: Mr R. W. Burgess
OIN 20950

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th June 2000

Inspection number: 187790

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Piddletrenthide Dorchester Dorset
Postcode:	DT2 7QL
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R. E. Goddard
Date of previous inspection:	16 th January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R. W. Burgess	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Information technology	How high are standards?
		Art	How well are pupils taught?
		Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Physical education	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	
Mr P. Oldfield	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs L. Brackstone	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Science	
		Geography	
		History	
		Music	
		Under fives	
		Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6 – 9
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since the last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10 – 12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12 – 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13 – 15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS' AND CARERS'?	15 – 16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16 – 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19 – 21
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS	22 – 33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Piddle Valley C. E. Aided First School is situated to the north west of the town Dorchester and serves a number of villages, where the housing is both privately owned and rented. The pupils come from a range of social backgrounds. It has 61 pupils aged between four and 9 years and is smaller than other schools. There is a similar number of boys and girls. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average with a wide range of attainment. At the time of the inspection there was one child under five. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Sixteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below average. Most children attend pre-school provision. The school also admits pupils into the school at the beginning of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Five per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals, which is below average. The number of pupils has fallen since the last inspection as a direct result of a decline in the agricultural economy locally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is led effectively by the acting headteacher, who, in a short time, has raised expectations of what pupils can do. The governing body make a very good and effective contribution to the work of the school. The quality of provision is good, with good teaching and satisfactory standards attained by the majority of pupils with a significant number attaining good standards. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to inform teaching are being developed. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- ◆ The school is very well led by the acting headteacher
- ◆ The very good commitment, support and involvement of the governing body.
- ◆ The quality of teaching for the oldest pupils.
- ◆ Community links and those with parents are good.
- ◆ There is good provision for pupils' personal development.
- ◆ The good standards attained in music.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- ◆ Assessment procedures for all subjects and the consistent use of assessment to inform teaching.
- ◆ The use of monitoring and evaluation to identify the professional needs of all staff and areas for improvement as part of the ongoing development of the school.
- ◆ The timetable for the review of the different subjects and aspects of the school's work.
- ◆ The procedures for identifying and meeting the special educational needs of individual pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in January 1996 there have been two changes of headteacher and some long term staff absences. The school moved to a new building in June 1999. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The acting headteacher and governing body have successfully addressed some issues from the last inspection. Curriculum organisation is now satisfactory. Classroom monitoring is being developed. Assessment procedures are improving and the school recognises the need to continue to develop procedures for the assessment of individual pupil's achievement and the use of this to inform planning for future learning. The school is now well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A	A	D	E
Writing	C	A	E	E*
Mathematics	C	A	C	D

Key

well above average A
above average B
average C
below average D
well below average E
very low E*

The information shows that in 1999, for pupil's aged 7 standards in reading were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. In writing, standards were well below the national average and very low in comparison with the average for similar schools. In mathematics, standards were broadly in line with the national average and below the average for similar schools. Standards seen during the inspection were satisfactory for the majority of pupils who reach the required standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science for pupils aged 7 at the end of Key Stage 1 and good for pupils aged 9 at the end of Year 4 with a significant number of pupils attaining higher levels. Standards in information technology are satisfactory.

The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school. The number in each year group varies considerably, also the number of pupils with special educational needs. In this small school this has a significant impact when comparing performance both nationally and with similar schools. The school has set clear and appropriate targets which make good use of baseline assessments made when children start school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils have positive attitudes to school and are

	eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Whilst the behaviour of most pupils is good, there are instances of inappropriate behaviour by a minority of pupils, mainly boys.

Personal development and relationships	The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development and relationships are good.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are good, pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

The school's strong, caring ethos supports the development of pupils' good attitudes and values. Pupils listen attentively and most respond well in lessons. In their personal development, pupils willingly take responsibility for tasks and show initiative, such as when undertaking independent research and supporting different charities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching in lessons seen was very good in 40 per cent, good in 28 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. Teaching was particularly good in lessons for older Key Stage 2 pupils. The strengths in the teaching include good explanations and effective sessions at the beginning and end of lessons. These have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is at least satisfactory and often good. Literacy and numeracy are generally taught well, within the whole curriculum. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The teaching of children under five is good overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is an appropriate curriculum for children under five and at Key Stages 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is satisfactory overall and the pupils make satisfactory progress. In some lessons insufficient support is given to pupils with learning difficulties
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' personal, including moral, social and cultural development. Very good provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has a caring, community ethos based on the Christian faith. Assessment procedures are being developed.

The school has a good partnership with parents. Good use is made of the community to enrich the curriculum. There is sensitivity and good support for pupils and their parents, which has a strong impact on improving standards. The school recognises the need to review its curriculum planning in the light of new national guidance materials.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The development of staff roles has been affected by long term absences.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is very supportive of the acting headteacher and the school benefits from a high level of commitment by governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The governing body, acting headteacher and staff have created a climate in the school where there is a strong commitment to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Grants are used well. Good use is made of resources and the excellent accommodation.

The newly built accommodation is of a very high quality and is having a positive impact on the quality of provision. There are sufficient staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum. The range and quality of resources is good. There is very good leadership that is well supported by staff and the governing body. The school makes good use of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases most parents and carers	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Their children like school and they make good progress. ◆ The school is well led and staff are approachable. ◆ The quality of teaching is good. ◆ The expectation that pupils will do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Information on their children's progress. ◆ Some parents would like more homework. ◆ Activities outside lessons. ◆ Some parents were concerned over the effect of staff absences and changes on their children's attainment and progress, particularly at Key Stage 2.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. Parents welcome recent changes with an increased emphasis on the partnership with parents and hold the school in high regard. The school works well in partnership with parents which is one of the school's strengths. There is a need to improve the quality of written reports on pupils' progress. There is some inconsistency in homework. Inspectors disagree with some parents' views that there are insufficient activities outside lessons. There is a good range of visits to places of interest and extra-curricular activities which enhance the curriculum. Inspectors' judgement is that children's learning has not been significantly affected by staff absences and changes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, when compared with all schools, pupils' performance in reading was below the national average. In writing it was well below the national average and in mathematics was broadly in line with the national average. Their performance in relation to schools in similar contexts was well below average in reading, very low in writing and below average in mathematics. There was no significant difference between boys' and girls' performance. In 1999, a larger proportion of pupils being assessed had special educational needs, which was reflected in the lower than average performance.
2. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school. The number in each year group varies considerably, also the number of pupils with special educational needs. In this small school this has a significant impact when comparing performance both nationally and with similar schools.
3. The results of voluntary national tests at the end of Year 4 and provisional results for 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the majority of pupils are attaining satisfactory standards in reading, writing and mathematics, with a significant number attaining above levels expected nationally. This was reflected in the standards seen during the inspection. Curriculum planning and organisation have been improved to provide continuity and progression. Pupils' attainment is being more closely monitored than previously and the school has set clear targets which make good use of baseline assessments made when children start school.
4. Additional literacy support and intensive teaching is provided for identified groups of pupils, particularly in the early years. Baseline assessment is used effectively to identify and provide support for pupils. These are having a positive impact on raising standards. Most recently, careful analyses of pupils' achievements are being developed to determine strengths and weaknesses.
5. Children under five make satisfactory progress. They meet the desirable learning outcomes for their age in most areas of learning by the time they are five. Their personal and social development is good. During the inspection only one child was still under five and was appropriately following the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.
6. Throughout the school, the vast majority of pupils achieve expected levels in English, mathematics and science, with a significant minority attaining higher levels. These good standards have been well maintained since the last inspection, despite a significant upheaval in the move to the new school, staff changes and long term staff absences.
7. The standards of work seen during the inspection were consistently satisfactory at Key Stage 1 for the majority of pupils and for the oldest pupils in Year 3 and 4 often good. In Year 3 and 4 where the teaching was most effective work was appropriate to all pupils reflecting their differing prior attainment. Good strategies were used to ensure pupils worked at a good pace and expectations of standards and behaviour were high, reflecting the impact of the quality of teaching on standards. The focus on improving curricular provision, teachers' expectations, planning and organisation are having positive results. Staff continue to improve their professional expertise, such as in their knowledge and understanding of information technology.

8. Standards of achievement of gifted pupils and those with special educational needs is generally satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment. They are generally supported well by all staff. Pupils with behavioural difficulties do not always receive sufficient support to ensure they make good progress and their behaviour sometimes affects the progress of other pupils. Teachers encourage these pupils to fully participate in lessons.

9. Standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum, including information technology, are at least satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1. They are at least satisfactory by the end of Year 4. Standards are particularly good in music.

10. There is a continuing focus on improving assessment and its effective use to inform planning. Pupils' performance in national tests is being carefully analysed to plan for improvement and raise standards. The school lacks systems for assessment in foundation subjects and for adequately monitoring the progress of individual pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Many are brought by parents and many others travel by coach. The greater majority of pupils listen well, as was evidenced by an assembly when the story read by the teacher was a 'moral' story about sharing. Pupils enjoy being involved in daily tasks and act as register monitors. A strength in the social development of the pupils in Years 3 and 4 is the provision of opportunities which are given for them to show initiative and personal responsibility. For example, pupils prepare the hall for assembly and responsibly tidy away afterwards. Pupils respected the view that one area of the veranda outside was reserved for Year 4 pupils. They show a good attitude to learning.

12. Behaviour was always satisfactory because of the good adult supervision. There were examples of some older boys not being fully on task and not listening well in some lessons. The school has recognised the need to keep all pupils fully engaged and is working with external support to develop a good strategy. There have been no exclusions. There was no oppressive behaviour seen and pupils did not believe this was a problem at this small school. All pupils played well together. The requirements of being kind, considerate and co-operative were known and understood.

13. Pupils were always pleased to answer teachers' questions and the strong spiritual and moral teaching evident in the school was reflected in their actions. They fully appreciated the understanding for others, promoted in an assembly where examination of their own lunch boxes was a comparison to the story of support to others who may be hungry.

14. Pupils move around the school in a well mannered way and show respect for the building as well as for one another. Pupils were seen to be helpful to each other, they opened doors, fastened shoe laces for younger pupils and generally added to the family care 'feeling' of the school. Some pupils enjoyed a lunch time session practising hymns and songs, so as to lead future celebration assemblies.

15. The pupils' social development is good. The quality of relationships in the school is good, helping pupils to develop good social behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The acting headteacher has worked hard to develop a collective team spirit and, following staff illnesses, a period of good relationships at the school has prevailed, as an added benefit of a stable staff. There is a good response to the school's set of golden rules, which the pupils themselves have been discussing over the past two terms. The school's ethos successfully

encourages pupils to feel part of a caring community. This is widened to being a useful part of a world community when pupils generously support charitable activities.

16. Attendance levels in the current school year are good and above the national average. Parents respond well to informing the school of any absences, the rate of unauthorised absence is very low.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good overall for children under five and at Key Stage 1. It is very good for the oldest pupils in Years 3 and 4. For children under five and at Key Stage 1 it was very good in 24 per cent of lessons, good in 28 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. For the oldest pupils in Years 3 and 4 it was very good in 75 per cent of lessons, good in 12 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. There is some variation in the quality of teaching but the school's recent focus on improving schemes of work and curriculum planning is having a positive impact. The acting headteacher has effectively promoted a positive approach to raising standards and all staff share this commitment.

18. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory for children under five and at Key Stage 1, it is very good for the oldest pupils in Years 3 and 4. There is a clear understanding of the needs of the youngest children and pupils with special educational needs. Time, support staff and resources are generally used effectively throughout the school. There is sometimes insufficient support for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Basic skills are taught well and pupils are generally managed well. A few exceptions were seen, where the management of pupils with behavioural difficulties was not always effective.

19. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. There is continuity and progression, though some planning sometimes insufficiently caters for different levels of pupils' previous learning. In particular, there is often similar challenge provided for all pupils, regardless of prior attainment in the Key Stage 1 classes. Expectations are generally appropriate in most classes, with some high expectations seen in the Year 3 and 4 class. In these lessons, effective strategies and methods were used to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, the teacher has organised the literacy hour to best effect, allocating time well to link all components of the hour. Pupils maintained interest and sustained concentration throughout lessons and made good progress.

20. The teaching of children under five is good overall. The teacher is well supported by non-teaching staff. Planning is satisfactory, there is a good range of resources to provide suitable experiences in all areas of learning.

21. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good overall. Good examples of whole class teaching were observed, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Teachers introduce and explain objectives well. For example, these were seen in a good literacy hour in Year 2. Pupils contributed well, concentrated on their task and made good progress in their learning about endings and root words. In the satisfactory lessons, though there were several good features, including effective introductions, the pace of the lessons was not always appropriate, often due to the behaviour of a very small number of pupils who did not receive sufficient support. In some instances, there was insufficient challenge for all pupils in the class.

22. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is supported well by the effective planning for the literacy and numeracy hours. The teacher has good knowledge in these subjects. In these lessons, good use is made of assessment to

inform planning and work is well matched to pupils' needs. Science is taught well and pupils have a good understanding of all processes involved in conducting an experiment to test how plants get their energy for growth. Music is taught well throughout the key stages.

23. Expectations of behaviour are generally high, though on some occasions teachers do not use the school's sanctions to correct the few instances of inappropriate behaviour. In a few cases, the less than effective management and organisation of some lessons causes pupils to lose interest and motivation.

24. Marking is inconsistent in the school. At its best, it is used effectively to help pupils to improve their work. Some homework is provided in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 3 and 4 and in reading and spelling for all pupils but this has been inconsistent in the school and some parents are unclear as to what they should expect.

25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and helps to promote progress. Pupils are fully integrated into lessons and teacher's planning is informed by pupils' individual education plans. Plans are regularly revised and targets are adjusted to ensure that pupils achieve success. Support staff contribute well to pupils' progress. They support pupils in lessons and also provide individual support for those with specific difficulties. Support for pupils with behavioural difficulties is not always sufficient.

26. The school staff have worked hard to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. The acting headteacher gives a strong lead to developments such as planning, assessment and delivery. She monitors the teaching closely and provides good guidance on teaching strategies. In the relatively short time since her appointment, the school has developed a shared commitment to improving expectations and standards. Considerable work has been done and continues to take place to improve the quality of teaching.

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

27. The school provides a satisfactory range of curricular activities and succeeds in its aim to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum, within a happy, caring, Christian environment. Since the previous inspection, improvements in the provision of schemes of work and structured planning have been made. The staff have worked hard to develop the curriculum through the use of recently published national guidelines and more detailed planning. This has been particularly noticeable in the last two terms since the acting headteacher took up her post. There is also a very detailed scheme of work for music specifically written by the co-ordinator for the school. Medium term plans are good and this gives good guidance to teachers on learning objectives and activities. This ensures that the skills of each subject are developed systematically as pupils pass through the school. Both weekly and daily planning follows a well-designed school pattern. A weakness is the provision of detailed plans for pupils with differing abilities and attitudes to work. The preparation of pupils for the next stage of education is enhanced through the regular provision of a variety of homework tasks, although some parents state they do not know what to expect.

28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are provided with the full range of the curriculum and make satisfactory progress. Suitable individual education plans are in place, with detailed targets for each area of need. The specific identification of difficulties and strategies to address them still need to be developed to provide greater accuracy and improved progress for the pupils. In literacy and numeracy lessons there is planning for pupils of

differing abilities. Paperwork for special educational needs fulfil the requirements of the Code of Practice, including help from outside agencies when required.

29. The strategies for numeracy and literacy have been effectively introduced. The effect of the literacy strategy has been analysed carefully by the school to help with the setting of targets. Mental mathematics teaching is much more focused and beneficial in providing pupils with a range of helpful strategies to improve their confidence and standards.

30. The governing body has a clear policy not to provide sex education but the school does deal sensitively with issues when they arise. There is an appropriate personal, social and health education policy and the provision of good knowledge and skills to make informed choices to achieve a healthy lifestyle are embodied in the curriculum.

31. Provision for after-school clubs is good and includes both sporting and musical activities. There are also good opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive games against other schools. The school has comprehensive links with the local community and this includes close liaison with schools within the area. Links are used regularly to provide both speakers and visitors to school that are able to supplement the school's curriculum resources. For example, several visits have been made by a local artist who has worked with a group of pupils to create stained glass windows in the hall. Until very recently, a local football coach has also been working with the pupils on ball skills. The school has a close and worthwhile relationship with the local cluster of schools. The sharing of both staff expertise and resources greatly enhance the quality of the curriculum provision.

32. The school's mission statement illustrates the school's clear aim to apply Christian values, principles and beliefs. It aims to achieve a secure environment that strives to provide the best possible education for the pupils. This aim permeates the daily life of the school, resulting in very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development and good provision for the pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Shared religious ideals encourage a special relationship between staff and pupils which lead to shared attitudes and values in life as well as in the school community. An ethos of caring for one another and sharing for the benefit of others is based completely on spiritual values. Pupils are given helpful opportunities in assemblies and lessons to reflect on their own experiences, to help them develop self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. Some teachers are very skilled at demonstrating to the pupils that their work is valued. For example, this is shown in music lessons where pupils are asked to demonstrate their compositions or in literacy when a pupil's piece of writing is used as an example of good work. This kind of response from the teacher gives pupils a valuable insight to the values of others. Pupils also have opportunities to learn about the faiths of others.

33. There is a shared understanding of moral principles in the school, with adults setting good examples of fairness and honesty, which leads to good moral development of the pupils. The school fosters respect for truth in illustrative stories in assemblies and the pupils develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. In their everyday dealings with incidents in the classroom, class teachers set a good example in the just way they deal with any differences arising between pupils.

34. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The quality of relationships in the school is good, helping pupils to develop good social behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The school's set of golden rules have been developed through discussion with the pupils themselves over the past two terms. Pupils are encouraged to move around the school in a good-mannered way and show respect for the building as well as for one another. There is good provision of opportunities for pupils to show initiative and personal responsibility. For example, pupils prepare the hall for assembly and responsibly tidy away afterwards. Teachers

challenge their pupils with open-ended questions and allow them to choose their own tools or methods of finding answers. The school ethos successfully encourages pupils to feel part of a caring community. This is widened to being a useful part of a world community when pupils generously support charitable activities.

35. The school teaches the pupils very well to appreciate their cultural traditions and satisfactorily promotes the diversity and richness of other cultures. The result is good provision for the pupils' cultural development. The school provides pupils with a clear perspective of their own cultural heritage as part of the history and art curriculum. For example, the story of the fire of London provides a focus for both art and history lessons. Pupils have a sound coverage of other cultures in geography topics. Art lessons include the work of painters showing a variety of styles and cultural emphases. Satisfactory opportunities are taken by the school to enhance cultural provision through the use of visitors. Helpful visits to the local landscapes, ancient technology centres and places of historical interest enrich the pupils' appreciation of the society in which they live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school values its pupils and provides a caring environment. It has good contact with many support agencies, including the school doctor and nurse and behaviour support services.

The procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. A member of staff has responsibility for child protection matters. Cases are handled in a professional manner and good liaison takes place with the appropriate support agencies. The school could benefit from having appropriate staff attend suitable training upon child protection matters so that the exact requirements are more fully understood.

37. The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. The school secretary frequently contacts homes to make certain that any absence that day is absence which becomes supported by parents' letters and telephone calls. Appropriate liaison is maintained with the educational welfare service. The school has good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. Class teachers and all adults in the school set high expectations of good behaviour and this is underlined in the assemblies and circle time. Staff have high expectancies of good behaviour.

38. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not yet fully developed. Work is marked and Year 3 and 4 tests allow some knowledge of added value building upon the baseline assessments and national test results at Year 2. There is insufficient use of assessment information to inform curricular planning, planning for future learning and pupils' annual reports to parents do not indicate appropriate levels of attainment to compare with national expectations.

39. The procedures for monitoring personal development are satisfactory. Teachers know the pupils well and in a small school there are continual opportunities to build up self-esteem and confidence of the pupils. This is frequently and effectively done. Teachers were polite and seen to be very caring. There are good introduction procedures for transferring to the middle school. Pupils entering the school reception year are given pre-visits with parents.

40. The excellent building provides a stimulating environment for learning. The governing body has undertaken all routine tasks of health and safety management and conducted appropriate risk assessments. Minor injuries are dealt with in a caring and sensitive way. There are appropriately trained first aiders in the school and prescribed medicines for pupils

are carefully marked and held for offering to pupils after parents have given appropriate consent. The school's accident book for minor accidents does need to show a fuller description of injuries and have appropriate dates stated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS?

41. Following the appointment of an acting headteacher in February 2000, parents now feel very satisfied with the work of the school after a period of concern due to the necessity for some temporary teaching appointments. The commitment and leadership of the acting headteacher has gained the confidence of parents and overcome their concerns. They receive appropriate letters about events at the school and the school brochure is produced to a high standard. The governors' annual report to parents gives a good picture about the life and work of the school.

42. A few parents had concerns about the amount of homework set. Homework is regularly set for Year 3 and 4 pupils. A revision of the home-school agreement is planned following the appointment of the new headteacher. Parents are involved in home reading and have the opportunity to write their comments and observations in a home-school book.

43. A large number of parents regularly help in classes, their work is highly valued. An active Friends' Association provides very good help to the school, particularly in help with certificates and badges for swimming lessons and does provide a 'disco' for pupils each term. One of the association events has become an established national event. The Piddle Valley Plod is a race where runners come from countrywide and race under national rules. Some of the association events are community events, such as the Strawberry Fayre.

44. Some parents had concerns about the range of activities outside school. Inspection evidence indicates that the range of extra-curricular activities is good. The school currently provides a choir, recorder, hand bells, aerobic walking and netball. Until very recently football was an event but supervisory changes meant this popular activity has had to be temporarily withdrawn.

45. The school values parents and seeks to make them welcome at all times. Teachers are always on hand at the school gate at the end of the school day and frequently meet parents informally at the beginning of the school day. There are parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms and parents may meet teachers to discuss progress after the pupils' annual reports have been sent and to review any concerns. Parents are pleased with the excellent learning environment of the new school building.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The acting headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the school well. In the short time since her appointment she has done much to build teamwork and has set a clear agenda for improvement in the school. In recent years, there have been two changes of headteacher together with periods of long term absence of staff which has affected progress in achieving the school's targets as set out in the school's action plan after the last inspection. In particular the review of curriculum provision and revision of policies and schemes of work in the light of the publication of national guidance materials has been disrupted.

47. The management of the school successfully promotes its aims and values. These are apparent in the work of the school. There is a shared sense of purpose, a strong commitment to community life and an ethos in which people are valued and respected. Much has recently been achieved, during the building of the new school, to integrate the community into the life of the school. Pupils are well cared for. Staff have a consistent approach which ensures that behaviour and discipline are well managed. A commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils is clearly evident in the everyday life of the school. Parents are fully supportive of the school's aims and values as shown in the questionnaire and the parents' meeting before the inspection.

48. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by the acting headteacher has given a good insight, shared understanding and an awareness of the school's needs. It is clearly apparent that the acting headteacher, governing body and staff have created a climate in the school where there is a strong commitment to improvement. The acting headteacher has analysed the school's results in both internal and external tests and tracked pupils in different year groups. This has provided a clear insight into the school's future needs. The acting headteacher has monitored and evaluated teaching and learning in the core subjects with focused observations of teaching which are helping to further develop teaching and the good practice which is already taking place.

49. The governing body is very supportive of the school and committed to the continued development of the school. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas it needs to develop. They fulfil their legal responsibilities by retaining oversight of the budget, plans and policies. They are well informed in terms of the school's position and educational direction. Training for governors for their role, including monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, has taken place.

50. The teaching staff and classroom assistants are well qualified and appropriately deployed. All staff work well together to ensure that the pupils are well cared for in an educationally stimulating environment. They all have an appropriate role in developing their curriculum subjects. Formal appraisal of teachers is not taking place in the school at present. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are taking place and to a limited extent there is some target setting. Governors have been involved in setting targets and the introduction of performance management is one of the targets in the school's development plan. Staff development is managed effectively and is playing an appropriate role in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.

51. The financial management of the school is good. The school office is run very efficiently and routine administrative procedures are most effective. The very good working relationship between the acting headteacher, governing body and school secretary is a key factor in the success the school has in managing and monitoring its finances and ensuring best value. Initiatives and developments are carefully costed, with due regard for the four principles of best value. For example, this is seen in the decisions taken to ensure the high quality of provision in the new building and on staffing levels in the light of falling pupil numbers, where alternatives have been considered and costed and decisions evaluated. The school development plan shows well-targeted developments, which are appropriately costed and linked to the school's budget with time scales for completion.

52. The school makes good use of the grants it receives, frequently supplementing them with its own fund-raising initiatives. For example, the funds provided to resource the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been used well. The school is also developing its range of information technology resources through the use of a national grant. Good use of these resources is made in classrooms, financial administration and in support of the

curriculum and the raising of standards.

53. The school's provision for special educational needs is managed effectively. Pupils with special educational needs receive sensitive support. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full and policies are appropriate. A member of the governing body has been nominated to liaise with the co-ordinator. Governors report to parents on the success of the special educational needs policy and give details of the allocations of funding to support pupils. Funds and resources are effectively used to meet the needs of all pupils with special educational needs.

54. The newly built accommodation is excellent. It is spacious and used well. The school has an attractive central courtyard. Corridors are wide and furnished with attractive displays of pupils' work. Classrooms offer good space. A sizeable hall provides ample space for dining, physical education, assemblies and other activities. The playground is of an adequate size for outdoor physical education and play and the grounds, which include a good sized grassed area, are being developed for use in pupils' study of the environment.

55. Resources are good. They have improved since the last inspection, particularly in library provision and provision for information and communication technology. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is also well supported with good quality resources. Effective use has been made of the school's links with other local schools. Overall the school offers good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ give high priority to continue to develop and implement assessment procedures, as identified in the previous report, to:
 - *monitor individual pupils' attainment and progress;*
 - *provide information to help set targets for individual pupils and for school improvement;*
 - *provide information to help develop curricular planning and to assist in its evaluation;*
 - *use the results of these assessments to help plan appropriate work for pupils of different levels of attainment;*

(paragraphs 10, 38, 73, 95, 100 and 107)

- ◆ ensure the effective use of monitoring and evaluation to inform plans for the school's development by:
 - *identifying the training needs of all staff for their professional development;*
 - *identifying areas of the school's work which require improvement*

(paragraph 50)

- ◆ develop a timetable for the review of the different subjects and aspects of the school's work within an appropriate period of time;

(paragraphs 46 and 48)

- ◆ continue to develop effective whole school strategies for pupils with learning difficulties;

(paragraphs 8, 12, 21, 27 and 28)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 24, 27, 38 and 42:

- ◆ improve the quality of information in annual written reports on pupil's standards of attainment and progress;
- ◆ ensure homework policy and practice is clearly understood by parents.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	40	28	32	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	63
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	6	6	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	4	3	4
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	10	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (94)	75 (100)	83 (95)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	4	4	4
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (95)	83 (95)	83 (100)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	54
Any other minority ethnic groups	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.1 : 1
Average class size	21

Educational support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of educational support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	161,054
Total expenditure	162,800
Expenditure per pupil	2,585
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,575
Balance carried forward to next year	829

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out:	61
Number of questionnaires returned:	27

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	41	48	7	0	4
My child is making good progress in school	26	48	11	4	11
Behaviour in the school is good	26	52	15	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	4	56	29	7	4
The teaching is good	30	63	0	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	22	48	15	11	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	56	33	0	11	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	30	63	0	7	0
The school works closely with parents	19	55	7	19	0
The school is well led and managed	22	63	4	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	18	67	4	4	7
The school provides as interesting range of activities outside lessons	11	44	37	0	8

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

56. Children enter the school at the beginning of the school year in which they will be five. They are currently accommodated in the Reception and Year 1 class. On entry into school their attainment is very varied but overall is broadly in line with expected levels. When the children are admitted they initially follow the recommended areas of learning for children under five. Satisfactory progress is made and, by the age of five, the vast majority of children have attained suitable levels. During the inspection only one child was still under five and was appropriately following the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

57. Children's personal and social development is good. By the age of five, the children have developed confidence in dealing with personal hygiene and are gaining good levels of independence. For example, they are able to undress themselves ready for physical education and they cope well with buttons, zips and other fastenings. The children are developing good working habits and are able to sustain concentration for appropriate periods of time. They know that they must look after the toys in their classroom and show respect for their school. The children enthusiastically celebrate each other's birthdays and respond fully to religious events such as harvest time, Christmas and Hanukkah.

58. In language and literacy, children develop satisfactory speaking and listening skills. By the age of five, the majority of children are able to both recognise and write independently their name. Most know a good number of the words that appear frequently in books. They enjoy listening to stories and confidently point both to the spine of a book and the cover. The majority of children understand that the name of the person who writes a book is called an author and they are able to point to the titles. The children are starting to learn both the names and sounds of individual letters and know that books are read from left to right. Good listening skills are developing and the children are learning to speak with confidence.

59. In the early mathematical area of learning, children can count up to 20 and can match and count objects to 10. By the age of five, most children have begun to sequence the days of the week in the correct order and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as more or less and greater and smaller. The children use money in their role-play area and have started to understand the varying values of the coins. They recognise simple two and three-dimensional shapes and sort objects according to specific criteria. They are developing confidence in writing and recording numbers.

60. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. By the age of five, the children are able to find their way around the school building and the outdoor environment. They observe changes in their own environment, such as the variations in the seasons and are beginning to identify differences between houses in the locality. The children begin to understand vocabulary related to electricity and light. They know that safety is a very important aspect in relation to them. Materials such as sand and water help the children to gain a good understanding of the different properties and the use of a wide variety of construction kits enables them to explore and select appropriate utensils. They gain confidence with their use of computers and are steadily developing their ability to use the mouse as a control panel.

61. In the physical area of learning, children develop satisfactory control of pencils and other writing tools. By the age of five, the children have developed an appropriate awareness

of space and are able to move around with good regard to each other. For example, during physical education lessons they move around the hall using their feet in a variety of different ways. They are also using both climbing and balancing apparatus with increasing skill. Tools such as scissors, pencils, crayons and glue sticks are used appropriately and they competently complete interlocking puzzles.

62. Children develop satisfactory understanding in the creative areas of learning. By the age of five, the children select appropriate materials to make three-dimensional models that depict autumn creatures. They carefully print patterns and create different textures using potatoes and paint. Christmas decorations are made with confidence and their ideas are developed well. The children sing confidently and are able to recall simple number tunes such as "Five Little Ducks went swimming one day". The role-play area provides a variety of different settings for the children to develop their creative skills and they achieve appropriate standards in the imaginative settings such as a "Vet's Surgery" and "Pet Shop".

63. Progress is satisfactory overall in the areas of learning for children under five. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Children generally respond well, are happy and have positive attitudes to school.

64. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teacher has a very caring approach, which ensures all children feel secure. Lessons are planned to meet the requirements for children under five. The teacher explains work carefully. There is sometimes insufficient overview of what is being taught by classroom assistants when the teacher delegates certain activities. The resources and accommodation are good for children under five. There is good space for a range of activities, including outdoor play.

ENGLISH

65. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils aged 7, the number of pupils attaining the nationally expected level 2 was close to the national average in reading. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was also close to the national average performance. In writing the number of pupils' attaining the nationally expected level 2 was below the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was well below the national average. The numbers of pupils undergoing national testing and assessment are too small and variable from year to year to provide a reliable guide to the overall trend of standards throughout the school.

66. Evidence during the inspection indicated the vast majority of pupils throughout the school achieve expected levels with a significant minority attaining higher levels. These good standards have been well maintained since the last inspection, despite a significant upheaval in the move to the new school and staff absences. There has been a strong focus on raising standards, which has included additional literacy support. The literacy hour is contributing effectively in developing pupils' reading skills. A considerable amount of good quality books have been acquired to support teaching in the literacy hour and to promote reading for pleasure and for information.

67. Standards are good with the majority of pupils reaching the required standards in both reading and writing for pupils aged 7 at the end of Key Stage 1 and for pupils aged 9 at the end of Year 4, with a significant minority attaining higher levels. Pupils are developing ways to understand unfamiliar words. They are able to talk about different books they like to read and the higher attaining pupils discuss their favourite authors. Pupils confidently write for a variety of different purposes, which include stories, poems and personal "news" reports. For example,

they write about days out when “they visit granny and go to McDonalds for tea” and they also competently write imaginative stories about “Magic Pigs”. Words are correctly spelt

and sentence structures firmly in place. This skill is developed well in both Reception and Year 1 where they gain an appropriate understanding of the use of writing as a means to communicate. By age 7, the majority of pupils are forming their letters clearly and legibly.

68. In speaking and listening, most of the younger pupils learn to listen attentively to the teacher and other support staff. They enjoy listening to stories during the literacy hour. There is a strong focus on improving speaking and listening skills, reflected in most lessons where teachers encourage pupils to answer, explain and offer their ideas. By age 9, pupils are able to contribute well to discussions with both confidence and enthusiasm. They generally listen carefully to each other and the majority of pupils respond appropriately to the comments of their classmates. For example, pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class confidently debate controversial subjects such as racism, fox hunting and the use of homework! Pupils listen very carefully to each other’s point of view and share suggestions with each other.

69. In reading, younger pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Some of the Reception pupils readily use their knowledge of letter patterns and use of illustrations to help them to read unfamiliar words. By age 9, the majority of pupils are reading with fluency and expression. They are developing a good knowledge of different authors and talk about the wide range of books that they have read. The majority of pupils are able to use their reading skills to support their learning. They have an appropriate understanding of indexes and glossaries when researching their topic work and successfully use the school library to find relevant books for their work.

70. In writing, pupils make variable progress in the school. In the Reception classes, pupils with higher prior attainment begin to write simple sentences. Letter formation is generally sound, though some pupils have insecure understanding of the correct formation and orientation of letters, or of spaces around words. By age 9, the majority of pupils are writing confidently for a variety of purposes. These include detailed story writing on subjects such as “Under the Sea” which show a clear structure to them. Speech marks are used well to identify individual comments and discussions as for example in the use of speech bubbles. Pupils are also developing their ability to use their writing skills for detailed factual information such as biographies, labelling and setting out instructions, such as in recipes. They also use their skills well when writing both informal and formal letters and the higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of the use of paragraphing. Punctuation is generally used accurately. Pupils are developing a fluent handwriting style and their work is neatly presented.

71. The overall quality of teaching is good and this has a direct impact on the standards being attained by the pupils. Teachers have a good understanding of the literacy strategy and through well-planned lessons, they are using it well to improve standards throughout the curriculum. For example, teachers use the structure of the literacy session to teach other subjects such as science. Group tasks are well matched to the needs of all pupils and teachers use the literacy hour effectively to teach appropriate skills. Teachers are skilled in asking questions, which require pupils to think carefully and use praise and encouragement to build up the self-confidence of the pupils.

72. Attitudes and response are variable but appropriate standards of behaviour are expected and generally the work planned challenges and excites the pupils. For example, teachers ensure that the text chosen for guided reading sessions are interesting and stimulate the pupils. This was evident in a Reception and Year 1 lesson when the teacher chose a very

appropriate poem about “Furry Ones” which really stimulated the pupils’ thinking. As a result, they were able to produce their own poems in a similar style using exciting words, such as scurrying, yappy and scratchy, with confidence. Teachers relate well to the children and this helps to establish a positive environment and commitment to hard work. Pupils are progressively taught how to search for information. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have skilfully learnt to use dictionaries. This had a positive impact on their learning because they are able to look up the spellings of words independently.

73. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall and the school continues to focus on improving the quality of assessment and its effective use to inform teaching and learning. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is effectively monitored. The school does not yet have a system for tracking individual pupils’ development to assess and monitor the “value added” element of their educational life at school. The quality of marking is inconsistent. In a few cases, teachers miss opportunities to show pupils how they might improve their writing, such as in highlighting more sophisticated ways of combining sentences.

74. The previous inspection highlighted weaknesses in both the long and short term planning. The introduction of the literacy hour has enabled the school to formalise planning documentation and both knowledge and skills are now planned progressively throughout the school. Monitoring of the subject has been limited because of the demands of the move to the new building and staff absence. The new building has a very good impact on pupils’ learning with a well-appointed library that is centrally located within the school. Resources for English are good. The literacy hour has been resourced well and there are a suitable number of books representing a range of different cultures.

MATHEMATICS

75. In the National Curriculum assessments in 1999, the number of pupils attaining the expected level for their age at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the national average. The proportion achieving at a higher level was well above the national average. These standards indicate a decline in performance since 1998, though there were much higher than average numbers of pupils with special educational needs being assessed. Their results have a significant impact on overall performance. This year’s provisional National Curriculum assessments show a significant rise in standards over the previous year. The number in each year group varies considerably. In this small school this has a significant impact when comparing performance both nationally and with similar schools and in considering trends from year to year.

76. Evidence during the inspection indicated the vast majority of pupils throughout the school achieve expected levels with a significant minority attaining higher levels. These standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number and place value. They are familiar with the language and symbols of addition and subtraction.

77. In Year 1, pupils add and subtract mentally numbers to 10 but their knowledge is not yet secure. They count confidently to 100 but are less certain in counting back. Those with higher prior attainment have secure understanding of mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20. They count in twos and fives and are making good progress in counting forwards and back in threes from 12 or 15. They are beginning to respond quickly when naming numbers that are three more or three less than a two-digit number.

78. By the age of 7, Year 2, pupils count with confidence up to 100 and back. They count in

tens and add and subtract 9 and 11 to and from two-digit numbers. They are developing mental strategies for adding two-digit numbers together. Higher attaining pupils can explain the mental process they use to arrive at the correct answer. Pupils order numbers to 100 and complete and explain simple number sequences. They recognise odd and even numbers. Most are secure in their mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20. Pupils solve simple problems involving number, money and measurement. They identify and name flat and solid shapes such as pyramids, hexagons and pentagons and sort them according to the number of corners, edges and faces.

79. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils increase their understanding of place value to well over 100, partitioning numbers into hundreds, tens and units. They understand how to count on from the lower number when mentally adding a pair of two-digit numbers together. They extend their knowledge of doubles to 100. Pupils use their knowledge of halves to find a quarter of a number by halving the half. They recognise multiples of twos, fives and tens. Their knowledge of the two, five and ten multiplication tables have been committed to memory. Pupils are beginning to use decimal notation with money when solving problems. They are gaining an understanding of the effect of multiplying and dividing by 10. They estimate weight and measures and solve simple problems involving measures.

80. Pupils have opportunities to use and apply mathematics in other subjects, such as science. For example, they record a range of data, measuring and recording temperature, light and air conditions during a residential visit. In design and technology they explore three-dimensional shapes and the two-dimensional shapes that can be found in them. Information and communication technology is also utilised to produce graphs relating to geography, science and design and technology. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

81. Progress overall is satisfactory for pupils in Key Stage 1 and good for pupils in Key Stage 2, including gifted pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs are generally effectively supported by classroom assistants. Some pupils with behavioural difficulties do not always receive adequate support. Pupils generally respond well. They listen and follow instructions and behave well.

82. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory at Key Stage 1 to very good at Key Stage 2. Lessons are carefully planned. Objectives are clear and well understood by the pupils. In the most successful lessons teachers use skilful questioning at the end of lessons to assess the degree to which objectives have been met. This then informs the next stage in learning. For example, in a very good lesson seen, Year 3 and 4 pupils made good progress in their learning about factors and multiples where work was well planned to extend and develop their previous work. Activities were also used to ensure pupils' attention was maintained. In most lessons, tasks are well structured and organised to meet pupils' needs. The scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that work is generally well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Marking does not always sufficiently help pupils to know what they must do to improve.

83. There is effective monitoring and evaluation of the subject, with focused observations of teaching by the acting headteacher which are helping to raise standards. Test results have been analysed, providing a good basis for further development. A review of the success of the National Numeracy Strategy in school is planned. All staff have received numeracy training. The medium and short term planning ensure continuity and progression across the school. Resources have been recently audited and there is now a good level of resourcing to support the National Numeracy Strategy.

SCIENCE

84. Standards are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and good by the time pupils leave the school. Throughout the school the majority of pupils are achieving the expected standard and a significant minority of higher attaining pupils are working above this. This good achievement has been maintained since the previous inspection.

85. By the age of 7, Year 2 pupils know that some toys need batteries to work and that cookers require electricity to work. They understand that seeds need the right conditions to grow and are able to sort and classify a variety of different mini-beasts. Pupils also know which foods they need to maintain a healthy diet and are able to distinguish between natural and man-made objects.

86. By the age of 9, Year 4 pupils are able to discuss the differences between solids and liquids. They clearly describe changes that can occur if these substances are heated or cooled. The pupils are developing a sound understanding of changes that can be reversed, such as the freezing of water. They accurately label the parts of a flower and know that flowers need both water and soil to survive. Pupils have a clear understanding of an electrical circuit and know that certain materials conduct electricity. They have also successfully tested a wide variety of materials to check which ones are good insulators and maintain heat.

87. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2 in their knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of the subject. Pupils work well and helped each other effectively. Most show interest, have positive attitudes and behave well. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

88. Evidence from scrutinising work samples and teachers' planning indicates that the quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. During the inspection one lesson was observed in the Year 3 and 4 class and this was of very good quality. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and clear objectives are both set and shared with the pupils at the start of lessons. This ensures that the pupils understand what they are doing and are able to judge how well they have done at the end of the lesson. The content of lessons are planned well to ensure that the pupils are fully interested and are able to both concentrate and think for themselves. For example, in the Year 3 and 4 lesson observed during the inspection, pupils were fully involved in the testing of different growing conditions for plants. They were given a variety of materials, which they used to cover up the plants and then confidently investigated how the light was changed into energy. This activity ensured that all pupils were actively involved in their learning and this was successfully achieved at a good pace.

89. Non-teaching staff are used well to support the pupils' learning and, through interesting dialogues with adults, pupils rapidly acquire new knowledge. Good use is made of a very wide range of resources. For example, evidence from the work in the Year 2 and 3 class indicates that pupils were given a large number of items to explore when they were investigating materials that could change shape. These included elastic bands, paper clips, play dough and clay. Good use is also made of the local environment to support the pupils learning and visits include mini-beast hunts in the woods and observations of living creatures at a local aquarium.

90. A scheme of work is used to ensure the consistency of both skills and teaching across the school. As a result of staff absences and the move to the new school, the monitoring and evaluation of this has been delayed and is still in its infancy but the school is aware of the need for this to be considered in the future.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

91. The school has successfully kept pace with national developments in information and communication technology and the standards attained by the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and when they leave the school at the end of Year 4 are in line with those expected nationally.

92. At Key Stage 1, pupils use computers, tape players and similar equipment with confidence. They explain the advantages of using information technology and discuss the use of information technology in everyday life. They write their own stories on the computer using a variety of word processing techniques such as cut and paste, using pictures and text and printing off what they have done. By Year 4, pupils find out information using CD-ROMs and other sources and print what they have discovered for themselves. For example, when using the Internet to discover information about different rivers as part of their geography topic. Pupils make pictures using appropriate software and use them for cards or notices. The majority of pupils are competent in these skills, especially those with access to computers at home. All the pupils are competent in the use of the mouse and keyboard. They save their work efficiently. During Key Stage 1, pupils develop in confidence and independence.

93. Pupils, including gifted pupils, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Those with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when given effective support by non-teaching staff.

94. Pupils respond well. They are eager to investigate uses of the computer and follow instructions carefully. Their behaviour is generally good when working individually or in pairs. Those whose understanding is good willingly support others who have less secure understanding of some of the keyboard functions.

95. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory and some is good. Some of the teachers are still not wholly confident in their approach to the subject. The school has already begun to provide appropriate training as part of a continuing programme of development. The teachers have realistic expectations of pupils and they encourage those with higher prior attainment to support other pupils. The teachers encourage pupils to be co-operative, to share resources and to help each other. This has a good effect on the standards of work. It also supports the pupils' social and moral development well. Good use is made of support staff for helping pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. The school recognises the need to develop procedures for the assessment of pupils' achievements in relation to learning objectives.

96. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work, adapting the national guidelines to the needs of the school, which is being developed to meet new national requirements for the next school year. There are sufficient resources provided for the subject. The range and quality of computers and other equipment is appropriate.

ART

97. During the inspection, most lessons seen combined design and technology and art. Evidence from the lessons, displays of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers indicates that standards are satisfactory and in line with those expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4.

98. The youngest pupils learn how to handle paints effectively and express themselves

using a variety of media. They apply paint to the edges of shapes and print on paper to make their own designs. Pupils are encouraged to experiment with various media, including painting, collage and printing. Pupils draw things they see around them such as footwear and plants. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are working with confidence and care within a number of media. There is a progressive acquisition of the skills of line and tone, colour mixing and representing people and objects by paint, crayon and pastel. Pupils' develop their skills in painting with texture and using paint by methods other than a brush, for example, using string to create symmetrical prints. A matching of shade cards with primary colours and considering shades from lightest to darkest gives pupils experience with colour and tone. Pupils throughout the school have opportunities to explore a variety of materials and techniques. Older pupils showed increasing independence in exploring different resources.

99. Progress for pupils, including gifted pupils and those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Most pupils respond well to art. They listen carefully and follow instructions. Most take care and show pride in their finished work. They share resources and behave well. Pupils appreciate their own work and the work of others and by the end of Year 4 they have experienced a wide range of techniques enabling them to express their ideas creatively using a variety of media.

100. The quality of teaching seen was good overall. Lessons were generally planned appropriately, though few plans showed detail of the development of skills over time. Where used, support staff are well deployed and they support pupils' learning. Assessment is informal.

101. Art is well integrated into curriculum plans and it is used well to support various topics of the curriculum. The subject is well resourced and the planning shows that there is appropriate emphasis upon the progressive development of skills. The school follows an appropriate national scheme to ensure continuity and progression. The art policy is to be updated and assessment procedures are to be developed. The school also invites artists to the school, for example, a visiting artist worked with children to produce stained glass windows for the new school building. There are good resources for art, including a range of good quality books for pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Standards at the end of the Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4 are satisfactory and in line with national expectations. All pupils, including gifted pupils and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

103. Pupils make a good start and, from an early age, the importance of practical work is recognised with opportunities provided to make simple things. Sometimes this involves the use of construction materials from which pupils form ideas of making objects in a three-dimensional form. Some are able to draw very simple designs of what they are going to make and many select from a range of materials those suitable for their model. Pupils in Year 1 select materials and have developed language to describe processes such as cutting and folding. They use these skills to design and make a pop up toy which they describe as toys that give us a surprise. Pupils make designs of what they are going to make and the higher attaining pupils clearly identify how the parts of the finished product will fit or join together.

104. By the end of Key Stage 1, a significant majority of pupils are evaluating their work and suggesting ways in which it might be improved. Design and technology is well integrated into

the wider curriculum. In Key Stage 2, Year 4 pupils give thoughtful consideration to the use of colour, design, purpose, size and shape. Their work in mathematics is put to good use as they measure, mark out, cut and assemble.

105. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They are interested in the process of design and making, make sensible contributions to discussions, work with concentration and persevere when they encounter difficulties. They listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions carefully. They co-operate well, helping each other and sharing ideas as well as resources. Pupils are anxious to succeed in producing well-finished articles. They readily tidy up at the end of the lesson. Pupils work carefully, handle scissors and tools correctly and show due regard for safety. They discuss their work sensibly, are able to say what difficulties they encounter and identify possible solutions.

106. Teaching is sometimes good and never less than satisfactory. Learning objectives are clear and teachers have a sound understanding of the subject. They use questioning skills well to draw out pupils' ideas and understanding. Good cross-curricular links are often made with mathematics and information and communication technology. Tasks are well structured and there is a good match of work to meet pupils' learning needs.

107. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work, based on national guidance materials that provides continuity and progression across the school. The subject is well managed. A recent audit of planning and resources has been conducted. Assessment is undertaken informally, though it is not yet used effectively to inform future teaching. The tools and other resources provided by the school are adequate.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Standards in geography are satisfactory throughout the school and all pupils, including gifted pupils and those with special needs, make appropriate progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

109. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the difference between coastal locations and the countryside. They know that maps and atlases provide information about different parts of the country and they enjoy locating different countries using a globe. They learn about the times when most plants and flowers start to grow. They learn about people who help others. They study objects from above, gaining a good practical grasp of the concept of a 'bird's eye view', putting this into practice by creating plans of their own classrooms. They walk around their locality and study aerial photographs of the area and note features on a map of the surrounding area and start to learn about their own community in relation to others. By the end of the key stage, pupils start to use appropriate geographical vocabulary.

110. By the end of Year 4, they are able to label the names of the various countries that make up the United Kingdom. Pupils carefully label plans of rooms both within their house and school. They confidently locate the main rivers such as the Trent, Severn, Thames, Forth and Clyde on outlines of the United Kingdom and are also able to draw simple maps of the village of Piddletrenthide. Pupils are able to identify features on an Ordnance Survey map and understand geographical vocabulary such as 'meander', 'estuary' and 'embankment'.

111. Pupils make satisfactory progress, developing early map reading skills. Mathematical and information technology skills are used effectively. Pupils respond well, showing interest in the subject and they generally sustain concentration and work well both independently and

co-operatively. They are usually keen to contribute to discussions and develop speaking and listening skills to good effect in oral work.

112. The quality of teaching is good overall. No teaching was observed in Key Stage 1 but scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicates that it is at least satisfactory. One lesson was observed in the Year 3 and 4 class and this was of good quality. The teacher showed a good knowledge of the subject and her enthusiastic approach had a good impact on the pupils' learning. The use of challenging questioning and productive pace ensured that pupils were gaining knowledge and developing their skills. Ordnance survey maps were used well to promote the use of geographical vocabulary and although a significant minority of pupils showed challenging behaviour, good questioning and intervention ensured that most remained involved in their task. The organisation of the lesson involved the pupils working in groups and this promoted well the personal development of the pupils. Pupils were generally enthusiastic and concentrated well on the tasks set. Occasionally, a significant minority of pupils lost interest in the activities and behaved inappropriately during lessons. The teacher dealt with this appropriately and good management strategies were used to redirect them on task.

113. The policy and scheme of work has not been updated recently because of staff absences and the move to the new building but new national guidelines are being used satisfactorily to ensure that the pupils receive a balanced programme of study. Resources are appropriate in number and include a wide variety of atlases and globes, which are used well to support the teaching. A particular strength is the way in which the local environment, such as nearby woods and coastal locations, are used to promote pupils learning.

HISTORY

114. There were no lessons seen in history during the inspection but evidence from pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicate that standards of achievement and progress are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards in both key stages were judged to be unsatisfactory.

115. In Reception, children are able to recognise primary sources of historical knowledge. They begin to understand that there are different ways to find out about the past and use books and artefacts to find out more about the event or custom they are studying.

116. By the end of the key stage pupils have a sound understanding of some aspects of the past and knowledge of the life and customs of long ago. Much of the knowledge they gain is linked to topics they study. Pupils understand the difference between the past and the present. For example, they have compared the old school building with the new one. They also know that life was very different long ago and, for instance, have an appropriate understanding of how difficult it was to wash clothes before washing machines were invented. They also have a sound understanding of famous people in the past such as Samuel Pepys. They are constantly developing skills and the older pupils can distinguish between the recent and the distant past and are able to sequence and put items and events in chronological order. Much of the pupils' work in history involves listening to their teacher, taking part in discussions and asking and answering questions. Sometimes higher attaining pupils write descriptions alongside pictures which reinforces their literacy skills.

117. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' books contain some good original writing. Their extended writing and use of a wide vocabulary shows good knowledge, understanding and imagination. Their work is often well illustrated. Pupils' written work makes a significant contribution to their literacy progress. Pupils undertake independent research well, using books or information

technology and often continue this at home. By the end of Year 4, pupils know that the Romans came from Italy. They understand that they were responsible for creating many straight roads and talk about the features which were common to a Roman town. Pupils compare the type of food that the Romans ate with that eaten today and they know that jewellery was very important in their lifestyle.

118. Pupils are interested in history. In discussion, they eagerly contribute information that they have discovered. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about past times and offer opinions and ideas about the differences between then and now. In discussion, they showed good recall of information. Pupils maintain concentration and their behaviour is good.

119. The quality of teaching in those aspects seen such as planning is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are designed and planned to interest pupils and provide them with stimulating activities. The teachers show good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are clear about what they want their pupils to learn. The tasks they provide are carefully thought out and are suitable for the range of abilities in the class. Teachers use artefacts well to stimulate enthusiasm in the subject. Teachers' careful planning links the history curriculum well with other subjects, such as science. The enthusiasm that the teachers show and their skill in asking questions has a positive impact on the pupils' desire to learn and the quality of the work which they produce.

120. The policy document has not been reviewed lately but good use is being made of new national guidelines, which ensure that the pupils gain a balanced programme of study. Art is used well to promote the subject and class books contain many good quality sketches of features such as Roman life and the great fire of London. The subject is well resourced.

MUSIC

121. Standards in music are good throughout the school and good progress is made throughout the school. The previous inspection referred to the good standards of achievement in this subject and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' progress is enhanced by the provision of good, extra-curricular, music-making activities.

122. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils learn a wide range of songs, including ones for collective worship. They begin to recognise the main elements of music and to explore and experience a range of percussion instruments. Pupils can compose simple percussion accompaniments to songs. They can identify fast and slow and high and low sounds and can identify the sounds of some instruments. They start to develop a musical vocabulary and become aware of melody and the rhythm of words. They develop good listening and remembering skills. Some pupils show good musical ability. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently sing a range of songs and play simple pieces and accompaniments with an awareness of pulse and are able to listen carefully to, and make simple appraisals of, sounds and pieces of music.

123. By the end of Year 4, pupils are able to sing tunefully and with good expression. They confidently compose short pieces of music and listen and appraise each other's efforts with sensitivity and maturity. They respond to pictorial symbols and both identify and communicate musical feelings and moods well. For example, during the inspection pupils in Years 3 and 4 were involved in composing musical pieces that would express the movement of the River Piddle. Pupils first composed and then confidently performed their music. They then appraised each other's work and provided sensible ideas on how they could improve.

124. Pupils enjoy their music lessons. The pupils observed generally responded well,

showing interest, concentration and independence. They show good listening skills. They sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment and co-operate well with one another. They are confident in performances and enjoy singing together especially in action songs and nursery rhymes. They exchange ideas readily, choose a leader and respond well to his or her direction. In composing and performing music, they are anxious to succeed and listen carefully to each other's pieces. They show appreciation of the other groups' work.

125. Good use is made of a music specialist to teach music throughout the school and the teaching is consistently very good. Lessons are well planned to link in with topic work and this provides a good focus for the pupils' learning. The teacher's high expectations and challenge ensures that pupils increase their understanding and acquire good levels of musical skills. Pupils generally respond well to these lessons and concentration is of a good standard. A significant minority of pupils behave inappropriately at times and this disrupts the pace of learning for the rest of the class.

126. The subject co-ordinator enthusiastically takes all the classes in the school for music. This enables her to have a good understanding of the levels of attainment throughout the school. Resources are of good quality and are used well. The school has a good reputation for its musical performances, which are a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 are satisfactory and in line with national expectations. All pupils, including gifted pupils and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

128. In Reception and at Key Stage 1, pupils develop and practise the skills of travelling with, sending and receiving a ball. In gymnastics they stretch, curl and balance and can practise, refine and begin to link a series of movements using different parts of the body. They show good awareness of space and levels. They gain an increasing control over their bodies as they explore travelling and learn that different parts of the body can be used to support its weight, for example, using hands and feet. Year 2 pupils develop throwing, catching and racket skills, working with partners. They show co-ordination of hand and eye when bouncing, catching or striking a ball with a racket. They work well with partners and co-operate in teams. Year 3 and 4 pupils understand the need for warming up before exercise; that their hearts beat faster to pump blood into their muscles and that they breathe more quickly because their bodies need oxygen. They are beginning to appreciate the performance of others and comment on it.

129. Pupils benefit from weekly swimming lessons for one term each year at the local swimming pool; evidence suggests that standards are good with most pupils making good progress.

130. The majority of pupils enjoy physical education. They change quickly and quietly for lessons, have a responsible attitude when using equipment and following instructions sensibly. They work hard to improve the quality of their movement and their games skills. In groups and pairs, they show good levels of co-operation.

131. Teaching is always satisfactory and sometimes good. Instructions are given clearly. Learning objectives are always made clear to the pupils and the key points of the lessons are re-emphasised in lesson conclusions. Lessons are well planned and structured. Good control is evident and there is an appropriate emphasis on safety. Lessons move at a suitable pace and teachers generally have high expectations in regard to pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Appropriate attention is given to warming up for, and recovery from, exercise. Good use is made of demonstration. Teachers encourage good behaviour, offer appropriate encouragement and praise and have appropriately high expectations. Teachers and pupils have good relationships and pupils respond positively to the constructive praise provided. Assessment is undertaken informally.

132. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work using national guidance material that ensures all areas of the National Curriculum are covered. The school is well resourced for physical education following the move to a new building and grounds. Resources for gymnastics are good, with a range of large and small apparatus that is well maintained. Good use is made of the hall for indoor activities and the playground provides adequate facilities for games and athletics.