

INSPECTION REPORT

St Nicholas Church of England VA Primary School
Child Okeford, Nr Blandford

LEA area: Dorset

Unique Reference Number: 113796

Inspection Number: 188957

Headteacher: Susan Marsh

Reporting inspector: Deborah Zachary
2940

Dates of inspection: 8 -10 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707234

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Rd Child Okeford Blandford DT11 8EL
Telephone number:	01258 860581
Fax number:	01258 860581
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Diana Bucknall
Date of previous inspection:	18-21 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Deborah Zachary, RgI	Science Design and technology	Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Teaching Curriculum and assessment Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Equal opportunities Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Jan Zachary, Lay Inspector		
Valerie Emery	English Art Physical education Special educational needs	
John Wray	Under fives Mathematics History Geography Information technology (IT) Music	-

The inspection contractor was:

Zachary Associates
23 White Cliff Mill Street
Blandford
Dorset
DT11 7BQ

Tel: 01258 450223

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The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Teaching is good and often very good, as is the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils have good attitudes and behave well. Their approach and behaviour are helped by very good discipline and support from staff.
- There is good provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development, and very good provision for social development.
- The Government's Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been put into practice well, and are starting to have a positive effect.
- The school is well led and it is taking the right action to raise standards.
- Parents and the local community make a very good contribution to the school's successes.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in mathematics are not high enough at Key Stage 2 - though there have been recent improvements.
- II. Standards in science are not high enough at Key Stage 2 - there are weaknesses in what is covered and what the pupils record.
- III. Progress in geography is poor at Key Stage 2, because the new scheme of work is not yet fully used.
- IV. Statutory requirements for the contents of reports to parents and the Governors' Annual Report are not fully met.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well. However, they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, much of it in the last two years. The school has been through a difficult period with many staff changes. All key issues have been addressed, however. Standards are broadly the same at the end of Key Stage 1 but have dipped and are not yet fully recovered at the end of Key Stage 2. The teaching has greatly improved and is a major reason why progress is improving in the school. However, there has not yet been time for standards to improve at the end of Key Stage 2. The school has now set appropriate targets for literacy and numeracy and has a good capacity to improve still further.

Standards in subjects

As less than 10 pupils took the National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds in 1999, a very small cohort, the year's results are not compared to other schools' results. However, the inspectors looked at a variety of evidence, including results over several years, in order to judge standards in the school. They made the judgements listed below.

- V. Standards of pupils who are five years old are average.
- VI. Standards of pupils who are seven years old (at the end of Key Stage 1) are above average in English and science, and average in mathematics and information technology (IT).
- VII. By the time pupils leave the school standards are average in English and IT, and below average in mathematics and science.

VIII. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress.

IX. There is also a strength in the progress the younger pupils make in design and technology.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	satisfactory	good	good
Mathematics	satisfactory	good	good
Science	-	very good	good
IT	-	not enough evidence	not enough evidence
Other subjects	satisfactory	good	good

The quality of teaching was good overall and satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen. Teaching was very good or better in 35 percent of lessons.

Some of the strengths in teaching are:

- X.the way teachers plan for different pupils to learn different things in lessons;
- XI.the way they use resources and the variety of things they provide for pupils to do;
- XII.the high quality teaching provided for pupils with special educational needs.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good overall. Improves as pupils get older. School's behaviour strategies very effective.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall, though with a significant number of family holidays taken in term time. Punctuality very good.
Ethos*	Good. All staff are committed to high standards and there are very good working relationships. Pupils are happy and parents are satisfied.
Leadership and management	Well led, especially by the head, through a difficult period. Governors give strong support. Subject co-ordination sound with some strengths.
Curriculum	Satisfactory planning and provision. Some plans not fully implemented yet, so not fully effective. Good procedures for assessment, though some very new.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and progress. Careful planning resulting in high quality teaching.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development, very good for social.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Very strong contribution by support staff. Good training for staff, good resources and good accommodation.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
XIII. They find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems.	XVIII. Homework – the quantity, structure
XIV. The school encourages parents to play an active part. Their children like school.	XIX. Information they receive about their
XV. The school's values and the children's behaviour.	XX. The progress of more able pupils.
XVI. The school's standard of work.	
XVII. The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons.	

The team of inspectors agreed with the strengths parents identified. Of the weaknesses, they disagreed with one point, partially upheld another and agreed with another – this is explained below.

XXI. They found that homework has improved this year and the structure, information and amount is satisfactory.

XXII. They found that the progress of the most able is satisfactory overall but is sometimes unsatisfactory in reading and science.

XXIII. They agreed that reports do not give enough information about progress.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The following matters should be addressed by the governors and staff in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards and improve the provision the school makes:

1. Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 by:

- implementing the strategies the school has planned;
- closely monitoring the effects of the strategies and taking additional action if monitoring shows it is needed.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 9, 31, 80 - 84 of the report).

1. Raise standards in science at Key Stage 2 by:

- ensuring the higher attainers receive teaching of the highest level investigation skills;
- ensuring that the older pupils record their work in sufficient depth to ensure they fully understand the content when they look back at it;
- ensuring the scheme of work is fully covered;
- using the new assessment system to track the progress of a sample of pupils, and taking action if weaknesses are identified.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 9, 11, 26, 30, 36, 87, 88 and 92 of the report).

1. Improve progress in geography at Key Stage 2 by fully implementing the new scheme of work.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 15, 35, 107 and 108 of the report).

2. Ensure statutory requirements for the contents of reports to parents and the Governors' Annual Report are fully met.

(This issue is discussed in paragraphs 48 and 52 of the report).

In addition to the key issues above, some less important additional points for improvement should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in the following paragraphs of the report:

- Reading (11, 19, 26, 71 and 73);
- Record keeping (36 and 104).

- **INTRODUCTION**

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. St Nicholas VA CE Primary School is small compared to other primary schools, with 100 pupils on roll. Of these, eleven were under the age of five at the time of the inspection. This latter group are described as under fives, rather than pupils at either key stage, and are all in the Reception class. Children enter the Reception class in the autumn term of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend on a half day basis for one term, becoming full time for the spring and summer terms. There are significantly more boys than girls, especially in Reception, Year 2 and Year 5. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection. There are no pupils from ethnic minorities, and none speak English as an additional language.

2. The school is set in a village and draws its pupils from the village and nearby hamlets. The pupils' backgrounds are average in economic terms, and about 15 percent are entitled to free school meals - within the average range nationally. The percentage entitled to free school meals has risen since the last inspection. The pupils' attainment on entry is overall as expected for their age, but inevitably the attainment on entry varies from year to year, as the cohort size is small. The current entry, for example, have slightly lower attainment than the previous entry. There is a comparatively high number of pupils in the school with special educational needs (20 are on the register at stage two or higher), a significant number of whom have joined part way through their school career. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need.

Summary of aims and priorities:

3. Mission Statement:

- Acknowledging our Christian foundation, we shall encourage the whole school community to be rooted and grounded in love. Always seeking the truth, we aim to foster individual talents for personal fulfilment and the common good. Recognising that all are made in God's image, we shall foster respect for others and our world, learning from our differences and not allowing them to become a source of conflict.

1. Overall aim:

- To provide a full, balanced and coherent education in a caring Christian environment in order to encourage all our children to achieve their potential and to build a firm foundation for their future development.

1. Key priorities 1999:

- Improve standards and teaching in maths
- Review achievement, especially for boys and attitudes to literacy
- Improve assessment, its use and record keeping
- Reduce budget deficit
- Continue development of ICT

1. Numeracy and literacy targets:

- EN 61% level 4+ (100% for Year 2002)
- MA 50% level 4+ (100% for Year 2002)

· **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
99	5	4	9

· National Curriculum Test		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	5	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	8	9	8
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	100 (100)	88 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

· Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4	5	5
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	8	9	9
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88	100 (91)	100 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
99	6	2	8

· National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	2	4
	Girls	2	1	1
	Total	7	3	5
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	88(50)	38(38)	63(63)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

· Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	3	5
	Girls	1	1	1
	Total	6	4	6
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	75(75)	50(63)	75(63)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

- **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

-

- **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

- **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	35
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

- **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**
- **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**
- **Attainment and progress**

1. In a small school such as St Nicholas the results of National Curriculum tests can vary a great deal from year to year without the variation being statistically significant. Factors such as the number of pupils with special needs and even pupils' absence can mask the effect of what the school does. In order to make judgements about standards the inspectors look at not only the most recent results, but also one or two years before and where current year groups are heading. This is why the inspection judgements do not always exactly match the most recent results, though the recent results are published. Results can also be compared to similar schools, ie those with a similar proportion of free school meals, but again this is not statistically secure for a small cohort. In this case inspectors consider the data, but it is not reproduced in the report. An analysis of results of girls and boys reduces numbers of pupils in the sample even lower; there was no significant variation in standards or progress of boys and girls in any subjects at St Nicholas.

2. In 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard and above in the 1999 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests was average in mathematics, above the national average in reading and well above in writing. In mathematics a very high proportion reached the higher level, in reading the number was above average, but in writing no pupils reached the higher level. In science, teachers' assessments that year were very high, both for numbers reaching the expected level and the higher level. The inspection judgements for standards in English, mathematics and science, based on evidence explained above, are that standards are above average in English and science at the end of Key Stage 1 and average in mathematics. Inspectors also judge standards in IT, and these are average. These standards are broadly in line with those of the last inspection, but indicate some improvement in science.

3. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests results were above average for English, but below average for science and well below for mathematics. The inspection judgements are that standards are average in English but below average in the other two subjects. Standards in IT are average. With the exception of IT, standards are not as good as the judgements made at the time of the last inspection, and English, mathematics and science showed a dip in standards in the intervening years. The last inspection report criticised teaching at Key Stage 2 and the weaknesses had an effect on standards in later years. Standards are beginning to recover, but improvements have been limited by a period of frequent staff changes. In addition, the full effect of the big improvements in teaching will not be fully evident in results this year, as the current Year 6 has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school has set appropriate targets for numeracy and literacy for the Year 2000, taking this into account.

4. Children enter the Reception Class in the Autumn term of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday, and follow a programme of work in six areas of learning before starting their National Curriculum work in Key Stage 1. The children's attainment on entry is overall as expected for their age, but inevitably the attainment on entry varies from year to year, as the cohort size is small. Overall, progress is satisfactory for children who are under five. By the time they are five, the children attain the standards that are expected for their age in all areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress in all areas, gain a smooth start to their school life and are ready to enter the National Curriculum at five years old.

5. In judging progress, inspectors look closely not only at lessons but at evidence of progress in written work and from test results. Progress is good overall at Key Stage 1, for pupils of all abilities. The picture is much more mixed at Key Stage 2. The current Year 6 have had a period early in Key Stage 2 when they did not make enough gains in their knowledge and skills. Although they are now making gains again, their overall progress through the key stage has been unsatisfactory. However, the progress of pupils in the other three year groups in the key stage is satisfactory, so progress is judged to be satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. Within this overall satisfactory judgement, however, there are differences for pupils of different levels of prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by good numbers of experienced and

well qualified learning support assistants. Expectations for these pupils are high, they are well taught, and they make good progress through both key stages. Higher attaining pupils, whilst making satisfactory progress overall at Key Stage 2, are not always fully challenged. This results in occasional patches of slower progress in reading and in science, and to some extent in mathematics. Details are given in the separate subject reports.

6. In English, literacy is put to sound use in other areas of the curriculum. Progress is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. All pupils are familiar with books when they enter Key Stage 1. They can read a few words and most have some knowledge of letter sounds. Pupils' knowledge of letter shapes and sounds is regularly consolidated and linked purposefully to the teaching of spelling. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have good sound recognition, which they use confidently to read new words. They have well-developed library and research skills for their age. They understand the need to speak Standard English and their vocabulary is widening. All pupils are enthusiastic writers and higher attaining pupils write at length. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in identifying significant themes in a book and a good number are confident in analysing characters, using the text to justify their opinions. Writing is lively and thoughtful and words are well chosen. Pupils plan their story writing carefully, thinking about the development of character and plot. They explore ideas in groups or pairs, picking up and developing ideas through careful listening and discussion. A significant number of pupils at Key Stage 2 speak in sentences with simple structure, but many of these have joined the school during Key Stage 2.

7. Progress is sound in mathematics at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 a significant number of pupils are able to use numbers involving hundreds, tens and units as well as being able to measure using standard units. They can solve number patterns using previous knowledge. By Years 3 and 4 they can find relationships between the number of matchsticks and the number of squares that can be made from them. At the end of Key Stage 2 the older more able pupils can use negative numbers and use co-ordinates in all four quadrants. However, the majority of pupils are not yet secure in their knowledge of all the multiplication bonds and a significant number have some difficulty in applying them to everyday problem solving situations. The pupils are reasonably secure in their understanding of shape and symmetry but are less secure in their ability to estimate length and mass. Numeracy is beginning to be used across the curriculum but there are missed opportunities to develop it in some subjects.

8. In science, pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 – with some good elements in Years 3, 4 and 5. In Year 1, for example, they are making specific observations about how interesting hidden objects provided by the teacher feel, whilst by Year 2 they are purposefully planning an investigation to investigate one of their senses. In Year 3 pupils understand the need for a fair test when investigating and by Year 4 the pupils are starting to understand how some aspects of an investigation must be kept the same in order to be fair. By Year 5 a significant number can identify exactly what variables must be kept constant in a given situation.

9. Progress is satisfactory through the school in IT, and it is used successfully across the curriculum. Pupils make particularly good progress in Years 3 and 4 where the teacher has good expertise and sets challenging tasks. Progress is satisfactory in most other subjects, but it is good in design and technology at Key Stage 1. In design and technology, pupils in Year 1 draw simple pictures of what they want to make or what they have learnt about objects. They move on to making a list of what they are going to do and by the end of the key stage can draw a labelled diagram to show their design ideas. Progress is poor, however, in geography at Key Stage 2. There is not enough improvement in geographic skills, and too much reliance is placed on work sheets. Mapping skills, for example, are not properly developed. A new scheme of work provides the necessary structure to ensure that skills can be taught in a progressive way, but it is not yet fully in operation.

15. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

10. Pupils throughout the school respond well in lessons. All lessons observed showed at least a sound response from the pupils, and in nearly all lessons response was good or occasionally very good. Most pupils show good attitudes towards their learning. They arrive in lessons prepared to work, settle quickly and apply themselves well to the task in hand. They are keen to answer questions and often enjoy their lessons. For example, in a

Year 3/4 science lesson pupils were learning that vibrations produce sound. When the teacher sounded a tuning fork and touched it to a table tennis ball on a string there was a collective gasp from the class as the ball spun quickly away, and there were exclamations of “cool!” from various pupils. The youngest pupils had only been in school for half a term at the time of the inspection. They are interested in their work, but on occasions they become over excited. They are learning to settle more quickly.

11. The pupils' behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around the site is good, contributing to an orderly and secure environment that supports learning and personal development. In lessons, the youngest pupils are generally well behaved but are still learning routines such as putting up their hands and taking turns to talk and listen to each other. Behaviour in lessons generally improves the older the pupil, showing that the school's strategies for encouraging good behaviour are very effective. The previous inspection reported that behaviour was sometimes weaker if teaching was weak. No examples of weak teaching or weak discipline were seen during this inspection. The pupils are very polite, helpful and friendly to each other and to adults. They show respect for property and are careful, for instance, when handling school equipment. No graffiti or litter, bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection. The school has had no exclusions in the past twelve months.

12. Relationships between the pupils are good and they show a good care and concern for each other. The school operates as a 'family' community and pupils are encouraged to work together to help each other. All pupils show caring and sensitive attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs and they are fully integrated into the life and work of the school. In one class, for example, some pupils have specific targets for improvement of behaviour, which others are aware of. The other pupils respond well in helping the individual to try to achieve the targets – they are skilfully involved by the teacher. The youngest children have well-developed relationships with each other and with the teacher. They work and play happily together, share resources and talk sociably to each other about their work. The oldest are happy to discuss their ideas in small groups, valuing each other's contributions. In a Year 5/6 science lesson, for example, pupils worked in fours to fill in a single worksheet after a practical activity. All contributed and they agreed their final answers.

13. The pupils' personal development is good. The youngest pupils do find it hard to sustain concentration, but by Key Stage 1 they are sometimes working without direct supervision. This means that the groupwork sessions in Numeracy and Literacy Hours are often very successful. Pupils also take responsibility for helping in the school community. As members of a 'circle of friends' they support others who may need help. They also contribute in assemblies by operating the overhead projector, music systems or curtains. Many have been involved in projects to improve the school grounds, helping to design and build play equipment. A key issue from the last inspection was to develop pupils' capacity for independent learning, and they now research facts independently, from CD Rom or from the library. However, the highest attainers' reading skills could be better challenged by more frequent and focused opportunities for this.

19. **Attendance**

14. Attendance is broadly average but with more authorised absence and less unauthorised absence overall than other schools. The unauthorised absence is due to a very small number of pupils and is dealt with appropriately. The authorised absence has risen this year, and although attendance is satisfactory overall, and a similar level to the last inspection, there is a growing trend for parents to take children on holiday in term time. Punctuality is very good at the start of the day and lessons start and end on time.

20. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

20. **Teaching**

15. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. It was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed during the inspection, was good or better in more than two-thirds of the lessons seen, and was very good or excellent in over one-third. The last inspection found 20 percent of lessons to be unsatisfactory, with particular

weaknesses at Key Stage 2. At that time, some of the weaknesses were the slow pace of lessons and the lack of work set that stretched the more able or supported the less able. Teaching is now frequently very good at Key Stage 2, and teachers almost always set a level of work that meets pupils' needs. The current high quality of the teaching is having a major impact in improving pupils' progress at Key Stage 2. It has not yet had time to raise standards in mathematics and science at the end of the key stage as the oldest pupils have a lot of ground to make up. However, the teaching has now had a major impact on the way standards have risen at Key Stage 1. There have been many staff changes since the last inspection – only one teacher present at that time remains on the staff and two teachers are new this term. As there have been so many changes it is not possible to fully identify exactly what the school has done to improve the teaching, but there is evidence that improved monitoring of lessons has been effective. The impact of the methods of teaching associated with the literacy and numeracy strategies has also been significant.

16. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory for pupils who are under five. It is based on a sound understanding of the needs of children of this age. This means that the teacher is well organised and provides a broad range of practical activities. The teaching seen at Key Stage 1 was always good and sometimes very good. That at Key Stage 2 included some satisfactory teaching (as opposed to good) but had a particularly high ratio of very good teaching – more than half of all the teaching seen. The teaching is good overall in English, mathematics, and PE, and is particularly strong in Key Stage 1 science and Key Stage 2 music. It is satisfactory overall in history. There were examples of very good teaching in a variety of different subjects, including English, mathematics and science, during the inspection. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement of teaching in IT, design and technology, art or geography.

17. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers, together with learning support assistants, write specifically focused targets in the pupils' special educational needs notebooks. These short term targets are very regularly reviewed and used well to plan work which matches the pupils' needs. When pupils are withdrawn for specially targeted group work, the teaching is very good. The work selected meets the needs of the individuals and is demanding. The approach is lively and interesting, with plenty of variety of activity. This keeps the pupils very interested and also supports the pupils' self esteem very well. In English the teaching covers reading, writing, speaking and listening in an integrated way. A very good example of this was a role play situation where pupils wrote a report of a burglary in Blandford in the role as detectives. It promoted a good level of debate, pupils wrote the report collaboratively in an appropriate style, and they read and checked the report for accuracy from their evidence, as it was being written.

18. The quality of literacy teaching is good, and has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned with good detail in identifying exactly what pupils of different levels should learn. They are based on a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Literacy Strategy. They often start with a good recap of previous work and the pace is kept going throughout the session. The Literacy Hour is often supported by other staff or volunteers. These other adults in the classroom are well managed and there is a good level of communication, both in spoken and written form. At the end of the lessons, there is a good use of the plenary session to assess what pupils have learned from the lesson.

19. The Numeracy Strategy, introduced last term, is having a positive effect in raising standards. The quality of teaching of numeracy is good at Key Stage 1, whilst that at Key Stage 2 varies from very good to sound, a considerable improvement on previous inspection findings. All lessons begin with mental work and concentrate on number bonds, table work and place value. This is proving effective. Planning is very good so that work is often well matched to the pupils' ability, though pupils were not fully challenged in one lesson seen. Teachers' expectations are being raised although the work sampling showed that staff need to ensure sufficient work is covered in each session.

20. The teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 has a particular strength in the way teachers plan for different pupils to learn different things in lessons. This means that most of the time the work set meets the needs of the pupils well. Only occasionally are higher attainers not fully stretched – for example in reading and science. In reading this is mainly because there are not enough high quality fiction reading books, and opportunities for research are not demanding enough. In science work shows that the higher attainers do not always record enough details, and there are occasional weaknesses in the attention given to teaching the highest level

investigation skills. These weaknesses are less to do with day to day teaching than to do with longer term organisation. This is why they have had limited effect on the judgements made of individual lesson quality. At this stage of the term, too, some of the teachers have new classes or are new to the school, and are still getting to know them. All teachers are committed to challenging their pupils.

21. There are also strengths in the way the teachers use resources and the variety of things they provide for pupils to do. In a very good Key Stage 1 science lesson, for example, a very lively whole class introduction included direct teaching, demonstration, and an unplanned but very effective response to a pupils' question. The lesson then split into Year 1 and Year 2 groups with different practical activities. The Year 1 work was carefully focussed on developing the vocabulary to describe how things feel, whilst the Year 2 work took pupils on into planning an investigation. The teacher's use of resources and demonstrations helped the higher attainers to start to appreciate how a test can be made fair.

22. Teachers manage classes very well. They apply the school's discipline strategy consistently without interrupting learning to do so. This means that the atmosphere in classes is calm and pupils are able to listen. Occasionally introductory sessions go on a little long, and pupils become restless, but this is not sufficient to disrupt the lesson. When introductory sessions are overlong the quality of learning improves again once pupils start their next activity.

23. Day to day assessment and its use are good. Questioning is used well in many lessons to establish what children know. Teachers are good at using the pupils' answers to build on and develop further understanding. Work is corrected satisfactorily and in some cases useful comments are added to help pupils improve. Homework is satisfactory. Parents were concerned that homework lacked structure at Key Stage 2 – that teachers were not working within an overall policy, and as a result parents did not know what to expect. There is some evidence that this has been the case in the past, but this term the strategy is clear.

29. **The curriculum and assessment**

24. The curriculum provided by the school is broad, balanced and includes all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Health education and sex education are appropriately taught through science lessons, and additional drugs education is provided through the use of an external resource, the 'life education' visit. An appropriate time is devoted to literacy and numeracy. However, the time allocated to science is lower than average, and a study of past work shows that the full scheme of work is not always completed. This means that there can be a lack of depth in the science teaching, which limits the progress of the most able. The previous inspection identified a lack of balance in science, art and music as a key issue. The school has successfully addressed this.

25. A well planned and co-ordinated approach to literacy has been established, with good attention to monitoring and review. A useful school policy outlining expectations and teaching strategies for the Literacy Hour provides staff with additional support. The recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy are consistently implemented and are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and standards of attainment. One of the school's current key targets, to raise standards in mathematics, resulted in the National Numeracy Strategy being introduced a term earlier than required. All lessons begin with mental work and concentrate on number bonds, table work and place value. The teaching group in Year 5 and 6 has also been successfully reorganised so that pupils are taught in two separate smaller groups matched to ability. These strategies are having a beneficial effect in raising standards.

26. Another key issue from the previous inspection was that provision for pupils who are under five lacked sufficient creative and structured play. This, too, has been successfully addressed and the under fives curriculum is also broad and balanced. It covers all the required areas of learning, meets the needs of children of this age and provides a sound preparation for the National Curriculum. Planning has a good level of detail. Sound assessment procedures are in operation, with 'baseline' assessment carried out when pupils start at the school. The results of this are to be used to group children and plan work matched to their needs, but at this

stage of the term their use is not fully established.

27. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Identification procedures are sound and all staff are aware of the needs of the pupils they teach. The teacher and the learning support assistant produce carefully thought out individual education plans, giving broad areas for development. These broad areas are broken down and recorded in a pupil record book, which is frequently reviewed and updated. It is used well to plan work to match the needs of the pupils. Longer term review of the individual education plans and the annual review of statements are appropriately carried out. Overall this forms a good system of assessment and review.

28. The school is very aware of the need to ensure equal opportunities in the curriculum and carefully examines its strategies. A great deal of recent work has been put in to looking at literacy standards achieved by boys, for example. A good range of extra curricular activities is available for all pupils, covering a variety of sports and musical activities. The younger pupils, who would be too small to compete on reasonable terms with others in the team sports offered, have a separate sports club.

29. Planning is sound overall. The school has taken successful action to ensure that schemes of work are available in all subjects, another key issue from the previous inspection. Sensibly, some schemes remain in draft form until national guidance due in the next few months is available. In some subjects, however, schemes are very new and their impact has yet to be seen in pupils' progress. In geography, though the scheme is well constructed, pupils have not yet had the benefit of the carefully planned progression of skills development. As a result their progress is currently poor at Key Stage 2. There is particularly good practice in planning in some subjects – in literacy planning, for example, a variety of learning objectives are identified to ensure that pupils at different stages of development all make progress. The individual subject schemes are linked to an appropriate two year rolling programme of topics, linked to the structure of classes that each contain two year groups.

30. A good range of strategies for assessing pupils' attainment and progress has been put into place, and the use of data is satisfactory and developing. Detailed analysis of test results has begun and has been particularly effective in planning a strategy to improve standards in mathematics. However, the same analysis has not yet been applied in science. A variety of procedures for making assessments are in place across the subjects, with strengths in English and mathematics where the most work has been done. In English, for example, individual assessment files have been systematically maintained for the last two years. Some of the tracking procedures are newly established this term and though potentially useful, are not yet providing data for use in planning work. However, the required target setting for literacy and numeracy involved the school in a careful review of individual progress prior to identification of reasonable yet challenging targets. There is a weakness in assessment in design and technology where no records or work have been kept for the first two years of Key Stage 2. However, the current teachers are working hard to ensure that work set in the subject ensures that progress is satisfactory.

36. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

31. The last inspection praised the school's social and moral development, but identified weaknesses in the spiritual and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is now good overall, and the weaknesses have been addressed. Pupils' spiritual development is encouraged very well through collective worship and through a variety of experiences within the curriculum. Circle time provides good opportunities to reflect on such issues as 'loss and suffering' which was a recent pertinent focus in the life of the school. Pupils' work in history and science is used to encourage them to wonder at the development of humans. For example, they are encouraged to wonder at the development of the human form when they look at a scan picture of a baby in a womb. Religious education underlines the sense of belonging to a family and promotes reflection of who we are and how we fit into a wider family. High quality daily acts of worship provide many good opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own experiences and the feelings and values of others. A collective worship theme concerning light provided good opportunities for pupils to reflect

on how it feels when it is dark and to imagine and reflect on a world which had no light. This was well linked to a person being a source of light in our everyday experiences. During assemblies, pupils light candles and are asked to reflect on themselves and their feelings for others.

32.The school supports pupils' moral development by good provision. Through assemblies and the school's behaviour policy, pupils are strongly taught the sense of right and wrong. They are asked to think about other people's feelings and provide support for those finding difficulties through a 'circle of friends'. The positive emphasis in the school's behaviour policy encourages pupils to assume responsibility and rewards good behaviour very effectively through 'golden time'. The 'Gold Book' and certificates of merit encourage good work and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to have a caring attitude and this is reflected in the general ethos of the school. Teachers and all adults in the school provide very good role models.

33.The provision for pupils' social development is very good. At all times pupils are encouraged to relate positively to one another and the whole staff give good support to the behaviour policy which underpins the ethos of the school by providing a happy caring environment. Pupils are developing positive attitudes towards citizenship. Teachers use every opportunity to encourage support for one another including the local and wider community. Good use is made of such people as the local vicar and local artists. Good opportunities for social interaction are presented in such projects as the building of the pupils' climbing frames in the grounds and painting of the mural in the playground used by the on-site playgroup. Pupils are consulted and involved whenever possible. At harvest and Christmas times, pupils take in gifts for the community and sing at old people's homes. They are encouraged to take responsibility in the daily routines of the school, helping to organise equipment for collective worship and acting as librarians, for example.

34.Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions are strong in most areas of the curriculum, particularly in history, music and art. They listen to and participate in music in assemblies and lessons and are given opportunities to use musical instruments, not only from their own culture, but from other countries. Regular opportunities occur throughout the school to study the works of well known artists and there are particularly good links with local artists. They study other major religions such as Hinduism and Islam within religious education and these are linked to visits to other places of worship such as a mosque. Geography includes studies of different countries such as Kenya and Pakistan and teachers take all opportunities to reinforce pupils' understanding of Britain as country with a multi-cultural society. In collective worship, for example, when the theme is in the Hindu tradition on the day of the Divali Celebrations, issues are explored with pupils who have transferred from other schools. The pupils are encouraged to describe the friends and acquaintances they may have had in communities which have a greater variety of cultural traditions than their own setting in Child Okeford.

40. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

35.The school provides good support and guidance for its pupils, and has a particular strength in the way it encourages good behaviour. This is a marked improvement on the judgements made at the time of the last inspection when the system of rewards was not applied consistently. The good attention to support, guidance and welfare enhances the quality of life in school and has a positive impact on standards. For example, the behaviour policy underpins the good discipline that teachers establish in classes, and this in turn encourages good work habits.

36.All staff provide very caring support for pupils, and parents appreciate the support given to their children. New entrants, for example, are helped to settle through an effective 'chaperone' system. The youngest pupils are given a caring introduction into school through the well-organised transition arrangements, which include home visits. Older pupils receive appropriate support for their transfer to secondary school, for instance through taster days. The school does not simply react to minor incidents of bullying but takes steps to ensure that as far as possible incidents do not arise. A system by which children's social interactions are informally monitored, and then a 'circle of friends' identified if needed, is unusual but effective.

37.Measures to promote discipline and good behaviour are very effective overall. The school takes a positive

approach and encourages pupils to be responsible for their own actions. There is a well thought out policy in place, based on 'golden rules' which parents are encouraged to use at home. Sanctions are effective, including the loss of minutes of 'golden time' on Fridays, sessions which pupils enjoy. However, pupils who have lost minutes can also earn them back. Teachers make good use of praise to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem and to encourage achievement and good behaviour.

38. The monitoring of academic progress and personal development of pupils is sound. Good record keeping systems have now been set up, linked to assessment procedures, but little is yet recorded as some systems are new. Record keeping for pupils with special educational needs is thorough and up to date. The procedures for recording and promoting attendance are good. Registration is carried out effectively by class teachers, the school administration officer efficiently follows up any unexplained absences and the education welfare officer is involved as needed. The school is well aware that there is a significant amount of family holiday taken in term time and takes appropriate steps to ensure that parents consider the educational impact of this.

39. Arrangements for child protection are good; the headteacher, as responsible member of staff, has detailed knowledge of pupils and effective liaison systems with social services. Staff have been appropriately trained. The school also has good arrangements for promoting the health and safety of pupils through safe working practices. The accident book is diligently completed, and regular risk assessments are carried out. There are sound arrangements for safety on school trips.

45.

Partnership with parents and the community

40. The school has very good links overall with parents and the community. These contribute positively to pupils' learning, social development and understanding of the world outside school. Particularly noteworthy is the way local people who are not necessarily parents contribute to the work the school does. The effective links identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. The parents as a whole are satisfied with the provision the school makes for their children.

41. Parents' involvement in the school is good. They feel the school is approachable and that they are encouraged to help. A large number of volunteers make an important contribution to standards through help with school activities. Parents recently organised the development of a footpath through adjoining land to make journeys to school safer. In addition, the parent teacher association is active in supporting the school. It effectively organises a number of social and fund-raising events. Parents have not always been clear about the homework they should expect their child to bring home, and in the past this has limited the help they could give. However, letters sent out this term have clarified the situation and the amount of homework set is appropriate.

42. Parents receive good quality information overall, but there are both strengths and weaknesses in what the school provides. The prospectus is friendly and clear, and includes pupils' drawings, but whilst the governors' report to parents is clear, it is less interesting in format. Curriculum information is effectively displayed around the school, and a variety of newsletters are used to keep parents well involved on a day to day basis. Teachers are accessible for informal and formal discussions. Work on the new home school agreement has not only included direct parental involvement by volunteers, but also a variety of written consultation and information. There are sound arrangements for parents' meetings to discuss children's progress but a number of parents feel that written reports can hide weaknesses and do not always give the information they want. The reports cover progress well in terms of the main subjects of English, mathematics and science, but they do not give enough information in some of the other subjects. A section which gives parents details of how they can help, though a good idea, is not sufficiently focused in practice. In some year groups the same targets appear for pupils of very different abilities.

43. The school enjoys very strong links with the local community. It welcomes a very wide variety of visitors from the community into classes - for example the vicar, the doctor, artists and army personnel. Local people make a very significant contribution both to extra curricular activities and to the Friday 'golden time' sessions. Pupils also make numerous curriculum-related visits into the local area including local farms and the village.

They dance at the village fete and provide entertainment for older people in a residential home. There are very close links with the pre-school group that uses the school premises and sound links with the schools in the local cluster, including the secondary school. Links with local businesses are well developed with a very large number of different organisations and individuals contributing to a recent 'auction of promises'.

49. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

49. **Leadership and management**

44. The school is well managed and led. The headteacher provides very good leadership, and has done so through a particularly difficult period in the school's development. She has developed a particularly strong partnership with the school's administration officer and Clerk to the Governors which has greatly supported both her and the governing body. The only other member of the teaching staff who has been at the school longer than two years, the allowance point holder, has also provided much appreciated support through the smooth running of her areas of responsibility. Now that staff changes are less of an issue, the headteacher and governors have successfully identified the areas of the curriculum in which urgent action needs to be taken to raise standards and the school has put a variety of appropriate strategies in place to do so. Development planning is now effective.

45. The school's initial response to the last inspection showed the intention to improve; however, little happened in practice during the first year. Since then appropriate action has been taken and all key issues have been satisfactorily addressed. The quality of teaching has been particularly improved, though it is too early for this to have had a full impact on standards. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall.

46. The governing body have become much more involved in the management of the curriculum since the last inspection. As well as offering very strong support, they observe lessons and report back both to the teacher involved and to the curriculum committee. However a system for receiving more formal reports on curriculum areas is not yet established. The governors are appropriately involved in development planning and the formulation of policies. The governing body is ably led by the Chair and supported by the Clerk. There are effective systems for training, and minutes, instruments and articles are detailed yet clear. Most statutory responsibilities are met well, but the Governors' Annual Report to Parents does not contain all the information required, and nor do the school's reports to parents about their children.

47. Subject responsibilities are effectively delegated to members of staff, an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordination of subjects is satisfactory with strengths in IT, English and mathematics. These subjects have been national priorities recently, and co-ordinators have been closely involved in training and monitoring. The special educational needs co-ordinator also provides good leadership. She is well informed and fully committed to providing good quality support through regular communication with teachers and classroom assistants. She has good oversight of individual education plans through monitoring and a clear vision for the area's development. The headteacher keeps an appropriate overview of subject co-ordinators' work, and also effectively monitors and supports teachers in the classroom.

48. All staff are committed to high standards in the school and there are very good working relationships, not just among teachers but staff at all levels. Pupils are happy and parents are satisfied. The atmosphere in the school is calm and positive and the ethos for learning is good. After a difficult period the school has a good capacity for further improvement. The leadership has very good insight into what needs to be done and the staff have a clear picture of where the school is, thanks to developing self evaluation systems. There is a shared determination to move forward.

54. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

49. The school has a good number of teachers, which means that the ratio of pupils to teachers is below average. However, three of the five teachers have joined the school in the last eighteen months and two are

newly qualified. This is an unusual balance of experience, but the quality of teaching is nevertheless good. The school also has a high number of well qualified support staff, who make a very significant contribution to the progress made by pupils with special needs and to the general smooth-running of the school. The good ratio of adults to children means that it is easier for the staff to challenge individuals with questioning and so support pupils' learning. Staff are supported by a well organised programme of professional development and induction. Recent national initiatives such as training for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology have been implemented appropriately. Much of the training has by necessity involved some cover by temporary teachers, but the school has organised training out of school time where possible. The school balances the demands of national government, its own development plan and individual needs, identified through appraisal and monitoring, with great care.

50. Major improvements to the school's accommodation have been made since the last inspection. A new classroom has been created, together with library and practical areas and new administration offices. The accommodation is now good overall but there is a minor weakness in that one classroom at the end of a corridor has no direct access to the grounds. The buildings and grounds are effectively maintained and provide a very pleasant environment in which to work. There are enough rooms for the number of classes, and some useful shared areas such as the library. PE facilities are good, with a field as well as a spacious hall.

51. The school now has a good range of learning resources to deliver the curriculum. A number of subjects, including English, benefit from a wide range of good quality books that have a positive effect on the pupils' learning. However challenging fiction books are not always available for the highest attainers. Music, art and mathematics resources are of good quality and cover a good range. IT equipment is up to date with a wide variety of software.

57. **The efficiency of the school**

52. Financial planning is now satisfactory. The school budget slid into deficit at one point since the last inspection, but appropriate strategies have now brought the balance up again. Development planning is appropriately costed and long term budgeting is sound. Financial control is good. Procedures are backed up by clear documentation and expenditure is carefully tracked – administrative staff, headteacher and governors all take key parts in this. The system for placing and paying for orders is smoothly operated. Funds the school receives for supporting pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately and other specific grants are also carefully allocated and tracked. Recent examples of these are the funds the school has received for capital expenditure, and the support for numeracy training.

53. Resources in general are used well. Teaching staff are working with classes and subjects that make the most of their expertise. The school has appropriate plans to cover a forthcoming maternity leave – including release time to allow other staff to cover additional responsibilities. Support staff are very well used to enhance the provision for special needs and to ensure the school's administration runs smoothly. Major items such as computers have been allocated sensibly to the different classes. The school accommodation is used well and displays of work enhance pupils' learning in a variety of areas.

54. The school is very effective in the quality of education it is now providing, and the attitudes and behaviour it encourages in its pupils. It is effective academically in that the pupils make sound progress overall, though standards in mathematics and science have not yet risen enough. The education is delivered in an efficient way though costs are above average. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

60. **Areas of Learning for Children Under Five**

55. Children enter the Reception Class in the autumn term of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend on a half day basis for one term, becoming full time for the spring and summer terms. Almost all of the children have attended the pre-school provision on the school site, which has close links with the school; the remainder come from a privately run nursery. A satisfactory programme of home visits and a half day visit to the school in the summer term ensure that all pupils are familiar with their new class and teacher before entry to the school. The children's attainment on entry is overall as expected for their age, but inevitably varies from year to year as the cohort size is small. The current entry, for example, have slightly lower attainment than the previous entry. Overall, progress is satisfactory for children who are under five. By the time they are five, the children attain the standards that are expected for their age in all areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress in all areas, gain a smooth start to their school life and are ready to enter the National Curriculum at five years old.

56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in all areas of learning and it is based on a sound understanding of the needs of children of this age. The teacher establishes a well-organised environment which contains a broad range of practical activities. Planning has a good level of detail and provides for all the required areas of learning. Sound assessment procedures are in operation, with 'baseline' assessment carried out when pupils start at the school. The results of this are to be used to group children and plan work matched to their needs, but at this stage of the term their use is not fully established. The teacher has a good, friendly relationship with the children and a happy environment is created where children are secure and ready to learn. Since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be good, the range of activities has been extended to meet the needs of children of this age.

62. **Personal and social development**

57. The children have well-developed relationships with each other and with the teacher. They work and play happily together, share resources and talk sociably to each other about their work. The children are generally well behaved and are starting to respond to school discipline and routines. On occasions they become over-excited, but are learning to settle more quickly and respond to routines such as putting up their hands and taking turns to talk and listen to each other. They are interested in their work, but at present find it hard to sustain concentration. The teaching is satisfactory and there is an appropriate emphasis on establishing school routines and children learning to be confident speakers and attentive listeners when working with the whole class. By the time they reach five years old, they are reaching appropriate standards and meeting the requirements of this area of learning.

63. **Language and literacy**

58. The young children make satisfactory progress in the development of their language and literacy skills. By the time they reach statutory school age, they are meeting the Desirable Learning Outcomes and higher attaining pupils are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Children are often engaged in planned and spontaneous conversations. A good illustration of this is when children share books such as 'Each Peach Pear Plum' and discuss rhyming words. Sometimes, however, the answers to questions are given too quickly to the children. Teaching focuses appropriately on early reading and writing skills and there is an appropriate emphasis on games and activities that focus on letter shapes and sounds and initial sounds of words. The children enjoy books and handle them with care. They know a number of nursery rhymes. They become confident in their writing by being encouraged to make marks and symbols and sometimes to write over and under the teacher's writing. By the time they reach statutory school age, they recognise and write their own names and familiar words, recognise most of the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and are well on the way to writing independently. All children have learned to handle books carefully and from an early age know that pictures will help them tell the story. By the time they are five, higher attaining pupils have a small whole word vocabulary and read simple books with sentences.

64. **Mathematics**

59. In mathematics, the children generally attain the levels expected for their age with higher attaining pupils working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum by the time they are five years old. The majority can count up to 10 and are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives. They are aware of the meaning of addition and subtraction through practical activities and are in the early stages of recording. The teacher provides a wide variety of purposeful practical activities and interacts well with the pupils. They have learned to recognise shapes such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Regular access to practical activities gives good support to developing mathematical understanding to solve problems. Their knowledge and skills are further consolidated through number rhymes, songs and counting games.

65. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

60. The children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and by the time they are five, their attainment meets the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The teaching is satisfactory and a variety of approaches are used to help children explore the world through topics such as 'Ourselves' where they learn their address and the features of their houses, the key places in the classroom and directional vocabulary. During the inspection they went on a 'sound walk' and remarked on sudden sounds, identifying objects from the sounds they made. They talk about past and present events, through stories such as 'Old Bear', for example, looking closely at similarities, differences and change. During the inspection, the children used the 'Roamer' effectively, learning how to make it move in different directions with higher attaining pupils predicting how far it will go. By the time they are five, children are starting to be curious about the world, and talk about their observations and higher attaining pupils ask questions and record what they have found out.

66. **Physical development**

61. By the time the children are five, their attainment meets the Desirable Learning Outcomes for physical development. They make models using construction kits, they use scissors and small tools safely and accurately and use pencils and crayons successfully. Facilities for outdoor play are satisfactory in that there are very attractive climbing frames and balancing apparatus, but this term there is no outdoor safe area designated for under fives where children can play and no wheeled vehicles for their use. The situation is to be remedied next term when children attend full time and can use the areas occupied by the playgroup in the mornings. Children use the school's hall and apparatus this term, but much of this is unsuitable for under fives, because of size and weight.

67. **Creative development**

62. Children have a satisfactory range of experiences in art, craft, dance and creative play and their attainment meets the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five years old. In art, they mix paint and paint pictures of themselves and use chalk, pastels and collage to create pictures. The teacher provides suitable opportunities for creative play within the classroom. For example, the 'Hospital', where pupils re-enact the life of hospitals in role as doctors, nurses and patients in their imaginative play. They learn to play musical instruments, learn about rhythm through clapping activities and regularly sing a good number of songs such as 'What is the weather like today?'

68. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

68. **English**

63. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are above average, which corresponds with the judgement of the last inspection. In 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard and above in the National Curriculum tests was above the national average in reading and well above in writing. In reading an

above average number of pupils reached the higher level, but in writing no pupils reached the higher level. In a small school the results of individual cohorts inevitably vary, so the inspection judgement is based not just on the most recent year's results but on the standards in the current Year 2 and the standards in previous years. There has not been a statistically significant trend in results over the last three years, nor has there been a significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.

64. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly in line with the national average, which is below the judgement of the last inspection when standards were above average. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests were above average overall. Again, however, the small cohort size leads to variations from year to year. Approximately one third of the pupils in this year's class of eleven year olds have special educational needs, which is a high number. The provision for these pupils is good and they are making good progress, but overall, standards are on target to be average overall by the end of Year 6 and not above. Over the last three years, standards have varied considerably from above average and well above average in 1996 and 1997 to well below average in 1998. Again, there has been no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.

65. At Key Stage 1, pupils of a variety of abilities make good progress. At Key Stage 2, the picture is less consistent and progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to prior attainment throughout the school. A good number move down the stages of the Code of Practice, benefiting from the good support they receive. This is because work is matched to their needs in the mainstream classes and is well supported by both teachers and classroom assistants. When pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn in small groups for specially targeted work, the level of support and teaching is very good. At Key Stage 2, tasks are well matched to the abilities of the lower and average achieving pupils and they often make good progress, but in some lessons, particularly in reading, there is not always sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. The provision for high quality fiction reading books is lacking. Although research skills have been covered in recent projects such as the Victorians, the level of challenge is not fully sustained at the moment – there need to be more challenging opportunities for them to research and prepare for work to be covered both from books and the computer.

66. The recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy are fully implemented and the introduction of the Literacy Hour is complete. A good detailed plan of action and review has been drawn up and put into practice, together with a helpful and clear school policy for expectations and teaching strategies during the Literacy Hour. The consistently good quality implementation of the Literacy Hour is greatly supporting the quality of teaching and standards of attainment.

67. All pupils are familiar with books when they enter Key Stage 1. They have a small vocabulary of words that they recognise and most have some knowledge of their sounds. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have good phonic recognition, which they use confidently to read new words. They have well-developed library and research skills for their age and use a simple index in a book to research information independently. They are regular readers and a good number name their favourite books. Higher attainers name their favourite authors enthusiastically. By the end of Key Stage 2, good numbers of pupils attain the average standard, but fewer than average are reading at higher levels. Pupils are confident in identifying significant themes and ideas and a good number are confident in analysing character and plot, using the text accurately to justify their opinions. Pupils' enthusiasm for reading is satisfactory, but the range of authors being read does not develop systematically to higher levels. Response to the question 'Who is your favourite author' for example, is too often the same in Year 3 as it is in Year 6. Reading is put to sound use in other areas of the curriculum to research information, for example in history and using the Internet.

68. At Key Stage 1, pupils use above average speaking skills and they listen very carefully. By the end of Key Stage 1, they converse and listen carefully in a variety of situations. Early in their school life, they are involved in discussions and question and answer sessions, and they quickly gain confidence in responding clearly, giving their opinions and views. By the end of Year 2, they understand the need to use Standard English and a widening vocabulary is being carefully established. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are average overall. Pupils explore ideas in groups or pairs, picking up and developing ideas through careful listening and

discussion. A literacy lesson concerning the journalistic style of writing was a good example of this - pupils discussed the vocabulary needed to establish fact or opinion in this style of writing. Ideas are developed in this way through collaborative discussion. A significant number of pupils at Key Stage 2 have a limited vocabulary and speak in sentences with simple structure, but many of these have joined the school during Key Stage 2.

69. Phonic skills are firmly established early in the school life and teachers keep careful records of their pupils' knowledge of letter shapes and sounds. They are regularly consolidated and linked purposefully to the teaching of spelling. Writing develops systematically and there is an appropriate emphasis on writing in all areas of the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in writing are above average. All pupils are enthusiastic writers and higher attaining pupils write at length. Writing is developed appropriately across the curriculum. Writing in different styles and for different purposes is well established - for example, instructional writing for 'Walking a dog', a report of the Moors Valley trip and non-fictional writing about a cloud machine. All have an awareness of when to use capital letters and full stops. Spelling is generally accurate and handwriting is generally well-formed and starting to be joined. By the end of Key Stage 2, at least satisfactory standards are achieved by almost two thirds of the class, with one third of the class being below average. All write competently for a wider variety of purposes, for example reports, poems, reviews and persuasive letters. Writing is lively and thoughtful and words are chosen for effect and consideration of the reader. Pupils plan their writing in an organised way with careful consideration for the development of character and plot.

70. Pupils' attitudes to English are good throughout the school and have maintained the standards of the last inspection. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are very well focused and concentrate well, particularly during the Literacy Hour. They are well behaved and enthusiastic about enjoying and sharing text. A good level of independence is established, particularly in group activities during the Literacy Hour. At Key Stage 2, behaviour is generally good and pupils give their full attention to tasks for an extended time. A good level of collaboration exists - for example writing poetry in pairs on the computer. Pupils with special educational needs are well motivated, particularly when withdrawn into specially grouped activities. A role play activity, when they were writing a report of a recent burglary as Child Okeford Detectives, was a very good example of this. Pupils were very well motivated and made good progress both in writing and speaking and listening skills during this activity.

71. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned, with particularly good detail in learning objectives that match different levels of ability. Lesson planning is based on a good knowledge and understanding of English and the requirements of the Literacy Strategy. Lessons often start with a good recap of previous work and the pace is kept going throughout the session. Expectations of behaviour are high throughout the school. Expectations of attainment are higher for higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1, however, than they are at Key Stage 2. Teachers involve pupils well in question and answer sessions, resources are carefully planned and used well and good assessment files are maintained systematically. Other adults in the classroom are well managed and there is a good level of communication, both in spoken and written form. At the end of the lessons, there is a good use of the plenary session to assess what pupils have learned from the lesson.

72. The management of English is good. The co-ordinator has worked hard and successfully to implement the Literacy Hour. She provides strong and supportive leadership, based on a good knowledge of the subject and has a clear vision for future developments. A good range of assessment procedures is consistently in place with particularly good detail at Key Stage 1. The assessment information is used well by teachers to plan their work.

78. **Mathematics**

73. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests show that an average number of pupils attained the national expectation or better, but a very high proportion achieved the higher level. These results are broadly reflected in the inspection findings (i.e. that standards are average) and are broadly consistent with the results over the last three years. Inevitably there is some variation from year to year - for example better results in 1998.

74. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests show that pupils are achieving results well

below the national average, as has been the case in the previous three years. Inspection findings for pupils in the present Year 6 show that standards are still below average. This year group has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs which has an impact despite recent progress. The school is well aware of these standards and is currently addressing the problem by teaching the Year 5 and 6 in two separate smaller groups matched to ability. This initiative is already bearing fruit in that standards seen during the inspection were higher than the National Curriculum tests indicate. Standards of attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5 are in line with national expectations and show that progress overall is satisfactory and that standards have risen for these year groups. Nevertheless, the attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is still below average.

75. At Key Stage 1 overall progress is sound and it is good in some lessons. This is because pupils in Years 1 and 2 are well taught with work often closely matched to their ability. At Key Stage 2 progress has been unsatisfactory for the current Year 6 because they have encountered many changes of staff and teaching approaches during their four years at this key stage. Progress is now sound overall since the introduction of smaller group teaching in Years 5 and 6, as the work is more carefully structured; there is evidence that progress is often good in lessons. The pupils with special educational needs are also making sound progress. In Years 3 and 4 progress is sound overall with the work being appropriately matched for most pupils.

76. Numeracy is now central to the mathematical work with the national strategy being introduced a term earlier than required. This is having a beneficial effect in raising standards. All lessons begin with mental work and concentrate on number bonds, table work and place value. At Key Stage 1 pupils can count accurately both forward and backwards with the older pupils being able to count in twos, fives and tens. By the end of the key stage a significant number of pupils are able to use numbers involving hundreds, tens and units as well as being able to measure using standard units. Overall standards at this key stage are sound. At Key Stage 2 the older more able pupils can use negative numbers and use co-ordinates in all four quadrants. However, the majority of pupils are not secure in their knowledge of all the multiplication bonds and a significant number have some difficulty in applying them to everyday problem solving situations. Numeracy is beginning to be used across the curriculum - in geography, for example, when mapping with co-ordinates and in IT with data handling. There are some missed opportunities in science, for example when pupils are working with forces. Standards of numeracy at the end of Key Stage 2 are still unsatisfactory.

77. Pupils at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3, 4 and 5 have sound skills in other areas of mathematics. At Key Stage 1 older pupils solved number patterns using previous knowledge whilst those in Years 3 and 4 worked hard at finding relationships between the number of matchsticks and the number of squares that could be made. This work is effectively developing their skills of using and applying their knowledge and it achieved good results. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are reasonably secure in their understanding of shape and symmetry and the less able are beginning to use simple formulae to find out the perimeters of regular shapes. They are less secure in their ability to estimate length and mass, as they become confused with the units of measurement, particularly when estimating the weight of an object. There is some evidence from the work sampling that standards in graphing are not high enough as this aspect of the work is under emphasised.

78. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is a considerable improvement on previous inspection findings. The main teaching strengths lie in the very good planning which often carefully matches the work to the pupils' ability, and the rigorous introduction of mental work at the beginning of each lesson. Teachers' expectations are being raised, although the work sampling showed that staff need to ensure sufficient work is covered in each session. Questioning skills are good as is the teachers' ability to control and support the pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties. In one lesson seen some objectives were too easy - resulting in a group of pupils being insufficiently challenged.

79. The relatively recently appointed co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, and has been involved in supporting teachers and introducing the numeracy strategy. There are some very good systems in place for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress. The testing of pupils takes place regularly at Key Stage 2 with the result that targets can be set and trends monitored. The school carefully evaluates national test results and has used this analysis to introduce new strategies to improve attainment. Resources are good with additional funding being allocated to the subject. Computers are used to support the work and reinforcement programs

are well used for the pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6.

80. The school is making a determined effort to improve the standards in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 2. Whilst results next year are expected to show a slight improvement the full impact is likely in subsequent years. The school is to be commended for tackling this major curriculum weakness with rigour and enthusiasm.

86. Science

81. In 1999 the results of the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils were below average, and in 1998 they were well below average. The previous inspection judgement and tests in earlier years showed broadly average attainment by the time pupils left the school. The results of teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils, however, were very high in 1999 and high in 1998, improvements on results of earlier years that were broadly average. Taking the pattern of Year 6 and corresponding Year 2 results together, the evidence shows that there has been poor progress at Key Stage 2 in recent years. This is also borne out by a comparison of Key Stage 2 results with those of similar schools. However, inspection evidence shows that the downward trend is now reversed and the progress of pupils at Key Stage 2 is now satisfactory overall.

82. The inspection evidence shows that the attainment of current Year 6 pupils, and the overall standards at the end of the key stage, are still below average. However pupils in years 3, 4 and 5 are reaching standards that are at least age-appropriate and often above. This is why progress is judged to be satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2. The current Year 6 shows lower standards partly because of unsatisfactory progress in earlier years but also because of a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Their progress is now satisfactory but better for lower attainers than higher attainers. The work set for higher attainers has sometimes not been sufficiently demanding this term, partially because lessons have been taught by different teachers. The scheme of work has not been fully covered and the work pupils record has been of limited depth. This limits them when it comes to revision of factual content. In addition, their investigation work shows them reaching average standards for their age rather than higher standards, partially because the higher level skills are not consistently been explicitly taught.

83. An example of good progress at Key Stage 2 is in pupils' understanding of fair tests from Years 3 to 5. In Year 3 pupils understand the need for a fair test when investigating and by Year 4 the pupils are starting to understand how some aspects of an investigation must be kept the same in order to be fair. By Year 5 a significant number can identify exactly what must be kept the same. For example, when comparing the way different size particles of sugar dissolve they know they should keep the amount of water and sugar and the temperature constant.

84. The inspection evidence shows that standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils enter the key stage with broadly average attainment overall, so this shows good progress. The Key Stage 1 lesson seen indicated that the good progress results from very focused teaching with clear objectives, and from very good questioning and listening by the teacher and support staff. It also illustrated how pupils move on from Year 1 to Year 2. In Year 1, for example, they are making specific observations about how things provided by the teacher feel whilst by Year 2 they are purposefully planning an investigation to investigate one of their senses.

85. The quality of teaching varies from satisfactory to very good, but is mostly very good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 has significantly improved since the last inspection – investigative skills are taught to all year groups and learning objectives are clear. Marking of work is now satisfactory but was weak in some year groups last year. Lessons are well structured with good introductions followed by group practical work, often targeted at different attainment levels, and finishing with an effective summary. Resources are carefully prepared, and well used. In one particularly good lesson musical instruments were used very well to help pupils reach a definition of 'pitch', for example. The demonstrations in this lesson were also a significant motivating factor for the pupils. Pupils' response to science is good overall. Notably, in one class, they have been asked what the teacher might do to make science more interesting, and the teacher has taken their suggestions on board. They

thoroughly enjoy practical work – for example making filters to try to clean muddy water.

86. The science co-ordinator is aware of what needs to be done in the subject, and she has pulled together a clear scheme of work. It provides for the development of both content knowledge and scientific investigation skills, and as a result there are no significant differences in pupils' attainment in these aspects. Good assessment procedures have been drafted, but are not yet fully in operation. However there has been no analysis of strengths and weaknesses in Key Stage 2 National Curriculum results to support improvement, in contrast to the work done in mathematics. This means that the teachers are working to improve the subject on the basis of their individual assessments of pupils rather than whole school analysis. However, the scheme of work and assessment procedures now in place do provide effective support. The challenge is now to ensure improvement continues through Key Stage 2 by rigorous challenge to the pupils who are higher attainers.

92. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology (IT)

87.No teaching of IT was seen during the inspection. However there was plenty of evidence from pupils at work on the computers, coupled with teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils to show that standards of attainment are average at the end of both key stages. This is similar to previous inspection findings and indicates that the school has managed to keep well abreast of changes within the IT curriculum, including the use of electronic mail.

88.Year 1 and 2 pupils have gained considerable keyboard and mouse skills so that they can use the menu bar effectively as well as being able to delete text and use the spell checker for their simple word processing. They also have been introduced to data handling and can input simple information and print out graphs to show the results. All this work indicates that progress is sound, and in some instances it is good especially when the pupils work alongside an adult.

89.The pupils at Key Stage 2 also make sound progress overall. Particularly good progress is made in Years 3 and 4 where the teacher has good expertise and sets challenging tasks. The work involving email messages to pupils in another local school is good and shows that skills are being taught progressively. The Year 6 pupils have used control technology as they are able to build up simple programs to control the working of traffic lights. They also showed that they were able to use simple spread sheets and have the appropriate vocabulary. They are proficient in handling the mouse and using the word processing program.

90.The attitudes of the pupils to IT are good and are a contributory factor to the progress and standards achieved. They enjoy the work and are keen to use the computers and demonstrate their skills. Their behaviour is very good as they are often engrossed in the tasks. They co-operate well with each other and in some instances are able to teach each other new skills.

91.No overall judgements about the quality of teaching can be made but the planning is good and allows pupils to cover the full range of the curriculum in a systematic way. There is now a good assessment system ready for use, though not yet fully implemented, and the well qualified co-ordinator has successfully led some in-service training. This has helped in improving teacher expertise. Resources are good overall with a range of programs suitable for all ages and abilities, some of which support the work of pupils with special educational needs. IT is used successfully across the curriculum - in history for example, where pupils access information about people in history using the CD Rom. A minor weakness in the use across the curriculum is in science where sensor equipment is not available all year round. As a result it cannot be freely used to make the very accurate measurements needed for high attainment in investigations.

97.

Art

92.Although no lessons were observed during the inspection, a thorough scrutiny of pupils' previous work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils, indicate that progress is satisfactory through the school. This judgement is similar to the findings of the last inspection.

93.At Key Stage 1, pupils show appropriate painting and drawing skills and show particular strengths in colour mixing and collage work, where their awareness of different textures creates pleasing pictures. At Key Stage 2, pupils use sketch books to record and observe their various experiences. Particular strengths are apparent in work linked to the study of famous artists. A study of Dore, where pupils looked at the painting 'Over London by rail', is a good example of this. Pupils made their own responses in charcoal drawings, showing particular strengths in using line and form to produce atmosphere and effect. Since the last inspection, good improvement has been made in the remedying of the weakness identified in the critical appraisal of art and the appreciation of the work of famous artists.

94. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art. They begin in the youngest class with drawings and paintings of themselves and have a good experience in using the computer for art work. In Years 1 and 2, people are drawn from the front, back and sides. Pupils respond well in art to poems such as 'What is that?' by John Foster, producing their own night time pictures. At Key Stage 2, the study of the styles of other artists develops well with a good range of artists such as Monet, Matisse, Mondrian and Constable. Close observational work builds progressively through such activities as sketching the front at the Manor House, in the lower Key Stage 2 class, and work such as observational sketching of Victorian kitchenware in the upper class.

95. The art curriculum is relevant and broadly balanced and every opportunity is taken to link the subject with history, IT and literacy. A sound art policy is in place and this, together with a helpful draft scheme of work, provides good guidance for teachers to plan their work, covering both what is to be taught and suggestions as to how it might be achieved. A newly appointed co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning for skills development and coverage, but it is too early for further developments to take place. Art resources are good and have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. The bright and colourful art displays throughout the school add interest and colour to school life.

101. Design and technology

96. Only one lesson of design and technology was seen during the inspection, so judgements about the subject are also based on available work and planning. The co-ordinator is newly in post, so has had limited opportunities to develop the subject. However she has clear and appropriate ideas about the direction to take.

97. Progress is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 past work shows good progress in the designing element of the subject. Initially pupils draw simple pictures of what they want to make or what they have learnt about objects. They move on to making a list of what they are going to do and by the end of the key stage can draw a labelled diagram to show their design ideas.

98. The school had no evidence of progress in the early part of Key Stage 2, which indicates a weakness in current assessment procedures. However, the oldest pupils made satisfactory progress in the lesson seen. They were working with textiles to make slippers, improving their design vocabulary through careful examination of the product. In this carefully planned lesson the emphasis was on the learning of specific skills and there were limited opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their imagination or creativity. However, they were encouraged to identify why different fabrics should or should not be used, and responded well.

99. The school grounds give ample evidence of the way pupils are encouraged to use design and technology skills to the benefit of the whole community. They have recently worked with local designers and artists to produce attractive safety barriers/ murals for the playgroup and wooden play structures for the main school. The quality of these demonstrates that the standards of Key Stage 1 work are effectively developed throughout the rest of the school.

105. Geography

100. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection. This is because the subject is taught in half-term blocks. Little evidence is available from the current year, so some pupils' work from previous years also provided evidence together with an examination of teachers' planning, the scheme of work and discussion with pupils.

101. At Key Stage 1 the pupils show an awareness of places beyond their own locality such as holiday destinations and are able to express views as to why they are different in both climate and vegetation. The mapping work on the locality shows the development of simple mapping skills and the pupils are beginning to use simple co-ordinates and look at keys. They are making sound progress. This is not the case at Key Stage 2, where progress is poor as there is little improvement in geographical skills – this was evident in the mapwork

on Pakistan for instance, where pupils did not have a clear understanding of the meaning of a map of the physical regions. Past work shows that heavy reliance is placed on work sheets, some of which are not helpful in developing geographical skills. One drawback to progress is the length of time between the geographical topics undertaken by the pupils as they may well forget previously learnt skills.

102.The co-ordinator is aware of the weakness in Key Stage 2 geography. A new scheme of work is in place but has yet to be fully implemented. This should provide the much needed structure to improve teachers' planning and focus on skills. The resources are satisfactory and good use is made of the local environment - for example when Key Stage 1 pupils map their route to school.

108. **History**

103.Only one lesson in each key stage was seen during the inspection, so the scrutiny of pupils' work, teacher planning and discussion with the co-ordinator provided extra evidence. This showed that pupils at both key stages are making sound progress. The youngest pupils are made aware of the why objects are old and often need to be handled with care. In Years 1 and 2 the topic on 'Ourselves' involves pupils in ordering photographs of their life so that they become aware of a sense of chronology. At Key Stage 2 the pupils are able to give sensible reasons for the movement of people, such as Roman settlers, whilst relating this to their own population movements. They also have good recall of other historical information such as the religious persecution of peoples that caused them to settle in other parts of the world. In this lesson the progress made by the pupils was satisfactory.

104.The pupils' response in history lessons is good. At Key Stage 1 they were keen to talk about their work and answered questions with enthusiasm. They worked well in groups and were ably supported by adult helpers. At Key Stage 2 the pupils listened well to their peers and provided clear answers to the teacher's questions. Behaviour is good.

105.The teaching is sound overall, but with strengths at Key Stage 1. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject that they are delivering and their planning is generally detailed. Expectations are appropriate but some of the quality of presentation is not of a high enough standard - for example in the work on Victorians. Discipline is effective and resources are well used.

106.The school has recently reviewed its scheme of work and put in place a carefully structured scheme which covers all aspects of the curriculum. This is an improvement on previous inspection findings. Resources for history are satisfactory and visits to places of historical interest add to the interest and quality of the pupils' work. The pupils used historical information well in their local study of the village. IT is put to good use as pupils are able to search for information and print out both pictures and text which they include in their topic folders. This adds to their enjoyment of the subject.

112. **Music**

107.Long term progress across both key stages is satisfactory. This is an improvement on previous inspection findings, as previously there was some under-achievement especially at Key Stage 2. Only two music lessons were seen during the inspection, and in these lessons pupils were making good progress, and developing the full range of musical skills, in response to good teaching. However, the lessons also showed that the pupils were starting from a comparatively low base and although they made good progress they were only reaching average standards for their age in the lessons. Judgements about progress in music were based on other evidence such as standards in singing and discussions with staff as well as the lessons themselves.

108.In the Key Stage 1 lesson the pupils made good judgements about pitch and dynamics by comparing different pieces of music. They showed sound skills in their feeling for rhythm by using movement. They were also able to listen to and then name simple musical instruments. In this lesson they made good progress -

particularly in developing their listening skills through the use of appropriate vocabulary and careful teacher direction. It meant that they listened for a specific purpose, i.e. to hear the depth of sound.

109. In the Year 5 and 6 lesson the pupils showed they can clap rhythms with increasing complexity and are aware of musical notation. However, some pupils do have difficulty in maintaining a regular beat. The pupils are building up a sound musical vocabulary and are beginning to name certain styles and pieces of music. They use a variety of both tuned and untuned instruments in their music-making with some pupils being able to play confidently. The majority of pupils throughout the school enjoy their music and are particularly enthusiastic during the practical sessions. They answer questions well and co-operate in the group work successfully.

110. The teaching seen at Key Stage 1 was good and that at Key Stage 2 was very good. The work is well planned and the teachers involve the pupils to actively participate at every opportunity. The Key Stage 2 teaching was very good because of the excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject coupled with very good musical skills. This contributed significantly to the good progress made during the lesson.

111. The school uses a scheme of work effectively and this is particularly useful for the non-specialist teachers as it provides both guidance and suggestions in their lesson planning. Resources are good both in range and quality and allow pupils to fully participate in lessons. There is full coverage of the National Curriculum as all elements of the subject are taught. Music is generally taught in blocks of time rather than on a regular weekly basis, which does mean that there are periods when pupils receive limited musical input. This is a possible reason for pupils coming to lessons with limited recollection of the music they have learned before.

112. There are other opportunities for pupils to take part in music making with recorder groups and choir. Most pupils participate enthusiastically when singing in assembly; they sing in tune and enunciate the words clearly. The pupils' musical development is well supported by various visits and visitors. The pupils perform regularly in the local church and at school concerts, for example. They experience live music, for instance from the Dorset Youth Orchestra and members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. These activities make a positive contribution to the progress made.

118. Physical education

113. Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education. At Key Stage 1, pupils carefully practice their movement skills and are encouraged to evaluate their own and each other's performances. A good example of this was a gymnastic lesson where pupils worked on large apparatus, improving their sequences of movement concerning high and low positions, and reaching good standards for their age. Half of the class carefully observed the other's performance, commented on what they liked about it and how it could be improved, thus improving their evaluation skills. At Key Stage 2, pupils' confidence and competence in ball skills is improved by a range of bouncing, balancing and hitting activities and pupils make satisfactory progress. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils reached average standards for their age in individual, paired and then small team games activities. In doing so, they practise their basic skills and improve their performance in a range of situations.

114. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good, but it was not possible to make an overall judgement for Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and based on a clear understanding of the skills to be taught. Pupils' self evaluation and demonstration are used appropriately to improve performance. Activities are planned well to build progressively on the skills taught at the start of the lesson. Teachers have a good awareness of safety issues, give clear instructions and use good questioning techniques to help pupils learn how to improve. Pupils' response to physical education is good. They are well behaved, stay on task and persevere to improve and particularly enjoy challenges such as 'beat your own record'.

115. The recently appointed co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning for skills coverage and balance of activities and provides satisfactory leadership. The development of a new scheme of work is a school priority and is awaiting government guidance to help with this. Recent good developments have included the school's

involvement in 'Top Play', which has made good provision for teachers' professional development for the teaching of games and improved games resources. Involvement in cluster dance training has provided further support for teachers, as has provision for rugby coaching courses. Overall, resources are satisfactory, except for the need to update larger apparatus and replace it with lightweight portable equipment. The judgement on progress is broadly similar to that of the last inspection. Improvements have taken place in the safety aspects at Key Stage 2, as pupils now all wear suitable clothing, and there is now a co-ordinator and a scheme of work.

Swimming

116. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below. It is based on an examination of planning and records, and on discussions as no lessons were being taught at the time of the inspection.

117. Good provision is made for swimming. A well maintained pool, designed for teaching swimming and with good changing and showering provision, is used in a nearby private school. Pupils are well supervised by the class teachers and a good number of parents. Swimming is taught by the class teacher along with two qualified instructors. School records indicate that of the current Year 6, 12 out of 18 pupils swim the 25 metres required by the National Curriculum. The remaining 6 pupils, who have not made enough progress, will join Year 3 and Year 4 swimming next Summer. This shows good attention to support for individuals. There is generally only a very small number, one or two, who fail to reach the requirements by the time they leave the school. Approximately 89% are expected to achieve or exceed them, which is a good standard. Pupils have positive attitudes towards swimming. On some occasions they have opportunities to take part in competitive galas. Records of pupils' attainments - in particular those who do not attain the required standard - are kept by the school for the past year, but a weakness exists in that this information is not passed to the receiving secondary school.

123. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

123. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

118. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, who spent a total of 10 inspector days in school. Lessons were observed for a total of 20 hours and other direct evidence gathered (including observation of registration, assemblies and extra-curricular activities, and a study of past work) for a further 16 hours. It was not possible to observe lessons in art, IT or geography during the three days of the inspection, and observations of design and technology and PE were limited. As a result no overall judgement of teaching or pupils' response could be made in these subjects, and judgements of progress are also based on past work and plans, combined with discussions with pupils.

119. Meetings were held with pupils, members of staff, the chair of governors and a group of other governors, as well as informal discussions. Non-teaching staff and volunteer helpers were also observed. Samples of pupils' work in all year groups were scrutinised. Several pupils in every year group were heard reading. The team examined school documentation before and during the inspection week. Members of the team met 18 parents at a special meeting held prior to the inspection to hear their views. The 27 written responses to questionnaires distributed to all parents of the school were also taken into account.

125. DATA AND INDICATORS

125. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	92.5	1	27	14

125. Teachers and classes

125. Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20

125. Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	57
Average class size:	23

125. Financial data

Financial year:	98/99
	£
Total Income	165475
Total Expenditure	153415
Expenditure per pupil	1743
Balance brought forward from previous year	-10339
Balance carried forward to next year	1721

125. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	64
Number of questionnaires returned:	27

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	52	48	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	56	37	4	4	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	17	52	22	4	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	19	46	27	8	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	48	13	13	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	29	57	4	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	32	50	8	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	44	12	24	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	45	35	19	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	59	7	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	33	63	4	0	0

125. **Other issues raised by parents**

At the parents' meeting, strengths were identified in many areas. A few parents had concerns over the progress of the most able pupils, and some questioned whether homework was sufficiently structured at Key Stage 2, or whether they had enough information about it.

A very small number of parents sent in comments with their questionnaires. Points made by at least two parents were:

Strengths:

- School is very approachable
- Children are happy

Weaknesses:

- Homework
- Information about progress

Response of team during inspection:

The team agreed with the strengths parents identified. Of the weaknesses, they disagreed with one point, partially upheld another and agreed with another. They found that homework has improved this year and the structure and amount is satisfactory. They found that the progress of the most able is overall satisfactory but is sometimes unsatisfactory in English and science. They agreed that

reports do not give enough information about progress.