

# INSPECTION REPORT

**PLYMPTON ST MAURICE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

PLYMOUTH

LEA area: City of Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113316

Headteacher: Mrs J. Tubb

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. T. Ridout  
OIN: 18926

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 189350

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Plympton Hill Plympton St Maurice PLYMOUTH Devon
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms. A. Havard
Date of previous inspection:	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 26 <sup>th</sup> September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. M. T. Ridout	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information technology Special Educational Needs Equal Opportunities	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mr. B. Sampson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs. D. Gale	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography History	How good are the curricular and other Opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs. G. Phillips	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical Education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
Mrs. L. Simmons	Team inspector	Art Religious Education Music Under-fives	

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## **REPORT CONTENTS**

Page

### **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

**6**

Information about the school  
How good the school is  
What the school does well  
What could be improved  
How the school has improved since its last inspection  
Standards  
Pupils' attitudes and values  
Teaching and learning  
Other aspects of the school  
How well the school is led and managed  
Parents' and carers' views of the school

### **PART B: COMMENTARY**

#### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

**10**

The school's results and achievements  
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

**12**

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

**14**

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

**16**

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS**

**18**

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

**18**

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

**21**

### **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

**22**

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

**26**

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Plympton St Maurice is a local authority maintained community school catering for boys and girls aged four to eleven years. Children are admitted to the reception class in September and January each year. Most children will have attended an independently run pre-school unit, which is situated at the school. At the time of the inspection there were 19 children in the reception class three of whom were under five. These children are taught by a full-time class teacher and two part-time learning support assistants. The older children are organised in six single age group classes. In total there are 164 pupils on roll and the average class size is 23. There are 8 full-time equivalent teachers and 1 full-time and 7 part-time learning support staff. Fifty eight pupils [34%], have been identified as having special educational needs. This is above local and national averages. Five of these pupils have statements of special educational needs. The number of pupils with special educational needs has increased by 16% since the previous inspection in September 1996.

The school is situated on the rural fringe of a mainly residential area. There is a wide variety of housing, including privately owned and local authority rented housing. The population includes a wide social mix. The majority of pupils come from a large council housing estate next to the school. A significant proportion of families have disadvantaged circumstances. Forty one pupils [25%] are entitled to free school meals. This is above the national average. There is one child for whom English is an additional language. There are no children from ethnic minorities. Many children begin school with levels of attainment below those expected for their age. In recent years the number of pupils changing schools during the primary phase has increased. For example, since 1996 about one fifth of the group of pupils now in Year 6 have left and a similar number have joined. In addition, 5 teachers have left the school and 5 have been appointed during the last two years.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school makes good provision for children under five and they make good progress. In Key Stage 1 standards are satisfactory overall. There are strengths in design and technology and religious education but standards are low in information technology. In Key Stage 2 standards are below average in English and very low in information technology. In other subjects standards are generally satisfactory. There are strengths in art and dance in both key stages. Despite good efforts to provide suitable curricular policies and schemes of work there are long standing weaknesses in implementing the curriculum and using assessment information. Teaching is particularly effective for children under five and good teamwork in Key Stage 1 is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The impact of teaching is variable in Key Stage 2. Sound progress is maintained in Year 3, but progress slows in Years 4 and 5, and it improves markedly in Year 6. The leadership provided by the governors and senior staff is satisfactory overall. The headteacher is particularly effective in creating a positive climate for learning and pupils respond very well. An inclusive approach is taken in planning improvements and the staff make a positive contribution to the school's work. However, although suitable areas for development are identified the means of their achievement is not planned in sufficient detail to enable the staff to focus their efforts on the key priorities. This results in too many issues being tackled and limits the impact of the staff's best efforts. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning lack sufficient rigour and are not securely linked to specific goals for improvement. At present the school does not have an effective mechanism to know what is happening in classrooms and this limits its capacity for further improvement. However, it is developing plans to tackle the weaknesses through a literacy intervention initiative beginning in the autumn term. The management of financial and other resources is good and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Teaching of the under fives is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and very positive relationships.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- Achievement in design and technology is good in Key Stage 1.
- Achievement in religious education in Key Stage 1 and in art and dance in both key stages is developing well.

### What could be improved

- Standards in English are not high enough in Key Stage 2.
- Standards in information technology are well below national expectations in both key stages.
- Achievement in using the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology across the curriculum.
- Investigative work, especially in mathematics and science.
- Curricular planning doesn't always provide relevant learning opportunities across subjects.
- The use of assessments to match work to pupils' learning needs.
- Evaluation and monitoring of the school's work and the implementation of plans for improvement.

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

This is a school with particular strengths; following a sharp decline, standards are gradually improving but several long standing weaknesses have yet to be fully resolved.

### HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1996 when the standards achieved by pupils required some improvement, the quality of education required substantial improvement, the climate for learning was very good and management and efficiency were good. Progress in implementing procedures linked to the five key issues raised in the inspection report is satisfactory overall. The school has successfully maintained a very good climate for learning and manages day-to-day arrangements well. Although standards in National Curriculum test results dropped significantly, following the last inspection, the position is now improving. The quality of teaching has significantly improved. However, despite the provision of curricular policies and schemes of work, the adoption of planning frameworks for teachers and of systems for assessing pupils' attainment, key weaknesses remain in the quality of education. In particular, the rigid adherence to the new schemes of work means that the tasks undertaken by pupils are not always appropriately challenging or made relevant to their learning needs. The contribution of subject co-ordinators is developing well, at an informal level, and the potential hazards to safety, drawn to the school's attention, have been resolved. Whilst the school's leadership has put in place suitable systems and arrangements intended to promote improvement it is not yet fully effective in focusing the good efforts of teachers and ensuring that the quality of learning is both consistent and effective.

### STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	D	D	C
mathematics	C	E	D	C
science	C	E	D	B

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

In 1999 the school's results for 11 year olds were average in English and mathematics, and above average in science when compared with similar schools having between 20% and 35% of pupils entitled to free school meals. In comparison with all schools nationally results were below average. In English standards in writing are a particular weakness and in mathematics and science achievement is not high enough in practical work. Inspection confirms standards are below average in English but finds they are close to the national average in mathematics and science. Test results in English have gradually improved since 1996 and following a significant drop in performance in the mathematics and science tests in 1998, results improved markedly in 1999. The school expects to exceed its targets for the number of pupils attaining Level 4 this year. The standards of work seen during the inspection were generally satisfactory in all subjects, except English and information technology, where achievement is not high enough. Furthermore,

pupils lack sufficient competence in using the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology across the subjects of the curriculum.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good and pupils act responsibly both in and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very positive relationships and their personal development is well supported.
Attendance	The level of attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, together with their very good relationships make a significant contribution to the climate for learning and are a strength of the school. The provision to ensure pupils' welfare are also very good and procedures to monitor attendance are very thorough.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 68% of observed lessons teaching was good or better. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The current picture provides a secure basis for further improvement. Teaching is particularly effective for the under fives. Teaching is having a positive influence on standards in English and mathematics in both key stages, but too little emphasis is given to developing speaking and listening, the use of reading and ensuring pupils sustain their writing, especially in Key Stage 2. Good teamwork ensures greater consistency in Key Stage 1, but the impact of teaching is variable in Key Stage 2. Teaching is sound in Year 3, it is sometimes unsatisfactory in Years 4 and 5 but it improves markedly in Year 6, where the impact is often good. In better lessons teachers have high expectations and learning is lively. However, work is not always matched to what pupils need to learn next, nor is enough time given to consolidate learning, and pupils' knowledge of what they need to do is sometimes limited. Overall, teachers have satisfactory knowledge in all subjects, but some lack confidence in information technology and music. In observed lessons teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. In 5% of lessons teaching was excellent, it was very good in 17%, good in 46%, satisfactory in 23% and unsatisfactory in 9%.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good learning opportunities are provided for children under five but although the provision of schemes of work is satisfactory in both key stages the quality and range of learning opportunities is sometimes unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the quality of support provided but pupils' progress is not always maintained across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are very effectively supported and good progress is maintained.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Provision for pupils' personal development is good, with strengths in provision for pupils' moral and social development. Provision for



spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	developing pupils' awareness of spiritual and cultural issues is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are very good. Procedures to monitor pupils' personal and academic performance are satisfactory but the use of assessment to guide curricular planning is a particular weakness.

The school warmly welcomes parents but, despite its best efforts a significant minority of parents is insufficiently involved in supporting their children's learning. Parents are provided with good quality information and those who are actively involved with the school have a positive impact on its work. The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and the curriculum is very positively enriched through links with the community. A good curriculum is provided for children under five, but the curriculum in both key stages is not always sufficiently balanced and relevant. The quality of pastoral care is very good and a strength of the school. Whilst procedures to monitor personal and academic achievements are satisfactory, the use of assessment is a particular weakness.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Day-to-day management is good. Senior staff positively contribute in steering the school's work but, whilst leadership identifies necessary improvements, it is less effective in evaluating the quality of learning and setting precise goals for improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors satisfactorily fulfil their statutory obligations with one exception. However, plans are to be put in place to review the work of teachers and thereby meet the requirements for professional appraisal
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher gives a strong lead in analysing the school's performance. She ensures staff are made aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Staff are well deployed, good use is made of most learning resources, except those for information technology, and financial planning is meticulous.

There are sufficient qualified and experienced staff to meet the needs of the curriculum, the quality of the accommodation and grounds is good, and the quality and range of learning resources is good in most subjects. The one exception is information technology where there is insufficient software. The overall quality of leadership provided for the school is satisfactory. Leadership is most effective in pastoral aspects, but too little attention is given to how to manage, support and sustain improvement. Good administrative procedures ensure careful consideration of best value in purchasing and placing contracts.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases the majority of parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's good behaviour and attitudes to their work.</li> <li>Children enjoy school and they are expected to do their best and work hard.</li> <li>Most feel their children are making good progress the teaching is good, and that the teachers are approachable.</li> <li>Most consider they are well informed about the school and their child's progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A number of parents feel there is too much emphasis on literacy and numeracy at the expense of other subjects.</li> <li>Several are unhappy about the demands made on their children and the inconsistent setting of homework.</li> <li>Some consider the school does not work closely enough with parents or provide enough information about the curriculum.</li> <li>A few say not enough activities are provided outside of lessons and some say the school is not well led.</li> </ul>

Inspection confirms most of the positive views of parents. However, the impact of teaching is judged to be

satisfactory overall, and this leads to some variation in pupils' progress. Inspectors find no significant evidence to support most of the concerns raised by a minority of parents. There is very good extra-curricular provision, the school has worked hard to involve parents and provides good quality information. However, parents would benefit from further opportunities to view their children's work and further reassurance about the expectations for homework. The school is well aware of the strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but is seeking to ensure its curriculum is more diverse, once Curriculum 2000 is implemented.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. A significant number of children join the reception class with relatively low levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy, and in their personal and social development. Most children make good progress in all areas of learning, and by the age of five, the majority achieve the national expectation in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in the creative, physical and personal and social areas of learning. They benefit from very good provision in the reception class, and are well prepared for working on the National Curriculum programmes of study.
2. Following the previous inspection, in September 1996, the school's results in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests dipped significantly in 1997. There is however, evidence of a gradual and sustained improvement in the school's English test results since that time, and although test results in mathematics and science declined further in 1998, results were much improved in 1999. The school says and inspection confirms that factors such as the relatively high number of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils joining or leaving a particular year group has had a negative impact on results. For example, in 1998 only three fifths of pupils in Year 6 spent all seven primary years at the school. Similarly, almost one fifth of pupils have left, and a similar number have joined the present Year 6 since Key Stage 1. However, despite these factors, the school has successfully raised pupils' level of performance, so that by the end of Key Stage 2, most of its pupils are achieving at least average standards in comparison with similar schools.
3. In 1999 the results of the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests showed the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in reading and mathematics was well below average and in writing it was below average. The percentage achieving the higher level 2B was close to the national average in writing, but below average in reading, and well below average in mathematics. An above average number of pupils attained level 3 in reading, but few attained this level in mathematics, and none in writing. The results of teacher assessments of speaking and listening indicate standards were very low compared with the national average at level 2, and the higher level 3. In science, teacher assessments show standards were below average at level 2 and at the higher level 3. In comparison with similar schools, the results in reading and writing were above average but in mathematics the results were below average.
4. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above was close to the national average in science, but below average in English and mathematics. The percentage achieving the higher level 5 was close to the national average in science, but below average in mathematics, and well below average in English. In comparison with similar schools the results were above average in science and average in English and mathematics. Analysis of test results at both key stages, between 1996 and 1999, shows that the performance of girls was below that of boys, which is contrary to the national picture. However, inspection does not find significant evidence of underachievement by the girls in the work seen, the lessons observed or from discussions with pupils.
5. The school has set suitable targets for improving standards. At the end of the current academic year the school expects, at least 54% of pupils in Year 6 to achieve level 4 and above in English and mathematics. Inspection confirms the gradual improvement in standards shown in test results. Standards in mathematics and science are close to the national average at the end of both key stages, although achievement in investigative work, in both subjects, is unsatisfactory. In English, overall standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1, but they are unsatisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in reading are close to the national average in both key stages, but although attainment in writing is close to the national average in Key Stage 1, it is below average in Key Stage 2. In both key stages the standards achieved in speaking and listening are below those expected for pupils in this age range. In religious education, the standards achieved in both

key stages are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The standards achieved in information technology are well below the national expectation in both key stages. Overall, pupils' achievements in using the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology, across the curriculum, are unsatisfactory. The lack of extended opportunities for pupils to use these skills and improve their achievements reduces the quality of their learning, holds back progress and results in a limited range of work being undertaken in several subjects.

6. In Key Stage 1, progress is good, and pupils achieve good standards in design and technology, but in Key Stage 2, progress and achievement are satisfactory overall. In art, geography, history, music and physical education pupils in both key stages achieve appropriate standards for their age. However, in the work seen pupils in both key stages often make good progress and achieve well in art and physical education. Although pupils' progress across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, the rate of work is not always maintained. There is greater consistency within Key Stage 1, but the variation in progress is most evident in Key Stage 2, where progress is sometimes unsatisfactory in Years 4 and 5. However, satisfactory progress is maintained in Year 3 and progress improves markedly in Year 6. This pattern of progress is reflected in the work of pupils with differing abilities. Throughout the school, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Average attainers are generally set suitable work, but too often learning is not consolidated before moving on to the next topic. As a consequence, the expected progress is not achieved and when topics are revisited much revision is required. Slow learners, and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress from a low base. These pupils are often well supported and, where this is the case, progress is often good. However, progress is not always maintained in other lessons. Where English is an additional language for a pupil, very good support is provided and such pupils achieve well.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and are a strength of the school. The quality of relationships throughout the school is also very good and has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. This is a strength maintained since the previous inspection.
8. Pupils are keen to come to school and show a high level of commitment and involvement in all the daily activities that are offered to them. They are well focused in lessons and keen to share their work and ideas, and this supports their learning and progress well. Teachers encourage pupils to be fully involved, especially when there is sharing of information at the beginning and end of lessons. They can work unsupervised at their tasks for developing lengths of time, but do not always have sufficient time to complete work and it is sometimes produced in a rather untidy way. They get out and clear away their own equipment. All pupils are becoming confident in contributing information about their work in lessons. For example, during physical education lessons they are able to evaluate their own performance and that of their peers in a positive and appreciative way. Pupils co-operate well within groups. They negotiate and generally come to a decision which is acceptable to all the members of the group, such as the pupils in Year 1 involved in a game to enhance their literacy skills and the pupils in Years 5 and 6 during their cross-curricular history afternoon. Parents affirm that their children like coming to school and feel happy and secure.
9. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and when they move around the school. They play together happily during lunch and break time. Pupils are kind to one another and acknowledge when their peers have been considerate by proposing them for awards. They have well developed social skills and this is shown particularly during lunch times where pupils sit in family groups so that older children can support younger ones. Lunchtimes are calm occasions where pupils relate well to one another and show respect for the cooks and dinner staff who look after them. Staff provide good role models and the quality of relationships in the school is very good. This is reflected in the school's warm, caring and welcoming ethos. Pupils' response to the school's system for rewards is very good and they strive hard for rewards in the form of certificates and trophies. There are virtually no incidences of bullying.

10. Pupils take responsibility for tasks within the school in a very serious and responsible manner and apply for specific positions each term. For example, the pupils who answer the telephones during the lunch time are frequently complimented by members of the community for the mature and responsible way they deal with a variety of requests and information. This trustworthiness is also seen as they carry out a variety of other duties around the school, which include, for example, acting as class monitor, preparing and using the overhead projector and tape recorder during acts of collective worship.
11. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and have sufficient confidence to ask questions to clarify what they are required to do and also to further their knowledge of particular aspects during lessons. However, at present they do not show sufficient confidence in generating their own ideas as a basis for solving problems, especially within mathematics and science. Circle time provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on, discuss and make decisions about specific events relating to their own and other pupils' welfare. They show good awareness of the impact of their actions on others and suggest very responsible answers to any problems that might arise, for example, to support any member of their class who might be experiencing difficulties with friendship groups. They are keen to help one another so that the quality of relationships between pupils themselves is also very good.
12. Pupils contribute successfully to the school rules and see them as fair and work hard for rewards, which actually result in the whole class receiving a treat. They show good self-discipline whilst using valuable equipment, such as musical instruments, and handle all property with care and respect. Most pupils show good initiative in seeing what needs to be done before being requested to do so, such as opening doors and proffering chairs. They are polite and courteous. Pupils are supportive of those who have special educational needs and are generally appreciative of their efforts.
13. Pupils personal development is good and every day they are provided with opportunities to carry out a range of small tasks and responsibilities such as returning the register to the office, playing music for assembly or recording a tally of tokens which result in rewards. The school offers a range of activities that enable pupils to develop their own feelings of self worth, which helps pupils to become mature and responsible. This enables them to make a good start to positive citizenship, which should help influence their future lives.
14. The level of attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. This compares well with attendance figures at the time of the previous inspection. There is virtually no unauthorised absence. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of school life and the good level of attendance and punctuality by the great majority has a positive effect on their learning.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

15. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 68% of observed lessons teaching was good or better. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when less than half of the lessons observed were judged to be good or better. The current picture provides a secure basis for further improvement.
16. The quality of teaching ranges between excellent and unsatisfactory, with particular strengths in the teaching of children under five and strengths in the teaching of basic skills in Key Stage 1. However, the impact of teaching is more variable across other subjects. This is most evident in Key Stage 2. Teaching is sound in Year 3, it is sometimes unsatisfactory in Years 4 and 5, but improves markedly in Year 6, where it is often good. Although teaching is having a positive influence on standards in English and mathematics in both key stages, too little emphasis is given to developing speaking and listening, the use of reading and ensuring pupils sustain their writing, especially in Key Stage 2. Good teamwork helps to ensure greater consistency in the teaching in Key Stage 1. In better lessons, teachers have high expectations and learning is lively. However, the

work is not always matched to what pupils' need to learn next, nor is enough time given to consolidate learning, and pupils' knowledge of what they need to do is sometimes limited. Overall, teachers have satisfactory, and in some cases good subject knowledge in all subjects except information technology and some lack confidence in teaching music. In observed lessons teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. In 5% of lessons teaching was excellent, it was very good in 17%, good in 46%, satisfactory in 23% and unsatisfactory in 9%. Since the previous inspection teaching has further improved for children under five and the management of pupils is now a strength throughout the school. However, the impact of teaching is still constrained by weaknesses in planning and the use of assessment to match work to pupils' level of understanding and need in both key stages.

17. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good and results in a good quality of learning. It ranges from excellent to satisfactory. It was excellent in 18% of lessons, very good in 36%, good in 36% and satisfactory in 9%. Teaching is characterised by high expectations, careful planning and the very effective use of learning resources, together with a very good range of teaching strategies. Excellent teaching was observed in language and literacy and in the physical area of learning. Children are clear about what is expected of them and they are positively encouraged to 'have a go' and do their best. Teaching is very good in the physical area of children's development, in personal and social aspects, and in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. It is good in the creative area of learning with a strength in art. The teaching reflects a very good knowledge of how young children learn, effective organisation and the focused use of day-to-day assessments to promote new learning. The contribution of learning support staff is very positive and good teamwork ensures objectives are clear and progress is carefully monitored.
18. The impact of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. It ranges between very good and unsatisfactory. It was very good in 18% of lessons, good in 65%, satisfactory in 6% and unsatisfactory in 12%. Very good teaching was seen in science and religious education and examples of good teaching were seen in all subjects in which lessons were observed. Examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed in music and information technology. Particular strengths include good lesson planning in English and mathematics, effective management of pupils and their learning, plus good use of learning resources and support staff. Overall, teachers are skilful, but the impact of their teaching is limited by cumbersome planning frameworks and insufficient support through school based schemes of work. As a consequence, not enough time is given to matching and pacing work to pupils' needs. Although teachers often use day-to-day assessments well within lessons, in subjects where there are no formalised arrangements for assessment the quality of learning is sometimes limited.
19. In Key Stage 2, teaching is also satisfactory overall. It ranges between excellent and unsatisfactory. It was excellent in 3% of lessons, very good in 11%, good in 40%, satisfactory in 35% and unsatisfactory in 11%. Examples of very good teaching were observed in English, history, music, and physical education. One lesson in music was excellent. Good teaching was seen in all other subjects observed during the inspection except geography and music. Examples of unsatisfactory teaching were observed in English, mathematics, design and technology and geography. The main strength in teaching is in the management of pupils. Better teaching was most evident in Years 3 and 6. Where teaching is most effective it reflects the same strengths as noted in Key Stage 1. However, although the weaknesses in lesson planning and the use of assessment are similar to those in Key Stage 1, they are more evident, especially mid key stage. In some cases expectations are not high enough, the pace of learning is slow and untidy work is accepted. The use of homework is not yet fully effective across the school, despite a clear policy.
20. Overall, the quality of learning is satisfactory at both key stages. The main difference is in the mostly good level of interest and concentration demonstrated by many pupils in Key Stage 1, and similarly in Year 6. In some lessons, pupils show a good level of independence and can sustain their work well without the direct support of the teacher, when required. However, a weakness in both key stages is pupils' own knowledge of their learning. In some cases, there is too much use of educational terms such as, target and objective which pupils find difficult to relate to. In some

cases such terms become an obstacle to learning. Overall, the main factors which limit the quality and range of learning opportunities concern the lack of guidance in making learning relevant. This results in a pattern of good progress up to the age of five and satisfactory progress overall in both key stages. A situation which doesn't fully reflect the strengths identified in much of the teaching.

21. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with well considered learning programmes. Teachers are well supported in working with these pupils by several learning support assistants. Together they enable most pupils to make good progress in relation to their learning goals as long as they are directly supported. In other lessons, work does not always match their needs and progress is only satisfactory overall. A pupil for whom English is an additional language is making very good progress.

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

22. At the time of the previous inspection the quality of education provided was in need of substantial improvement. Appropriate steps have been taken to provide a satisfactory framework of policies and schemes of work for the curriculum. However, the quality and range of learning opportunities remains unsatisfactory overall.
23. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children under five is good. This is a strength built upon since the previous inspection. The curriculum is appropriately based on the six required areas of learning, a good emphasis is placed on developing skills in literacy and numeracy and children are particularly well supported in the personal and social aspects of learning. Learning is made relevant to children's needs, suitable work is planned to ensure progress is maintained and there is a good overall balance of opportunities. Planning provides an effective framework and takes good account of the early learning goals. Provision for children with special educational needs is good. Learning difficulties are identified at an early stage and appropriate action taken.
24. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education in both key stages. There has been a satisfactory improvement in curricular provision, with policies and schemes of work in place, but the impact of this provision is variable across both key stages. Whilst the curriculum is broad, it does not provide an overall balance, which properly meets the needs of pupils. Although the school carefully allocates an appropriate length of time for each subject, the organisation of work does not always effectively match the needs and interests of pupils. As a result the curriculum does not consistently provide a positive influence on the standards achieved. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies provide the framework for English and mathematics, and nationally recommended schemes have been adopted in science, information technology, design and technology, history and geography. Religious education meets local requirements and there are suitable schemes in art, music and physical education. However, there is a lack of balance in the provision for information technology, which is not used as an integral part of the curriculum. There are also weaknesses in provision for the investigative aspects of mathematics and science and in provision for the structured development of literacy skills across the curriculum. A basic weakness lies with the school's rigid adherence to the schemes of work. As a result, the curriculum does not always address the particular needs and abilities of the pupils. The set objectives in the scheme of work do not always reflect the necessary learning goals to enable pupils to build on their previous learning. This is sometimes because assessment information is not effectively used to guide planning. In too many instances, aspects of the curriculum lack relevance, for the majority of pupils. This reduces the impact of many learning opportunities and is unsatisfactory overall.
25. The school has fully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, there is sometimes a lack of flexibility in tailoring the requirements to meet the needs of all pupils. Furthermore, pupils do not always have worthwhile experiences across the curriculum for them to make effective use of the key skills in literacy and numeracy.
26. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Activities include, country dancing, band,

drama and seasonal sports. Visitors, such as theatre companies and people from the local community, together with educational visits, make a worthwhile and effective contribution to pupils' learning.

27. The school effectively ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to the statutory curriculum and to all other activities provided. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in meeting the particular needs of several children under five and in the quality of support for pupils in both key stages. Individual Education Plans are generally well focused and provide sufficient information to guide teachers and parents in supporting pupils' learning. However, insufficient account is sometimes taken of pupils' targets when planning work for lessons where additional support is not available.
28. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and is taught through effective cross-curricular links. Aspects are frequently identified in teachers' planning, so that provision is regular and continuous. Sex education and the misuse of drugs are carefully dealt with under the health programme. The school highlights healthy living and citizenship. Learning is well supported through the involvement of visitors and activities such as the life skills and citizenship week and visits to the life skills centre. The school has successfully been accepted into a healthy school award scheme.
29. The pupils' personal development in terms of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects is well promoted, and is good overall. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Lessons in religious education promote awareness of spiritual responses and assemblies and acts of collective worship provide suitable opportunities for stillness and reflection. The daily act of worship meets statutory requirements. The emphasis on Christian values is supported by the local vicar and members of various religious communities. Themes are carefully chosen to promote spiritual and moral values, and pupils are given time to reflect and become aware of the difference between right and wrong. There are examples of pupils in lessons developing an ability to appreciate values and understand feelings. This was exemplified in a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 6 who reflected on the ideas and feelings conveyed by the poems of war poets. Younger pupils develop their understanding of beliefs and values through the enactment of a wedding ceremony, for example. However, opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to reflect and wonder are frequently missed.
30. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. This provision is well supported by the good quality behavioural and discipline policy. There is a clear system of rewards and sanctions, which is fully understood and appreciated by all pupils. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. The school actively encourages this process by setting aside time in class groups, when pupils have the opportunity to discuss and resolve problems. The school encourages pupils to value and respect themselves. Pupils are encouraged to respect property and the school environment, which is tidy and litter free. Termly awards for a range of achievements such as effort, behaviour and citizenship contribute effectively to pupils' moral and social development.
31. There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Members of staff provide effective and consistent role models. They set very good examples to pupils in their relationships with each other and with the pupils. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to work together and discuss their activities. Pupils are frequently given opportunities for responsibility. For example, pupils act as receptionists at lunchtime and have to apply for this responsibility. Older pupils have opportunities to help younger pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils become aware of the need to help others through their support of charities. Each year pupils decide for themselves which charity they should support. Further opportunities are provided for their social development in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, and the many and varied visits pupils make including residential visits. This very good provision is reflected in the Citizenship Award presented to the school for its many contributions to the local community.



32. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school has strong links with the community and uses the local area well as a learning resource. The range of well-planned visits linked to their studies encourages pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions. Music and art make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development, while religious education provides a sound basis for the development of pupils' appreciation of the religious dimensions of other cultures. Although aspects of the curriculum, such as geography and art, help pupils to appreciate differences between the lifestyles of other people, there is insufficient planned provision for pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of the diversity of cultures other than their own.
33. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good and is a strength of the school. This is an improvement even upon the favourable standards commented on at the last inspection. The school has very close links with all local churches and the pupils frequently make visits as part of their lessons. For example, learning how a child baptism is conducted and why. The local Church of England vicar regularly takes assembly and other representative denominational visitors are frequently seen in school. Recently the pupils' country dancing team took part in a local 'Lamb Feast' and many pupils performed a sensitive presentation, together with pupils from a nearby special school, in the national JC 2000 competition. At Christmas pupils sing carols for local old peoples' homes and they also arrange food parcels for senior citizens at harvest time.
34. The school makes very good use of local business and industry. Two local firms have provided computers and others have helped with significant sponsorship for a variety of projects. The local community policeman is a frequent visitor to the school and advises pupils, on: 'Stranger Danger'; road safety; transfer to secondary education and drugs and alcohol misuse. The latter being a valuable contribution to pupils' social and personal education. Every year the headteacher invites several charitable organisations into the school to talk to the children. The children then vote on which organisation to support. They are currently collecting for the local air ambulance. The school is very well used by the Plymouth Links to Learning organisation which advises parents on current approaches in teaching literacy and numeracy, for example. Overall, the school's links with the community contribute very positively to the pupils' learning.
35. The school also has very good links with local partner institutions and this is a further strength. The school is active within the Plympton Academic Council which involves twelve schools, including two of secondary, one special and nine primary schools. These schools are currently involved in the Millenium Challenge, to enhance the skills of more able pupils, for example. Various work experience students, via a local training agency, are made welcome in the school, as are the trainee teachers from the local teaching college. The school finds their contribution supports learning well.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

36. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good and a further strength of the school. This compares well with the high standards reported by the last inspection. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and is well trained. She effectively ensures that all staff are made well aware of their responsibilities in this area. They are very well aware of local authority guidelines and procedures, and know the relevant person to contact should the need arise. The headteacher is arranging specialist refresher training for all staff, including lunchtime assistants.
37. The school has a very detailed health and safety policy and an up to date risk assessment. The safety issues raised at the last inspection have been resolved. In co-operation with the fire officer and caretaker the headteacher ensures that all relevant checks and documentation are up to date. Fire drills are held regularly and all relevant equipment is checked within the required time-scale. There are very efficient procedures for recording and reporting accidents to parents and/or the appropriate authorities. There are very well trained first-aiders in the school and a convenient medical room. The school has a very clear policy on the administration of medicines and all staff are well aware of pupils with medical conditions such as allergies. Contacts with outside

professional agencies are positive and the services of those coming into school are used well. Limited access to the building is provided via a wheelchair ramp, but there are no suitable toilets for the use of disabled pupils. Children with English as an additional language are very well supported. Arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs are conscientiously implemented and comply with the requirements of the Code of Practice.

38. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and are a strength maintained. Registers are very carefully marked at the beginning of each session and returned to the school's office for checking. The headteacher maintains an additional register to monitor pupils with a history of irregular attendance. Absences are immediately followed up and information is shared with the Educational Welfare Officer who regularly provides very helpful support. Such procedures are proving very effective. All parents are made well aware of their relevant responsibilities concerning the notification of absence and the taking of holidays during term time.
39. The school has very good procedures, both for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. This is a significant strength, maintained since the previous inspection and demonstrated by the very good behaviour of pupils. Policies are clear and succinct, and provide well balanced rewards and sanctions which are implemented sensibly. All pupils are well aware of both school and classroom rules which they respect. Bullying at the school is very rare, but when it does occur staff take notice and quickly take positive steps to eliminate it. Where the need arises parents are suitably involved. The consequences of behaviour and personal actions upon others are well covered in lessons in personal, social and health education and during assembly and 'circle times'. The adults in the school set a very good example for pupils to follow and the pupils' very good behaviour is acknowledged by the local secondary school. Overall, the school's procedures are very well reflected in the pupils' responses and positively contribute to an effective climate for learning.
40. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic performance and development are satisfactory. The results of baseline assessments, completed when the children enter the reception class, are used well to plan work at that stage, but this information is not used to track the achievements of pupils as they move through the school. In both key stages, teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly and carefully in English, mathematics and science and record pupils' level of attainment. There are no agreed whole school procedures in other subjects. Information is gathered through the statutory end of key stage National Curriculum tests and through the use of non-statutory tests and assessments as pupils move through the school. The information collected is analysed to find where strengths and weaknesses lie, and identify the implications for teaching and setting curricular targets. For example, weakness in some aspects of reading and writing have been identified. Currently assessment in English and mathematics identifies a pupils' stage of development, and helps to inform the setting of individual targets, but it does not consistently ensure that future work is matched to their capabilities. Overall, the use of assessment is unsatisfactory. It is not used sufficiently to inform curricular planning or to ensure that teaching and learning consistently addresses the needs of all pupils. Despite teachers' best efforts, target setting for pupils, while providing useful direction, is not yet having the necessary impact on pupils' attainment. Frequently, pupils neglect previous targets when once achieved. Teachers are often unsure of the precise level at which pupils should be working and the necessity for short-term goals. Areas of weakness that limits pupils' progress are not sufficiently identified.
41. Group assessment record sheets for writing, reading and numeracy are now being implemented. However, their potential as a useful contribution to planning has not yet been fully realised. They provide opportunities for evaluative comments, but the quality and usefulness of these in determining the next stage of pupils' learning is a weakness. Overall results are recorded in files of assessed work. Individual records show the targets achieved and indicate the next target in pupils' learning. While this provides a useful picture of what pupils have achieved, teachers do not link it sufficiently to day-to-day planning and assessment to ensure that areas of weakness are systematically and consistently addressed. The marking of pupils' work is conscientious and often provides helpful guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. However, in some instances comments are not followed through and pupils are not benefiting from suitable guidance.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

42. The school warmly welcomes parents, provides a range of good quality information and works hard to further strengthen its partnerships with parents. However, despite the school's best efforts, the effectiveness of its links with parents are satisfactory overall, because a significant minority do not sufficiently support their children's learning. In general, the strength of partnerships is similar to those found by the previous inspection but the quality of information provided is now a strength.
43. The majority of parents consider that the school is good for their children. At the pre-inspection meeting and from the questionnaires returned, most parents state that their children like the school and they consider the teaching to be good and that their children are making good progress. Parents particularly appreciate the good behaviour in the school. They consider that the school expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best whilst, at the same time, becoming more mature and responsible young people. Most parents also believe that they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on and would not feel uncomfortable about approaching the school with a question or a problem. A significant minority, however, do not consider that their children are getting enough homework, or that the school works closely enough with parents. Furthermore, quite a few parents consider that an insufficient range of activities is provided outside of lessons. Some say that they have reservations in approaching the school and do not feel the school is well led and managed. Whilst inspectors acknowledge the concerns expressed by a minority of parents, they find no significant evidence to substantiate these latter views.
44. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with parents are satisfactory. The information that the parents receive is good and can be considered a strength of the school. All parents receive an updated copy of the school prospectus, an annual governors' report and a yearly pupils' academic report. These documents comply with statutory requirements. There are regular newsletters and three meetings a year for parents and carers to consult with teachers and discuss their child's work. Whilst these meetings are appreciated by parents they have little opportunity to see the full range of their children's work. The school has discussed home/school agreements with parents and the vast majority of these agreements have now been completed. All new parents receive a sensitive induction into school for them and their child, and receive a copy of the school's behaviour policy. Educational evenings and classes have been arranged for parents on a range of topics. For example, how to help your child with reading, mathematics and other homework. Recently the Life Education Caravan has been available to parents in school for them to learn about drugs awareness. In general, the school has an 'open door' policy to parents and teachers are approachable. Those parents with children having special educational needs are well informed through receiving a regular, updated termly review of their child's progress. The majority are fully involved with their child's individual education plan.
45. The overall contribution of parents to children's learning is satisfactory. Within school it is good and a strength. The school warmly welcomes parents and their help. A group of parents help with listening to readers and on educational visits. On four mornings each week parents also run the school 'tuckshop', the proceeds from which go towards helping meet the cost of visits. The school has a very energetic Parent Teachers Association which raises considerable funds to enhance the pupils' education, in particular, setting up the new computer suite. However, a significant minority of parents, are insufficiently involved in supporting their children's learning, despite encouragement to contribute through a home/school reading partnership, for example.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

46. The overall quality of leadership provided for the work of the school is satisfactory. The impact of leadership is strongest in pastoral aspects. The school has successfully maintained its many strengths in these aspects which are clearly evident in the very positive climate for learning throughout the school. However, at the time of the last inspection the standards achieved required some improvement and the quality of education required substantial improvement. Improvement in these aspects is less secure because, although many good systems have been put in place, insufficient attention has been given to how to manage and support sustained improvement.
47. The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and successfully provides clear leadership and direction for all staff in setting high expectations for pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Equality of opportunity, positive values and harmonious relationships are effectively nurtured and this has a very beneficial effect on the quality of learning throughout the school. The headteacher expresses her aspirations for the school in terms of raising standards and developing strategies to positively enhance pupils' self-esteem. These aspirations are strongly reflected in the school's aims. However, the process of determining areas for improvement does not result in a sufficiently clear, prioritised and focused set of goals. The inclusive approach to school development planning adopted is commendable, but it is not based on sufficiently rigorous evaluation of progress towards previous goals. Although the broad areas identified in the school development plan are right for the school, the means of their achievement is less secure. Whilst staff are aware of the broad priorities, they are not always clear about what needs to be done, how it is to be achieved and what they need to do. The school management team is beginning to play a key role in trying to draw together the many strands within the development plan. However, it is not yet fully effective in focusing the corporate energies of the staff and securing significant, sustained improvements across the school. Although co-ordinators develop suitable action plans for their subjects and most have a positive influence at an informal level, the school's leadership has yet to fully capitalise on the staff's strong commitment to improving the quality of learning and raising standards. At present the absence of a strong, corporate sense of purpose and the absence of sufficiently focused strategic leadership, which sets a clear educational direction by defining specific, measurable, achievable and realistic targets, limits the school's capacity to improve where some long standing weaknesses remain. However, the leadership is developing plans to build on a literacy intervention initiative, in the autumn term, in order to focus the school's efforts in further improving the quality of learning.
48. The school considers everyone in its policies and its managerial systems are appropriate. All staff have suitable job descriptions and benefit from informal professional review discussions with the headteacher. Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers have lapsed. This is in breach of statutory requirements. However, arrangements are being put in place to meet the latest requirements. The governing body has agreed performance targets with the headteacher and deputy headteacher but, although areas for development have been discussed with teachers, these are at a very early stage. The arrangements to support a newly qualified teacher are satisfactory. Although all teachers have appropriate co-ordination roles, there is an imbalance in the delegation of roles and responsibilities among the school management team. For example, the deputy headteacher is responsible for English, assessment, the curriculum, monitoring teachers' planning, mentoring a newly qualified teacher and co-ordination of Key Stage 2. The fact that five of these responsibilities are key areas for whole-school development makes it all the more important to establish a manageable programme of action. In general, the lack of a whole-school focus, supported by a corporate action plan results in a diminution of efforts and the impact of teachers' good efforts is often too thinly spread. Despite these shortcomings, the headteacher is particularly diligent in resourcing the work of teachers through appropriate financial allocations, ensuring initiatives are discussed by the staff and by providing class release time.
49. As a result of the sound leadership provided by the Chair of Governors and headteacher, the governing body is successful in meeting its statutory obligations, with only one significant omission. However, plans to implement a programme of performance review for all teachers are in hand. Governors show a strong interest and are very supportive of the school. Following a period of unease about the school's performance among parents and a lack of clarity about the role of governors, the governing body has set in place well considered systems to manage its business. It

has improved the quality of information for parents, instituted helpful 'drop in' sessions for parents and benefited from suitable training which has helped to focus their contribution. Governors contribute a helpful range of expertise, they are constructively involved through committees and their individual links with subjects and their co-ordinators. These links enable them to keep abreast of particular issues and governors are kept well informed by the headteacher through helpful termly reports. Arrangements to review the school development plan, consider budgetary options and monitor income and expenditure are good, but mechanisms to assess the impact of spending decisions are under-developed.

50. The headteacher makes an important contribution in evaluating the schools' performance in national tests. She is also well supported by subject leaders in the analysis of the information provided by school based tests. All teachers are made aware of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, but they are not always sufficiently supported in making the hoped for improvements. Although the school has recently instituted a suitable programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching, and the quality of learning in the core subjects, these observations lack sufficient rigour and focus. Records of staff discussions, including the dissemination of training, demonstrate that suitable strategies are shared but the leadership has no formal means of establishing the quality and consistency of what is happening in classrooms. There is some monitoring of teachers' planning, but the weekly review by teachers focuses on how lessons went rather than on pupils' achievements. At present there is no effective monitoring of pupils' work across the school. As a consequence of these omissions, the school's leadership is unable to effectively focus the work of improvement and ensure that generally agreed practices are consistently implemented. Despite these weaknesses, many good systems for planning and assessment have been implemented. However, their very complexity leads to a preoccupation with planning at the expense of considering what pupils actually know and need to learn next. This is well illustrated by the proliferation of targets around the school, many of which have little direct influence on pupils' learning. Furthermore, there is undue emphasis on using such words as focus, plenary and objective with pupils, which actually add little to the learning. The too rigid adoption of nationally recommended schemes of work, instead of systematically building on existing resources, sometimes distracts teachers from considering the quality and relevance of learning experiences.
51. Teaching and support staff are particularly well supported by senior staff in contributing to the school's work. The headteacher effectively ensures all staff feel part of the team. For example, lunchtime and support staff are fully involved in implementing the school's behaviour policy and following changes to lunchtime arrangements the supervisors are effectively deployed in listening to reading. Learning support staff are well trained and careful consideration is given to their role. Good teamwork is evident in classrooms and the input of support staff is well managed. Appropriate arrangements are made for teachers' professional development although dissemination of best practice is largely informal. There are sufficient well qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. They have particular strengths in the teaching of skills but are sometimes less effective in making learning experiences relevant to pupils' needs. Individuals contribute particular subject strengths, such as in art and music, but the majority still lack sufficient knowledge and confidence in teaching information technology and music. Day-to-day administration is efficient and unobtrusive. The office staff provide very good support for the school, and the caretaker, cleaner and kitchen staff all play their part well. The school and grounds are clean and well maintained. The quality of the accommodation is good for the number of pupils on roll and the learning environment is considerably enhanced by good quality displays of a wide range of pupils' work. The quality and range of learning resources is generally good. However, despite the provision of the computer suite, there is insufficient software to teach information technology effectively.
52. The headteacher provides a good lead in managing the school's resources. Staff are efficiently deployed and careful consideration is given to the organisation of the school day. The teaching time available is appropriate, but the use of lesson time is not always efficient. The strong emphasis on discreet subject teaching is not always appropriate. For example, some lessons in mathematical problem solving and information technology lack relevance and not enough time is

given to developing the key skills, such as reading. These factors reduce overall efficiency. The quality of financial planning and administration is good with appropriate checks and balances in place. Appropriate use is made of new technologies, but this is a developing area. The few recommendations of the most recent auditor's report have been implemented. The headteacher plans expenditure meticulously and all specific grants, including the resources made available to support special educational needs are well targeted. The school provides satisfactory value for money and its administrative procedures provide for careful consideration of best value in purchasing and the placing of contracts for services.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

53. In order to further improve the quality of education, the school and the governing body, with the support of the local education authority and appropriate agencies should :

- raise standards in information technology and improve pupils' level of competence in using the key skills in both key stages, and raise standards in English, particularly in Key Stage 2, by building on best practice in the teaching of basic skills, and :
  - further improve the quality, range and relevance of learning opportunities in both key stages and ensure teachers' planning :
    - is effectively supported by and closely linked to improved termly planning;
    - is informed by appropriate assessments;
    - specifies clearly what is to be learned;
    - identifies suitable opportunities across subjects for pupils to sustain and improve their use of the key skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology;
    - identifies opportunities for pupils to use mathematical and scientific knowledge in order to solve problems and explain their methods;
    - indicates how teaching is to be organised and learning assessed;
    - provides details of how work is to be matched to pupils' differing learning needs;
    - establishes the purpose of learning in order to improve pupils' knowledge of their work.

[paragraphs : 5, 18, 20, 24, 40 – 41, 62 – 77, 115 – 120.]

- further improve whole-school curricular planning and the use of assessment by :
  - matching curricular provision to the needs of the school;
  - further reviewing the use and organisation of lesson time;
  - extending the range of learning opportunities across the curriculum;
  - securely linking assessment procedures to the planning process;
  - simplifying planning frameworks to enable teachers to focus on the quality of learning;
  - ensuring pupils' contribute to the assessment of their work and that targets for improvement are relevant, meaningful and achievable.

[paragraphs : 24 – 25, 40 – 41, 50.]

- implement more effective arrangements to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning by :
  - building on the key areas already identified in the school development plan in order to prioritise and focus the work of staff;
  - providing appropriate professional training where there is a need;
  - establishing precise, manageable and realistic targets linked to specific and measurable goals;
  - rigorously linking arrangements for monitoring and evaluation to the school's goals and using the outcomes of monitoring to promote further improvement.

[paragraphs : 46 – 48, 50.]

- other less important shortcomings which should be considered for inclusion in the action plan to ensure statutory requirements are met:
- implement a systematic programme of professional appraisal and review in the light of current guidance.

[paragraphs : 48 – 49.]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5%	17%	46%	23%	9%	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	164
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	41

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	58

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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



***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	10	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	11	12
	Girls	7	8	6
	Total	16	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (68)	83 (74)	78 (74)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	11
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	16	18	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (71)	78 (84)	83 (94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	10
	Girls	9	6	11
	Total	16	16	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (53)	64 (50)	84 (41)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	10
	Girls	9	6	10
	Total	16	15	20

Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (53)	60 (57)	80 (69)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	164
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### *Teachers and classes*

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	23

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

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

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

### *Financial information*

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	323,669
Total expenditure	333,804
Expenditure per pupil	1,886
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,069
Balance carried forward to next year	26,934

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	164
Number of questionnaires returned	40

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	45	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	45	43	8	5	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	55	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	38	23	5	0
The teaching is good.	40	55	5	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	45	8	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	25	5	8	8
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	50	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	33	20	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	35	38	15	5	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	52	8	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	48	10	13	5

### **Other issues raised by parents**

- Several parents are unhappy about the demands made on their children and feel there is too much emphasis on literacy and numeracy at the expense of other subjects.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

54. Children under five are taught in the reception class. Three children were under the age of five at the time of the inspection. There is a range of attainment on entry with some children of average standard or above, but the majority are below average, especially in the areas of language and literacy, and in some elements of personal and social development. All children make good progress in the reception class so that most achieve or exceed the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. The 'good' standards found in the previous inspection have been maintained and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. The education of children under five is a strength of the school.
55. The quality of teaching in **personal and social development** is very good and children are well prepared for entry to Key Stage 1. The very good induction procedures allow them to settle into reception class quickly, and they are very happy and keen to learn. Class routines are well established and children are made to feel secure and cared for. All adults make very good role models, creating a calm and purposeful atmosphere. All these factors encourage children to gain in confidence and they learn to make positive relationships with adults and other children. They show increasing independence in organising themselves and their activities with only minimal adult assistance. When adults are speaking, they sit quietly and the children show unusual maturity in their reliably good behaviour. Children are then able to work independently or co-operatively, taking turns and sharing fairly. They develop an appropriate understanding of what is right and what is wrong, and learn to treat property with commendable care.
56. The quality of teaching in **language and literacy** is very good and the excellent teaching of phonics gives children good strategies for early reading. However, the reception class reading schemes do not contain enough phonic based books to support and extend these taught skills. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of skills in speaking and listening, with many having poor articulation and a restricted vocabulary. All adults take every opportunity for promoting the children's language skills by engaging them in conversation and improving their speech. Opportunities are provided for role play, at present in the class "Hospital" where dressing-up clothes and medical artefacts extend and develop imaginative talk during play. A wide selection of glove and finger puppets encourage children who are shy to speak through an intermediary. Staff work hard to develop early reading and writing skills. Adults share books effectively with children and appropriate teaching of the literacy hour promotes their learning. There is an attractive reading area where children can browse through suitable story or information books and they are encouraged to take books home to share with their families. Many children recognise letter shapes and their associated sounds. Some are able to read simple books and most join in class reading confidently. Opportunities are provided for early writing and children make marks with increasing independence and develop skills of tracing, copying and then writing at their own level. They are learning that writing is a means of communicating and are becoming aware of the conventions of capital letters and punctuation. Most children can write sentences with adult guidance or support from good resources.
57. The quality of teaching in **mathematics** is very good and children make good progress in number work. They count in ones and two's to 20 and can create number bonds to 10 using appropriate counting apparatus. They reach good understanding through the use of number games and mathematical activities. There are sufficient resources for other mathematical areas such as shape, measurement, capacity, weight, money and time. The good teaching and appropriate resources enable most children, by the age of five, to reach the required standard for work in the National Curriculum.
58. The quality of teaching is very good in the area of learning associated with **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Children play with appropriate materials and toys in different play situations and effectively develop their knowledge of different roles in society. They explore the

school, its grounds and further afield and enthusiastically re-create their environment with miniature world play equipment. They play with tracks, playmats and toy vehicles indoors and outside, practising the early geographical skills of mapping and tracking. They learn early history through learning about families and their own growth since babyhood. Scientific learning includes growing and observing plants in the classroom and visiting the butterfly garden outside. Children develop good technological skills through construction games, cutting, sticking and fastening. They have regular access to the school's up-to-date computer suite and are confident in using the mouse to create images on screen. At present the classroom lacks a computer to transfer these skills to everyday work and practise them on a daily basis. Reception children benefit from a wide range of visits and visitors arranged especially for them or as part of the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

59. The quality of teaching in the **creative area of learning** is good. In art it is very good. From a low base children's drawings show increasing skill. During the inspection they reached good standards in pencil drawings of faces and transferred this experience to using an appropriate program to creating portraits on computer screens. They improved their level of detail by using the computer's magnifying glass, and with good adult guidance in observing and recording all facial features. The good variety of art work is used to create attractive displays which add to the learning environment and illustrate art techniques such as drawing, painting, printing, textural rubbing, stained glass, roller printing, modelling and collage. Children sing with enthusiasm and have access to a very good range of percussion instruments to shake, rattle and bang. During the inspection they reached good standards in completing a successful composition using their bodies for rhythmic sounds.
60. The quality of teaching in **physical development** is very good. Children's fine motor skills are developed skilfully through the use of small tools and activities such as manipulating playdough, cutting, sticking, drawing and painting. The excellent teaching of the large motor skills of running, jumping, climbing and balancing enables children to achieve well. They benefit from regular access to the school hall and its physical education equipment. Children develop an appropriate awareness of space and their own bodies. In a highly successful hall lesson they attained very good standards in performing a sequence of movements using a bench. They can balance and manage their own body weight very well for their age. By the age of five the majority attain all the desirable learning outcomes. However, there is no dedicated outside play area and no climbing equipment outside to allow daily access for physical development and this is unsatisfactory.
61. The planned curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the children's needs. All staff work very well as a team under the very effective leadership of the class teacher who also has responsibility for Key Stage 1. There is an appropriate policy for the foundation stage. Resources are good except for the element of outdoor physical development. Schemes of work and assessment are used very effectively to evaluate what children know and to plan the next steps in learning. At the time of inspection most children were working happily in the early stages of the National Curriculum and the transition from the foundation stage is being managed well. Children with special educational needs are well provided for and they make good progress. High quality written reports give parents helpful information about what their children are learning and what they need to do to improve.

## ENGLISH

62. Overall, observed standards are close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1, but standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. This marks a decline in standards in Key Stage 2, since the previous inspection when overall standards, were judged to be in line with the national average in both key stages. However, at that time in Key Stage 2, some pupils attained standards that were above average, but some more able pupils were underachieving.
63. The results of the 1999 National curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average and that writing was close to the national average. In comparison with the results of similar schools, pupils' performance in reading and

writing was above the national average. Trends over the last four years show an improvement in pupils' attainment. In 1999, the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 2 was below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was average. There has been a trend for improvement in attainment over the last four years, although standards are still below what they were at the time of the previous inspection.

64. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is similar to the national average. They make satisfactory progress in relation to their earlier learning. Most pupils improve their ability to listen to their teachers, and pay close attention to what teachers are saying. They follow instructions carefully and show mutual respect for each other, listening carefully to each other's responses. Their attainment in speaking is variable. The pupils capably use the new vocabulary they acquire through their learning. They articulate their knowledge and understanding well, as was exemplified in a lesson where pupils discussed items for a content page. Pupils volunteered suggestions based on the new vocabulary they are learning, using terms such as "endangered species" and further explaining the meaning of this term. However, they demonstrate their lack of appropriate vocabulary when attempting to communicate their thoughts and feelings.
65. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the national average. Most pupils have the confidence to put forward their point of view in discussion and debate, but there are many that speak quietly and with hesitation. This was exemplified in an organised debate on the evacuation of children during the war years. Pupils asked pertinent and considered questions, but many lack a wide vocabulary to help them articulate their responses. Their knowledge and use of the spoken word is very limited. They have learned the conventions of discussion and conversation, listening while others speak and waiting their turn to contribute. They listen with careful concentration to other pupils and teachers, particularly if they are interested and stimulated by what they hear. Pupils benefit from opportunities for speaking and listening during the literacy hour, and teachers take every opportunity during this time to widen pupils' vocabulary and extend their understanding of the use of language.
66. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. Pupils show that they are acquiring a range of reading skills, and make satisfactory progress in relation to their earlier learning. They read with accuracy and respond with interest to what they have read, but show less ability to talk with confidence about the story and characters. Higher attaining pupils clearly understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, and can locate the information they require. As they progress through the key stage, pupils are acquiring a sound range of strategies, such as using sounds at the beginning of words, and sounds to build the whole word. They successfully use the sense of the surrounding text they are reading to help them read unfamiliar words. Pupils' reading skills are satisfactorily developed during the literacy hour. Effective use is made of the shared and guided reading time to enable pupils to gain a greater understanding of what they read. The systems for home reading are satisfactory.
67. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading is below the national average. Pupils show an enjoyment of the books they read, and respond to the humour and subject matter with interest. They find it more difficult to express opinions about plot and character. Higher attaining pupils are able to explain the reasons for their views on what they read by referring to the appropriate part of the book, but overall the level of the text read by pupils is below what would be expected for the age group. Pupils' knowledge of a range of authors is limited and most show a narrow choice in their reading. Their knowledge and understanding of a range of literature is below expectations, but when given the chance, as in a Year 6 lesson on examining poetry, pupils show that they have an appreciation of writers' style and the content of poems. Work done in the literacy hour in Year 6 is having a positive impact in this respect, but older pupils have not had sufficient input over time, and so their knowledge of literature is not as good as it could be. Pupils know how to use books for information, and their research skills are sound. There is less progress in the use of library skills. Overall pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. There are instances of insufficient monitoring and guidance of pupils' choice of books to ensure that books are well matched to pupils' ability and that pupils are extending their skills and understanding.

68. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average, and their progress is satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils spell a range of familiar words accurately, although their choice of vocabulary is secure rather than adventurous. Pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops to punctuate their work correctly and many use interesting sentence connectives. Their independent writing shows fluency of style and content, and work is carefully and neatly presented. Pupils form their letters correctly and neatly, and the higher attaining pupils are starting to use a joined up script.
69. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 is below the national average, and their progress is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the requirements for grammar and punctuation. They are aware that writing is used for a range of purposes and for the need to re-draft their work. Pupils are provided with opportunities within the literacy hour to write for a range of purposes, but the outcome is frequently brief and unrewarding. Throughout the key stage, most pupils do not apply accurate spelling and punctuation to their writing and this is a major weakness. Many pupils are insecure in their knowledge of familiar spelling patterns and only a minority of pupils use more complex words. Work during the literacy hour is having an effect on pupils' ability to select more powerful language, but they have little chance to refine their skills. Handwriting is unsatisfactory, and the teachers' expectations for presentation and the careful outcomes of pupils' work are not consistent. Too much time is frequently spent by pupils copying out the purpose of their task rather than meeting teachers requirements for their work. Areas of weakness are not regularly revisited to remind pupils of previous learning and the need to use what they learn when performing their tasks.
70. There is little evidence of consistent and worthwhile opportunities for all pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum, or to write at length either creatively or informatively. In Key Stage 1, opportunities are missed for pupils to further develop their writing in other areas of the curriculum. The quality of pupils' recorded work in other subjects in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory, with little pride shown in presentation and achievement.
71. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. Their progress frequently benefits from the good support given by learning support assistants, and is better when tasks provided are suited to their needs.
72. The teaching of English has strengths and weaknesses, but is satisfactory overall. Good and very good teaching was seen, as well as unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 1, teachers use the time for the literacy hour profitably. They have high expectations and set appropriate challenges for pupils. Effective strategies are used to engage pupils' interest. This all ensures that there are good learning opportunities so that pupils progressively build their skills and are motivated to give of their best. In Key Stage 2, in the good and very good lessons seen, teachers have good knowledge of the subject which impacts well on pupils' learning. Effective questioning is used to enhance and extend pupils' thinking and the brisk pace ensures pupil's interest. Teaching is less successful when unsatisfactory use is made of on-going assessment, resulting in group tasks that are not made clear to pupils or carefully matched to their needs and capabilities. Pace is slowed by the excessive time provided for pupils to listen rather than practise skills. This means that very little is achieved in the way of new learning. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that expectations for the outcomes of pupils' learning are inconsistent. Pupils entering the key stage make a positive start to the next stage of their learning, and there is high expectation at the end of the key stage where the teacher works hard to improve standards. The main weakness, across the school, is some teachers' lack of confidence in adapting all the elements of the literacy strategy to meet the needs of the pupils. There is often insufficient emphasis placed on the recalling, revision and application of previous learning so that skills can be carefully practised and used. What pupils are to learn, and what is expected of them, is not always made clear to them as they begin their work. In both key stages, learning support assistants provide knowledgeable and useful help.
73. The pupils' positive attitudes contribute to their quality of learning in the better lessons seen. Their responses are particularly good when teachers use interesting strategies and move the lessons along at a brisk pace. Most pupils work hard during the literacy hour and can work independently during



group tasks, which contributes positively to their personal development. They co-operate with teachers and each other and support each other well. When time is not used effectively to motivate pupils and pupils are not clear what is expected of them, they lose interest and show a lack of urgency in completing their tasks.

74. The marking of work acknowledges pupils' efforts and there are some good examples of evaluative comments made, and guidance for improving work. However, the quality of work by some pupils shows that comments are not consistently followed through. Guidelines for literacy are displayed around the classrooms. Although these provide reminders to pupils, there is limited emphasis on celebrating pupils' achievements in writing.
75. The school has carefully established the National Literacy Strategy and conscientiously follows its guidelines. It provides the tool for the teaching of English, and planning for literacy identifies clear learning objectives. However, the school has not yet fully developed the means to ensure that the planning of the English curriculum meets the needs of all its pupils. The school devotes just under 30% of its teaching time to English, but has not yet found appropriate ways to give pupils enough work in writing at length, either in English lessons and across other subjects. This is a particular weakness. The use of information technology for drafting and re-drafting pupils work is rare. There are plans to make literacy more inter-active, but as yet there are no systematic ways to ensure the constant application of the skills learned in writing, or provision for the structured development of reading and speaking and listening.
76. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. The school has carefully analysed the results of tests to identify areas of weakness in reading, and subsequently developed plans to improve this, although the potential has not yet been fully realised. Staff keep satisfactory records of group reading, but the records of what individual pupils have read and the analysis of what books they need to read is inconsistent through the school in furthering pupils' reading development. A similar picture emerges with writing records. The results of assessments are used to set targets for pupils, but these are wide and comments written in their books show that once a target has been achieved pupils frequently forget it. Despite teachers' best efforts, target setting is not providing the necessary short-term goals to overcome weaknesses in pupils' day-to-day learning. Rigorous on-going assessment is not used sufficiently to influence planning and consistently meet the needs of all pupils.
77. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and her commitment to raising standards and the future development of English is a strength of the subject. She has had opportunities for monitoring the subject, but monitoring has not yet focused on specific aspects to determine strengths and weaknesses. Money has been well spent on resources for literacy and these are good. The lack of a library impedes the development of pupils' reading skills, but there are plans to remedy this. Literacy is well supported by visitors to the school and events such as 'book week'.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. Overall, observed standards of attainment are close to the national average at the end of both key stages. Most pupils gain an appropriate knowledge of number, shape, space and measures. However, standards are unsatisfactory in investigative work. This is because pupils have only very limited opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills through problem solving and do not regularly present mathematical information in a variety of ways. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages but standards were variable, particularly in Key Stage 2. The general picture is similar today, but following a sharp decline in National Curriculum test results, after the inspection, there is a steady trend of improved results in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 results continued to decline until 1998.
79. The 1999, end of Key Stage 1, National Curriculum test results indicate that standards were well below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The end of Key Stage 2 test

results for the same year indicate standards were below the national average but in line with those for similar schools. These results represent an improvement on the previous year in both key stages. The school has set a target of 54% of pupils to achieve level 4 this year and expects to improve on its goal.

80. Pupils in Year 1 count up to 20 objects accurately and order numbers within 20. They identify missing numbers on a number line and order digits appropriately. Some are beginning to recognise number patterns and more able pupils are beginning to understand the place value of 'ten' and that other numbers are 'units'. These pupils can recognise higher numbers on a 'hundred square' and are beginning to predict the number before and after. The majority are keen to participate in counting games, they count in 2s, for example, and most can add and subtract numbers within ten. They are gaining confidence in using number bonds and patterns to find solutions. In practical activities, pupils can make repeating patterns using objects such as coloured cubes, they sort and classify objects by given criteria, use appropriate language to describe 2D and 3D shapes, make simple measurements and can order events in time. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a good knowledge of addition and subtraction facts to 10 and make increasing use of mental strategies to find answers. Many confidently check their answers using counting aids such as digits, number rods and number lines or squares. Most have a secure knowledge of place value to 100, can order numbers within 100 and recognise number sequences and patterns with the aid of a number square. Pupils are becoming increasingly adept at doubling, halving, counting in 2's, 5's and 10's in ascending and descending order and predicting the next number in the sequence. Many show increasing confidence in explaining their method for adding or subtracting 9 from a two digit number, by calculating ten more or less, and adjusting the answer by 1. Pupils have a good understanding of number patterns and use appropriate mathematical language. They have a satisfactory knowledge of 2D and 3D shapes, they can name common shapes and describe properties such as the number of sides, angles and corners. They use measurement appropriately and are beginning to collect information and record their findings in tables and graphs.
81. Pupils in Year 3 further develop their mental skills and confidently count forwards and backwards in different intervals. Most have secure knowledge of the 3 and 4 times tables and can rapidly recall known facts and patterns. The more able pupils explore sequences systematically and develop a good understanding of commutative relationships when finding methods for addition and subtraction, using two and three digit numbers. Pupils in Year 4 count on and back in equal steps and a few pupils are beginning to grasp the pattern of negative numbers. Most pupils can count mentally in 6's and 8's. They systematically use 'dot' paper to group numbers when investigating the relationship between multiplication and division. Lower attaining pupils successfully investigate groupings of units using number rods. In Year 5, pupils develop their knowledge of decimal notation appropriately and most can round up from two decimal places and explain why. By the end of the key stage, pupils can solve appropriate written computations using the four operations. Many work accurately with numbers greater than 1000, they develop a suitable knowledge of fractions and some show a reasonable level of competence in simplifying fractions. Pupils are beginning to understand the relationship between fractions and percentages, but only a minority are confident in calculating percentages. Most have a satisfactory understanding of decimal notation. During the key stage, pupils gain a suitable knowledge of measurement, older pupils can calculate perimeter and area, they have an appropriate knowledge of angles and lines of symmetry and can describe the properties of a range of shapes. They collect information and learn to draw a variety of graphs, but some find difficulty in interpreting graphical information. Although pupils cover the full range of mathematical topics, the strong emphasis on number work does not provide sufficient scope for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge to solve real life problems. The work in pupils' books reflects satisfactory achievements for most, but it is noticeable that, when set an investigation many pupils lack confidence in using factors and well known number patterns and relationships to reach a solution. Many prefer to count on, even when working with one or two digit numbers.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and generally enables pupils to acquire knowledge and new skills well. It ranges from good to unsatisfactory. The teaching of basic number skills is a strength in Key Stage 1. Here, good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mental skills and pupils are keen to participate in finding answers. Mathematical games are presented with a sense

of fun which helpfully promotes learning. In better lessons, expectations are high, the purpose of the learning is clear and group tasks are well organised and supported. Direct teaching is clear and the teacher is purposefully engaged throughout the lesson, often focusing on one or two groups, but taking suitable opportunities to draw learning together and reinforce pupils' understanding. Well structured lessons enable pupils to sustain interest and concentration well. However, the impact of good teaching on pupils' progress is sometimes constrained because the guidance being followed is not always appropriately adapted to class needs. This results in too little time being spent consolidating learning and opportunities to provide suitable extension tasks for the more able pupils are sometimes missed. The majority do their best to follow instructions and to use their knowledge and skills, but quite frequently pupils are uncertain of how to develop their work. This results from not enough practice and in some cases not revising topics sufficiently. Teaching is least effective where activities such as problem solving are presented in a separate lesson without a meaningful context. In Key Stage 2, the impact of teaching is variable. Where expectations are clear most pupils make a positive effort and try their very best. For example, older pupils enthusiastically use digit cards and other aids to answer 'quick fire' questions. The strengths in teaching are similar to those found in Key Stage 1. These are most evident in Year 3 and Year 6 but activities suggested in the scheme of work are not always matched to the needs of the pupils. For example, in Year 4, direct instruction was clearly presented but not all the tasks were appropriately challenging. In several lessons not enough time was given to work through a process and consolidate new learning, before moving on to the next topic. In addition opportunities are often missed to challenge pupils to solve mathematical problems, explain their methods and learn from each other.

83. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The framework provided by the National Numeracy Strategy is being implemented appropriately, but the work undertaken is not fully effective because the teaching and learning is not always made relevant to pupils' learning needs. Too little time is given to allow pupils to consolidate their learning, to re-visit topics and to extend their knowledge through problem solving. The links between formal assessments, day-to-day assessments and planning are not well developed. Whilst the procedures for making formal assessments, and for identifying individual and class targets for improvement are satisfactory, the use of the information gained to promote pupils' progress is unsatisfactory overall.
84. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and provides helpful advice and guidance to colleagues. There is a suitable action plan for the subject but there are few opportunities to monitor quality and standards across the school. Whilst it is helpful for teachers to share evaluations of units of work, there are no agreed arrangements to match the outcomes in pupils' work to the planning. Whilst the school is aware of the need to consistently develop pupils' mental skills and provide more opportunities for problem solving, it has no effective means of evaluating the impact of arrangements for teaching mental skills or the impact of lessons in problem solving. An appropriate amount of lesson time is allocated to the subject, but links with other subjects are not always exploited. There are sufficient learning resources of appropriate quality to meet the needs of the curriculum.

## SCIENCE

85. Standards of attainment in science are in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This is similar to the standards found by the last inspection.
86. At Key Stage 1, teachers' assessments indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining level 2 was average whereas the number attaining level 3 was below average. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were close to the national average, with 84% of pupils attaining level 4 and above. Almost a quarter attained the higher level 5. This represents an improvement from the previous year and the school indicates that it expects the improvement to be maintained this year.
87. In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady gains in their learning. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have a good

knowledge about the differences between living and non-living things and have a sound understanding of the variety of creatures that are found in specific habitats, such as the butterfly garden. They are developing suitable environmental awareness; this is also apparent with pupils in key stage two. Pupils in Year 1 know the conditions that are required to keep plants and animals alive and pupils in Year 2 can describe the stages in the life cycle of frogs and butterflies. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 have a satisfactory understanding about materials and the specific properties that make them useful in different circumstances. They know that materials can be changed by heating and cooling. They observe carefully what happens to jelly as it cools and ice as it melts, and they show suitable awareness that some changes cannot be reversed. All pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the needs of human beings, including a healthy diet.

88. At the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory understanding that things are moved by forces of pushing and pulling, and know how to make a simple circuit to light a bulb. However, although pupils are beginning to use a more specific vocabulary for describing their work, their planning and recording of experimental work still needs a great deal of attention to ensure that pupils draw conclusions and understand its relevance to their everyday lives. Pupils record their observations using work sheets, but in lessons it was evident that some pupils do not use their literacy skills sufficiently well and their writing within science is very limited.
89. Pupil's achievements in lessons are satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Most pupils are capable of using a more scientific vocabulary in discussions and this represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 3 make systematic observations and measurements, and record them using a simple framework that enhances their understanding of cause and effect. They have undertaken a suitable range of investigative work on soil and rocks such as, erosion, permeability and drainage. They are aware of growth, change and healthy lifestyles and our dependence on plants as the primary food source. They make judgements which reflect their understanding of work studied and questions posed by teachers during marking directs them to further research or knowledge about their discoveries. In Year 4, pupils use their prior knowledge to help them make sensible predictions and the need to make a test fair. For example, they have carried out separation and filtration, made timed recordings and are prepared to say how results obtained have changed their perceptions of original predictions. Although pupils are developing some sound investigative skills much of their work is unfinished and poor presentation detracts from its quality.
90. A similar curriculum is covered in both Years 5 and 6 with much improved knowledge and understanding as pupils become more mature. In Year 5, pupils are well informed about the major organs of the human body and are aware of the importance of the heart, skeleton and muscle groups, for example. As a result of a 'forces workshop', pupils understand that objects that are stretched or compressed exert a force on whatever is changing their shape. They appreciate the uses of electricity in everyday life and that some materials are better conductors than others. Pupils recognise differences between solids, liquids and gasses, in terms of their properties, for example, maintenance of shape and volume, and classify and group both living and non-living things. They acknowledge the importance of a healthy lifestyle, diet, fitness and also the importance of drugs and some of their dangers. Pupils in Year 6, during their investigations of different types of soil, show that they are able to set up experiments relating to key questions. They work systematically and understand the need for repeated testing for reliability and the importance of a control to ensure that testing is fair. The quality of the work seen in lessons is not always apparent in pupils' recorded work, particularly in Year 5, and pupils often fail to draw satisfactory conclusions from their results or to compare them with their original predictions.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching seen in both key stages and especially with the oldest pupils in Year 6. In better lessons teaching enables pupils to acquire new skills and build on their prior knowledge and understanding effectively. Teachers generally have secure subject knowledge and use effective strategies for introducing pupils to new topics. However, there are some instances when the work being studied does not match the learning needs of the whole class; it is driven by the newly adopted scheme of work rather than the current learning needs of the majority of pupils. As a consequence pupils sometimes have only a limited knowledge of their work and the pace of learning slows. In most lessons teachers attempt to

provide meaningful activities, which are linked to learning in other subjects to promote greater understanding, such as the different vitamins and nutrients found in healthy food during food technology.

92. Pupils literacy and numeracy skills are not always sufficiently well promoted. Pupils do not write initial suggestions about what might happen during investigative work, nor assess their findings against their original predictions which would enhance their evaluative writing. They do not use a suitable range of charts and graphs to present their findings nor collect data and interpret it though the use of information and communications technology. There are also different expectations of how pupils record their work across the key stage, particularly in Key Stage 2. Where pupils are offered a more supportive framework, their work is more structured and easier for them to interpret as they look back. There are also different expectations of the quantity and quality of pupils' recording across the school. However, by the time the pupils are ready to leave the school, this has mainly been addressed. Pupil's numeric skills in measuring time and temperature for example are well established. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in lessons, where work is well matched to their capabilities and they make appropriate progress. A few higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently extended and challenged to pose their own questions as part of their investigations. Insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils' practical investigative work. However, where pupils carry out experiments, they do so sensibly and use equipment carefully with good awareness of health and safety.
93. The curriculum is broad and satisfactorily balanced. The school has enabled pupils to discuss their work using a scientific vocabulary. Work in books is marked regularly and in the best instances uses questions to move pupils' learning on. Teachers monitor pupils' work effectively in lessons and have suitable knowledge about what pupils know and understand. The recording of this assessment is satisfactory, but is not always used successfully to ensure future work matches their developing needs. Teachers are sometimes insecure in judging the levels of attainment at which their pupils are working. They appear driven by the new scheme of work and progression is too steep for many pupils to develop secure concepts that will enable them to tackle new areas of work. The co-ordinator has begun to analyse the results of National Curriculum tests to help the school provide more support to pupils. He is providing sound informal leadership in the subject, but has not yet been involved in the monitoring of the quality of teaching or learning. Information gained from looking at pupils' work is not sufficiently well established to identify the differences in teachers' expectations across the school and at present this does not support the sequential development of pupils' scientific skills.

## **ART**

94. Art lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, but none in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' sketchbooks, the artwork on display in all areas of the school and discussion with the co-ordinator. In both key stages, pupils make good progress and reach standards which are appropriate for their age and sometimes better. In both key stages, the quality of work on display is above average and adds significantly to an attractive learning environment. The school has raised standards in art since the last inspection.
95. In Key Stage 1, pupils successfully use a range of materials and media to express their ideas. Pupils in Year 1 study portraits by Durer, Picasso and Renoir, reaching good standards in drawing each other. They show attention to detail, reasonable proportion and satisfactory knowledge of body composition. Pupils in Year 2 make very good observational drawings of flowers using pencils and fine felt tip pens. Good standards are displayed in mono printing and press printing. Pupils are able to create three dimensional effects with paint and collage. Pupils throughout the key stage, make sound progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of art and extend their range of techniques appropriately.
96. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to record what they have experienced and imagined using various

media. They show increasing control over a range of materials, tools and techniques. Pupils in Year 3 use clay successfully to depict woodland scenes and create leaf and flower designs after the style of William Morris using black crayons, or pen and ink. Pupils in Year 4 use information technology effectively to extend the same theme into creating repeating patterns on computers. Pupils in Year 5 carefully paint on glass using sponges. They collaborated with Year 6, on art work based on an African Experience topic, to mount a very effective display in the school hall. This includes high quality ceramic heads and excellent patterns influenced by artists from Kenya, Ghana and Mali. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to reach high standards in expressing ideas and feelings, choosing appropriate materials and creating images and artefacts of beauty. Art supports other curriculum areas effectively, throughout the school.

97. Since the last inspection in 1996 standards have been raised in spite of changes in the National Curriculum which have reduced the amount of time available for art. There is now a consistent quality and range of experiences throughout the school and the range of materials is good. There are generally good opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their work. Improvements in teaching now preclude noisy or disruptive behaviour.
98. The impact of teaching is satisfactory overall. In observed lessons teaching was good and this enables pupils to make sound gains in their learning. Pupils show interest in art activities and behave well in lessons. Teaching enables them to develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the work of several established artists and to build well on their own creative efforts. The pupils show pleasure in their own achievements and the success of others. Teachers plan their lessons in art satisfactorily and have clear ideas about what they expect their pupils to learn but, they don't always systematically build on pupils' previous learning. Overall they manage the pupils well, organise lessons efficiently and use time, support staff and resources to good advantage.
99. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator and other teachers have expertise and enthusiasm and use their skills to support their colleagues with advice and help. The art policy and schemes of work satisfactorily support teachers in their planning. Assessment is informal and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a consistent system through the school to record pupils' progress in developing artistic skills. Resources are good. Cross stitching is done as an extra-curricular club activity and pupils' skills are shown to good effect in the school's good contribution to a Millennium textile wall hanging, which is currently on display in a Plymouth department store.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. The provision for design and technology has improved since the previous inspection, resulting in pupils achieving good standards at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory standards, with some good features, in Key Stage 2. Discussion with pupils confirms judgements that pupils at the end of both key stages are developing an awareness and understanding of the importance of good design features in products that improve the quality of everyday life.
101. Pupils in Key Stage 1 work successfully with an appropriate range of tools to make simple products such as pop-up cards and slippers. They have a good understanding that materials behave in different ways and make suitable choices where products require strength or flexibility, for example. After observation of a playground they design a range of features such as slides, swings, seesaws and roundabouts with simple moving parts. They were able to talk about their ideas and how they solved problems such as making the seesaw balance. Pupils recorded their ideas using pictures and sketches with some identifying labels. In the making of their designs they showed they are able to cut and shape their materials joining them in a variety of simple ways, including sticking, folding, gluing and stitching. Pupils were aware of the need to incorporate soft surfaces around swings and that safety bars are essential for small children. They were aware that the distance, space and layout of a playground are also essential features of the design process and were confident in expressing their ideas. Teachers ensure that pupils explore a range of everyday products such as fruit and vegetables, linking work with art and science. For example, they

explored texture, taste and smell before deciding which fruits they would include in their designer fruit salads.

102. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils have engaged in a range of tasks which have involved the use of construction kits, electrical and mechanical components and food technology. Although they are building appropriately on the knowledge and understanding acquired in Key Stage 1, they do not progressively develop their skills in using tools such as hand saws, snips and drills, for example. During the design and making stages pupils have worked independently and in groups where each person has undertaken a specific role to achieve the task. Younger pupils have investigated a range of purses and wallets before designing and making their own particular choice. Their planned work shows that they worked in a sequenced way but did not evaluate their products as they went along. However, a simple framework for final evaluation showed that most pupils were satisfied with their designs and improvements were usually confined to decorative elements. Older pupils in their work on shelters have explored large and small features such as bus shelters, tents and umbrellas. In their work on fair grounds they showed a good awareness of the need to find alternative ways of making things work, especially when they added motion through the use of mechanical or electrical motors. In their work on umbrellas, pupils systematically tested a range of fabrics to discover the best way of making them waterproof using wax, oil, or 'pva' glue. In discussions, they indicated that they are developing a subject specific vocabulary and are fully aware of the safe use of tools. They also understand the importance of hygiene, for example, whilst making scrambled eggs to a World War 2 recipe.
103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good and unsatisfactory lessons seen. In better lessons teachers are effective in promoting pupils' interest and they stimulate pupils so that they are well motivated and keen to achieve good results. They enjoy the process of investigating and show good levels of perseverance especially in the design elements of their tasks. Teaching enables pupils to work well together, to share ideas and to collaborate effectively in making designs to achieve their objectives. Where the teacher's expectations are not so high pupils do not finish their products to a good standard and many items are left incomplete. On-going assessment whilst pupils work is satisfactory, but there is no written evidence to support teachers' observations for end of year reports. Opportunities for pupils to be fully involved in the assessment of their achievements do not yet occur in all classes. Teachers do not always ensure that pupils have practised the skills they will need before starting their 'making' tasks. In one instance the teacher had prepared lengths of wood and cardboard triangles which could easily have been measured, marked, and cut by the pupils themselves. Although oral evaluations are an established way of focusing pupils' attention on what they have done, teachers are not always effective in promoting pupils' writing skills. They do not provide sufficient opportunities for them to write about what they want to achieve or how successful they were in making their products.
104. The curriculum is broad and well balanced over the two key stages. Most pupils are involved in making oral evaluations of their work but few records are kept of pupils' progress in learning. As a result, the teachers in following classes have insufficient information on which to plan activities and ensure increasing levels of challenge in the tasks set. Teachers' expectations do not always build sufficiently well on their knowledge of pupils' past achievements so that pupils' skills are systematically improved as they move through the school.
105. The co-ordinator is new to the post and is making a suitable impact by sharing her enthusiasm and expertise with colleagues in an informal way. Suitable school based training and support has been provided to support the co-ordinator but there has been no relevant externally provided training in the subject. The new scheme of work supports the one already in existence and there are sufficient good quality resources to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. From the evidence of work seen, from displays and discussions, the majority of pupils attain standards that are in line with those

normally seen from pupils of similar ages and make satisfactory progress. Pupils become aware of their own locality and develop early mapping skills. Younger pupils map a walk through the woods based on a familiar fictional character. These skills are further developed in Year 2, such as when pupils find where they live on a local map and consider how each of them travels to school. They become aware of features of the environment by visits to support learning in their topic. For example, pupils visited a local beach in connection with their topic on the seaside.

107. In Key Stage 2, pupils show a sound range of knowledge, and they attain standards similar to those usual for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 6 capably demonstrate their knowledge of themes such as mountains and rivers. They identify mountain ranges in different parts of the world, talk about how mountains and rivers are formed and use the correct terminology. Their visit to a local river enabled pupils to make comparisons with what they had discovered about the River Nile when conducting their own research. Younger pupils are developing their awareness of how humans change the environment, while older pupils consider the effects of this. Progress in learning is satisfactory overall but improves when tasks are suited to the understanding and experience of the pupils.
108. The teaching of geography has strengths and weaknesses, but is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, teachers plan carefully and make effective use of resources to interest pupils and to support their learning. Teachers ensure that tasks are clearly understood and this results in positive interest from the pupils. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the objectives and tasks of the lesson are not well matched to the understanding of the pupils, resulting in few gains in learning. Pupils then show no urgency to complete their tasks. This happens as a result of too close adherence to the statements of the curriculum rather than basing planning on pupils' needs. Teachers make effective use of visits to the local area and of the school grounds to support pupils' learning.
109. The introduction of a scheme of work has ensured that there is a clear framework for the geography curriculum. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the school has not yet determined how the elements of the scheme of work should be adapted to match the needs of all pupils, so that there can be flexibility in how teachers plan their lessons. There is no systematic means to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, which would helpfully lead into more appropriate lesson planning. A weakness in geography is the quality of pupils' recorded work. A lack of care in presentation means that pupils' work does not reflect the systematic building of geographical skills nor does it allow pupils to further consolidate and consider what they are learning. This was a weakness identified in the previous inspection. Literacy skills are not purposefully reinforced, and pupils show little pride in presentation. Management of the subject is satisfactory, within the present constraints. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' work in geography.

## **HISTORY**

110. It was not possible to observe any lessons in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. From a scrutiny of work, looking at displays, and from discussions, it is clear that pupils have acquired a satisfactory sense of the past, and they attain standards in line with those normally seen for pupils of similar ages. From the realistic opportunities presented to them, they learn how to compare past and present. When looking at pictures of the seaside in the past, pupils in Year 2 carefully point out what is different to the present time. They are able to form opinions on what they see, and have a sound understanding of how things change over time.
111. In Key Stage 2, pupils attain standards in line with what is expected for the age group. They have a sound knowledge of historical periods and people, and of events of the past. Younger pupils in the key stage make suitable comparisons between how children used to dress and learn in Victorian times and today. They look at photographs as a source of historical evidence and make conclusions based on what they see. At the end of the key stage, pupils have a sound knowledge of life in Tudor times. Present work shows that they have a knowledgeable awareness of life during



the war years. By interviewing visitors who talk about their experiences, pupils learn how events in the past affected people.

112. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is further enriched by the varied learning opportunities provided by teachers. The organisation of a cross-curricular 'living history day' gave pupils the opportunity to consider more deeply life during the war. Through this they considered the feelings of the people, the influences on art and how food styles were adapted to meet needs. A worthwhile debate centred on the issues of evacuation showed that they are able to ask questions based on the knowledge gained, weigh up evidence and make relevant conclusions. Discussions with pupils show that they use independent research to help them with their learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
113. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Observed teaching was mostly good, and never less than satisfactory. Teachers use effective strategies to engage pupils' interest, and ensure that there is ample opportunity for pupils to discuss, question and give opinions on what they are learning. The use of role-play and examination of artefacts ensures pupils enjoyment, and therefore they make satisfactory gains in their learning. Teachers show that they have good subject knowledge and this ensures that pupils are acquiring a broad range of knowledge and understanding. Pupils make positive responses and participate well in lessons. Learning in history is further supported by informative displays, and by visits to places of interest.
114. A weakness in history is in the recording of pupils' work. This is frequently of poor quality and not carefully presented. Although pupils are benefiting from their learning opportunities, there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to reflect and consider what they are learning through recording their work. The school has recently adopted a scheme of work, which ensures appropriate coverage in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, the school has not yet found a means to ensure that further curriculum planning is securely based on the pupils' needs. There are no effective systems for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding which would help in guiding teachers' planning. This was a weakness identified in the previous inspection. There are no planned opportunities to capitalise on pupils' interest by requiring them to produce more extensive and detailed written work on their history topics. Management of the subject is satisfactory within the present constraints. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity to monitor the history curriculum and pupils' work, so has yet to develop a helpful overview of the subject.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

115. Standards of achievement are well below national expectations in information technology at the end of both key stages. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be satisfactory overall, in a limited range of work. Since 1995 the school has not kept pace with developments in the subject and as a result standards have fallen.
116. Pupils in Year 1 know how to operate an overhead projector, for example. They can explain the correct operating procedure and are beginning to predict the consequences of particular actions. As pupils have only limited opportunities to use computers they lack knowledge and skills in using the keyboard and operating programs for themselves. In Year 2, pupils show a reasonable level of competence in using a data base. They can operate a search and most know how to load, set up and close down a program. However, several are adventurous and click on buttons from the tool bar or select menu items at random. This reveals their lack of experience in using information and communications technology as a regular part of their work. Some pupils recall using a word processor but most have only a basic understanding of editing, printing and saving their work. Whilst pupils are gradually being introduced to a range of operations they do not regularly use CD-ROM or suitable programs to support their learning in other subjects. Scrutiny of pupils' work and displays around the school confirm that pupils have too few opportunities to develop the expected level of competence, despite the satisfactory and sometimes good progress made in information technology lessons.

117. The picture is very similar in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 confidently open programs and operate specific programs. They can select a folder, locate an appropriate graphic, import this to a document and add text. Most show developing confidence in using the tool bar to drag, resize and rotate an image. Pupils in Year 4 are also confident in setting up and loading a few familiar programs. They carefully follow their teacher's instructions, but few are able to predict the shape the 'screen turtle' will draw in response to a set of instructions. Most found it difficult to see the link between programming a 'floor turtle' and the instructions they keyed into the computer to produce a shape on screen. Very few pupils could recall using the 'floor turtle' previously. Older pupils confirmed a similar lack of previous experience. They have a limited knowledge of basic computer operations such as editing, saving and printing. They can operate suitable programs, access CD-ROM and although they are learning to put together a simple multi-media presentation they lack the expected level of competence because they seldom work with computers independently. During the inspection no pupils in either key stage were observed using the classroom computers.
118. The impact of teaching is unsatisfactory. However, in observed lessons teaching ranged between unsatisfactory and good. Teaching ensures pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and behave well. They are keen to learn and attentively listen to their teachers. They confidently answer questions and show patience and determination when using computers. The majority follow instructions appropriately and when given the opportunity they co-operate well to solve problems. This is sometimes accompanied by animated discussion. Most pupils sustain their interest well. Although the majority of staff lack sufficient knowledge and confidence in the subject, most have worked hard this year to provide clear instruction in basic computing skills and in the use of specific programs. For example, pupils in Year 4 quickly learned to enter instructions in order to program the 'screen turtle' to draw a predetermined shape. Teaching is less effective where new words, commands and processes, such as designing a booklet, are taught without providing immediate and relevant first hand experiences. Despite the availability of a suitable scheme of work, teachers are not adequately supported in planning. They are spending a great deal of time on re-writing medium-term curricular plans, as well as planning lessons. This results in a lack of emphasis on identifying relevant learning opportunities and developing a clear view of what pupils know, understand, and need to do next.
119. There is a suitable subject policy and the school has recently adopted a nationally recommended scheme of work. However, whilst the planned provision is appropriate, there are significant weaknesses in implementing the curriculum. There are no effective formalised systems for assessing pupils' progress. Although some teachers respond appropriately to pupils' needs during lessons in the computer suite, for example, the lack of opportunities to consolidate and extend pupils' skills in other subjects, together with the absence of assessment, is having a detrimental impact on pupils' progress.
120. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Despite identifying suitable areas for development in the school development plan, there is little evidence of sustained improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection. However, the recently appointed co-ordinator has an enthusiastic approach and supports colleagues well at an informal level. This results in much improved confidence among staff in teaching the skills in information and communications technology, but opportunities to use computers to support other work are seldom taken. The school benefits from having a bank of locally networked computers, which is used mainly by whole classes, but there are too few multi-media machines available in classrooms. The use of lesson time for the subject is rigidly linked to whole-class teaching and this severely limits the impact of teaching. The range of software available does not adequately meet the needs of the curriculum. The school has identified appropriate areas for development and expects to receive additional funding over two years, as a result of a national scheme to support improvements.

## MUSIC

121. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress and reach standards which are appropriate.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident performers and some reach above average standards in singing and instrumental playing. Standards are lower than in the last inspection but changes in the National Curriculum have reduced the amount of time available for the subject and changes in staff have had a detrimental effect on the amount of specialist teaching available.

122. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing a range of songs in lessons and assemblies. In Year 1 they can clap a repeating pattern and distinguish between high and low notes, but few understand rhythm and structure. By the end of the key stage, pupils recognise changes in volume, pitch and tempo. They can analyse structure and use their voices to indicate changes. They can make an appropriate selection of instruments and play a steady beat and the rhythm of words. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall and good progress when they are taught by teachers who have specialist skills. Pupils in Year 3 explore texture by listening to compositions by Anton Webern and use percussion instruments to compose pieces with similar texture. They use words appropriately to describe texture, timbre and mood. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 reached high standards in ensemble work, whilst playing woodwind and brass instruments under the effective tuition of a specialist teacher. The oldest pupils reached the regional finals of 'JC2000', performing in public at the Colston Hall, Bristol and in Exeter Cathedral. A video-taped recording shows confident performances and good achievement by pupils in Year 6. In Key Stage 1, pupils use graphic notation appropriately and in Key Stage 2 they are introduced to standard notation. Pupils with instrumental skills read standard scores competently.
123. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan and provide a suitable variety of activities which interest and stimulate pupils. The range of teachers' subject knowledge varies throughout the school so that occasionally teaching in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and teaching by teachers with expertise in Key Stage 2 is very good. Music has a secure place in the curriculum and pupils show positive attitudes towards their lessons, paying attention and generally behaving well. They enjoy singing and playing, treat the instruments with great care and share them willingly.
124. The curriculum is suitably broad but there are no effective means of assessing and recording pupils' achievements. There is a good scheme of work and all pupils including those with special educational needs have equality of opportunity and access to all activities to promote their musical skills. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator uses her skills well to support non-specialist teachers who also gain confidence from commercially produced schemes of work. An excellent range of pitched and unpitched instruments is available. Some pupils have peripatetic instrumental teaching for woodwind, guitar, brass and keyboard. There are two recorder clubs and a choir is formed when concerts and productions are being planned. Pupils regularly perform in public and they visit residential homes to sing carols at Christmas time.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

125. Pupils in both key stages make appropriate progress and achieve appropriate standards for their age. This represents a broadly similar picture to that found by the previous inspection. However, standards have improved in the element of dance where most pupils now achieve good standards.
126. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show a good sense of space and physical co-ordination and move at speed changing directions to avoid collisions. All pupils respond well to instructions and listen attentively to their teachers. They display different strategies to demonstrate expected movements and are aware of health and safety considerations. They get out, use and return equipment with care, and show responsible attitudes to its use. They warm up in a suitable manner and all pupils change appropriately for work, which encourages them to be physically active and build up stamina.
127. Pupils in Year 1 show satisfactory hand and eye co-ordination when throwing and catching balls and improve after practice. However, their ability in anticipating and moving towards the balls in paired work is just developing. By Year 2 their skills have improved so that they can bounce and

bat balls with a satisfactory degree of accuracy and they show suitable co-operation in team games. In country dancing, most pupils successfully build on previous work and pick up new sequences quite quickly. They have good timing and move lightly on their feet, using a range of steps such as hopping, skipping and side stepping. They move to the right and left, and complete a figure of eight demonstrating adept co-ordination with their partners. They have good sequential memories and successfully perform dances such as the Circassian Circle.

128. In Key Stage 2, pupils show good body awareness and flexibility during warm up sessions. In dance lessons pupils plan their work well with their partners and in ensuing sequences are beginning to use mirroring, linkage and tension to good effect. This was particularly evident in Year 3 as pupils worked on their summertime motifs; they used symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes to particularly good effect. They work hard to improve their performances and are aware of the requirements that will ensure quality movements such as concentration, control, different speeds, large movements and good starting and finishing positions. Their awareness of others as they work is developing well. Older pupils show more control over their bodies and move into and out of different balances, using curled and stretched shapes. Where teachers have relevant expertise and confidence they give suitable instruction to pupils who are then able to refine and improve their performance successfully and change their movements showing more confidence and poise. During lessons that involve specific athletic events pupils work hard to better their own personal performance in such events as the triple jump from standing position. They remain well focused and keen to succeed and show improvement during the session. In most lessons teachers use the plenary time to good effect, to consolidate learning, and pupils show a developing maturity when sharing opinions and accepting constructive criticism from their peers.
129. Swimming is undertaken at the local swimming pool to develop pupils' confidence and water skills. Approximately 60% of pupils achieve the goal of swimming 25 meters and some pupils gain competence in personal survival. Pupils have the opportunity to play competitive sports against other schools, such as soccer and tag rugby and, although the girls also participate in these sports, at present there is no provision for netball. The school organises a sports day where pupils are keen to compete and achieve points for their houses. Residential visits attended by pupils in Years 5 and 6 offer good opportunities for them to participate in outdoor adventurous activities such as kayaking, abseiling and orienteering. Pupils confirm they are delighted with this provision. The school offers a variety of after school clubs that are well supported, such as country dancing and soccer.
130. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In observed lessons it was occasionally very good with the majority being satisfactory. Better lessons are characterised by effective warm up activities, brisk pace, clear demonstration and appropriate challenges. Pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their own personal achievement and also that of their peers. This they do in a very positive way and spontaneously applaud good effort as well as achievement. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and behave well, and even the youngest pupils are aware of health and safety issues and the contribution of physical activity to a healthy life style. Pupils work co-operatively and respect each other's space. They demonstrate fair play. The quality of relationships is good and helps to develop pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Assessment and instruction whilst pupils work is sound, although at present no written records of achievements are kept.
131. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to observe colleagues at work, in order to support their subject knowledge. Resources are good and the accommodation offers very good space, including a large field.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

132. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress and achieve standards similar to those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection but there are developing strengths in Key Stage 1. For example, pupils' understanding of the

impact of religion in people's lives is a good feature.

133. The pupils in Key Stage 1 listen to stories and learn about Christian ceremonies. They visit local churches and are currently studying wedding traditions after a visit to an Anglican church and a successful lesson with the local Methodist church minister. Their work has contributed to attractive displays about weddings which include pupils' own written prayers. They know about church architectural features and create realistic stained glass effects in their classrooms. Religious education includes learning about spiritual and moral concepts and the youngest pupils, listening to the story of St. Peter, showed good understanding of what friendship and helpful behaviour means. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about other major faiths. In Years 3 and 4 pupils showed sound knowledge of Judaism when they explored and enacted the festival of Purim. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 read Bible passages with concentration and can interpret what they read in the light of their own experience. They show sound knowledge of the creation story, and through discussion, develop their understanding of temptation, sin and conscience. Religious education lessons and contributions through daily assemblies are mutually supportive in developing pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. In both key stages pupils are given suitable opportunities to discuss their thoughts and feelings and this is handled sensitively.
134. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In one lesson observed in Key Stage 1 teaching was very good. In Key Stage 2, teaching was mostly satisfactory, and in one instance teaching was good. The last inspection report referred to some less effective teaching giving insufficient opportunities for pupils to participate and allowing too slow a pace so that pupils lost concentration. Such weaknesses were not observed during this inspection, so these aspects of teaching have improved. Teaching builds successfully on pupils' generally good behaviour and positive attitudes. This enables the majority to learn without undue interruption as teachers have to waste little time on control and discipline.
135. The curriculum is satisfactory. The agreed syllabus is due to be updated up but the school's schemes of work currently provide teachers with clear guidance and support. However, there are no effective procedures to assess and record pupils' achievements or inform end of year reports. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is effective, and school-based training and advice have positively contributed to maintaining a sound quality of learning, particularly in Key Stage 1. There are sufficient resources to meet the needs of the curriculum, including a good selection of resources and artefacts for teaching about the main world religions. Pupils also benefit from visits to local churches and gain significantly from the contributions made by visitors from a wide variety of local religious bodies, some of whom assist in corporate worship.