

INSPECTION REPORT

OKEHAMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Okehampton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113260

Headteacher: Mr Brian Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mr George Crowther
18814

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th June 2000

Inspection number: 189606

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Coleen Herriman
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
George Crowther	Registered inspector	Science Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Robert Arnold	Team inspector	Physical education Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
Peter Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Gillian Phillips	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children under five Art Religious education	
Michael Ridout	Team inspector	History Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
Arlene Thomas-Ramasut	Team inspector	English Music English as an additional language	
Lynne Wright	Team inspector	Design and technology Information technology]	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Okehampton is a large, community primary school for boys and girls who are 3-11 years old. It has 564 full-time pupils, and 52 attend part-time in the nursery. Socio-economic data suggest that the circumstances of the families in the area are less favourable than national averages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average. Taken together, pupils' attainment when they start school is below average. One hundred and forty-eight pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, of whom 13 have a statement. The proportion of pupils needing additional support is about average overall, but above average for those with a statement. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or who have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Okehampton Primary School is an effective school in many ways, but it recognises that, despite recent improvements, standards are not high enough and need to be raised. The school fulfils its aim to provide a caring and supportive community in which pupils are happy and well motivated to learn. Relationships between all members of the school community are a strength. Pupils' achievements are sound overall, but their progress is inconsistent, owing to weaknesses in teaching in some classes and some subjects. Nonetheless, most pupils reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages in English and mathematics, though standards are too low in science. The school is well led, but the identification of priorities for improvement and their implementation have weaknesses. Staff and governors work well together and have been successful in improving a number of aspects of the school's work. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes.
- Art is taught very well and pupils achieve excellent standards.
- Pupils' good attitudes, their good behaviour, and their good relationships with each other and with staff support learning well.
- The school provides a good range and quality of extra-curricular activities, particularly in music.
- The school has a caring approach to all aspects of pupils' welfare.
- The school is well led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors.

What could be improved

- Attainment in science is not high enough.
- The quality of teaching is too variable; in some lessons, teaching does not have the pace and challenge to ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Too little time is available for teaching and learning in Key Stage 2, and time is not always used efficiently throughout the school.
- Assessment procedures for some subjects are not yet in place.
- Planned improvements are not implemented consistently enough.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was inspected last in July 1996, the school was judged to be good, with many strengths. Since then, though the school has sustained many of the good features, standards in national tests fell, and the school has worked hard to improve pupils' attainment. Sound progress has been made, and standards in English and mathematics now meet national expectations. The school has also made sound progress in addressing most of the action points from the last inspection. There are now better systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and the curriculum, though these have not been fully effective in identifying and tackling weaknesses. Planning of the curriculum has improved, and teacher appraisal is now in place. The school has made good progress in ensuring that pupils are more aware of other cultures and beliefs. Despite improvements in English and mathematics, in other subjects assessments of pupils' existing skills are still not used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. The school is continuing to improve, and has a sound capacity to raise standards further.

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	E
mathematics	C	E	D	E
science	D	E	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but is below average overall. Pupils make good progress during their early years at school, but progress throughout the rest of the school varies significantly between year groups, and sometimes between classes within year groups, depending on the quality of teaching. Pupils make good progress in Year 6. Results achieved in national tests for 11 year olds have been below the national average, but are improving steadily. Inspection evidence shows attainment in the current Year 6 classes to be average in English and mathematics, but below average in science. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are sound throughout the school. Attainment in information technology meets national expectations, and attainment in religious education matches that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Attainment in art is much higher than expected for pupils' ages because they benefit from a rich curriculum and good teaching. In music, most pupils make unsatisfactory progress during Key Stage 2, though achievements in extra-curricular music are very good. In all other subjects, pupils make sound progress and reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school; they are interested in their work, and they usually concentrate well and persevere with tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in most lessons, and good around the school; pupils know the rules, and the great majority respond well to the guidance provided by the staff.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and with teachers are good; pupils of all ages work and play well together; pupils are capable of taking responsibility for their work, and tasks around school, but they are not given enough opportunities to do so.
Attendance	Close to the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Teaching was sound or better in 89 per cent of the lessons observed. In 15 per cent of lessons it was very good, occasionally excellent; in 58 per cent of lessons it was good or better; it was less than satisfactory in 11 per cent. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching varies significantly between classes. The better teaching is well planned and purposeful, with high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and a good range of activities that hold their interest. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the teacher's knowledge of the subject was not secure, or tasks were not challenging enough, or there were weaknesses in the teacher's management of pupils' behaviour. The school recognises the need to raise the standard of this teaching so that it matches the good quality seen in many classes. Teaching of art is very good, and teaching is sound, overall, for other subjects. Literacy and numeracy are soundly taught. Teaching generally meets the needs of all pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the nursery and reception classes. Sound for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2: the school provides a generally broad and balanced curriculum, but there are weaknesses in aspects of some subjects; extra-curricular activities are very good in range and quality, particularly in music.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound: work is generally well matched to pupils' needs in lessons and they receive good support from adults.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: provision for pupils' personal development is an important priority, and is supported effectively by good relationships; provision for pupils' social development is very strong; good provision for pupils' moral and cultural development, and sound for pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils Assessment of attainment and progress	The school provides good care and support for its pupils through a range of effective policies and procedures; the assessment and monitoring of pupils' attainment and progress is sound in English and mathematics, but weaker in other subjects.
How well the school works In partnership with parents	The school works hard to improve and sustain effective links with parents; in many cases, these support children's learning well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound: the headteacher provides clear leadership for the school; he knows what needs to improve, and makes this clear to the staff; he has been successful in achieving a number of improvements since the last inspection; he is well supported by the deputy headteacher, but other key staff do not always play a strong enough role in the push to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised, supportive, and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well; governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, which is helping them to plan the way forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is considerable evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, by the headteacher and senior staff; as yet, this has not been fully effective in identifying and tackling weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are very well supported by carefully considered financial planning.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is well staffed; the accommodation is good and well cared for, but rather cramped for the number of pupils; learning resources are sound

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy going to school and make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable if parents have concerns. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel that the pattern of homework is not right for their children.

The great majority of parents are pleased with most aspects of the school's work, and inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Some parents feel that homework is not set consistently in all classes, particularly for the oldest pupils, but inspectors found no evidence to support this view during the inspection. Most parents are pleased that the school adopts a flexible approach.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. There is a wide range of attainment amongst the children who join the nursery but, overall, attainment is below average compared with what is expected nationally, particularly in language skills and in personal and social development. A broad, rich and relevant curriculum, and skilful support from the staff, enable the children to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in all areas of learning. They make good progress in developing their personal and social skills; they co-operate well with each other in their work and play, and show developing perseverance and concentration. They show growing confidence in speaking to one other and to adults, learn that words as well as pictures tell a story, and become familiar with some letter sounds. They enjoy mark making and early writing experiences. Children become more confident in their use of number, and they sort, match and compare objects, building their early mathematical vocabulary. However, by the time children leave the nursery, overall attainment is still below that expected in language and literacy and mathematics. It is satisfactory for their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.
2. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress in most areas of their learning. They show increasing independence, moving confidently from teacher-directed to own choice activities and locating materials themselves. They communicate well in small groups in imaginative play, and show improved listening and speaking skills during literacy sessions. By the time they are five, most children use a range of letter sounds and picture cues to read simple texts, and higher-attaining children are beginning to read well from the early stages of the reading scheme. Most are becoming independent writers. They have secure knowledge of numbers to ten and beyond, carry out simple addition and subtraction, and can sort, match and recognise colours, patterns and shapes. Children make sound, often good progress in all other areas of their learning and, by the time they enter Key Stage 1, most reach and some exceed the expected standards. Children under five with special needs are well supported and they make similar progress to other pupils.
3. In the end of Key Stage 1 assessments in 1999, results in reading were below the national average, and results in writing were well below average. In reading, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 of attainment was close to the national average, but very few pupils gained the higher Level 3. In writing, the results were weak at both levels. In contrast, the 1999 mathematics results were well above the national average, with a high proportion of pupils reaching Level 3. Based on teachers' assessments, attainment in science was below the national average. Comparisons with schools in similar social circumstances indicate that the 1999 results were well below average in reading and writing, but well above average in mathematics.
4. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in the current Year 2 matches national expectations in reading and mathematics, but is below expectations in writing and science. Attainment in reading has gradually improved during the last few years, and pupils' achievements are now satisfactory. In writing, however, pupils make inconsistent progress during Key Stage 1 because, in some classes, teachers' expectations of the standard of work pupils should achieve are not high enough. In mathematics, achievement is also inconsistent across the key stage, being weaker in Year 2 than in Year 1, but satisfactory overall. Last years' outstanding results in national tests were gained by a year group that contains a larger proportion of high-attaining mathematicians than is usual for the school. In science, most pupils gather a sound range of scientific knowledge, but they do not develop their skills in experimental and investigative work sufficiently, so their achievements are unsatisfactory overall. Achievement in art is excellent, and Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress in all other subjects. Overall attainment is lower than at the last inspection.
5. In the end of Key Stage 2 assessments in 1999, results in English, mathematics and science were all below the national average, and well below average when compared with those achieved by schools in similar circumstances. However, the results were significantly better than the previous

year and show an improving trend over the past four years. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that standards have continued to rise in English and mathematics, and attainment in the current Year 6 is now close to national expectations. In science, however, pupils' attainment is still below national expectations, largely owing to weaknesses in their experimental skills. Across Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements vary between classes because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. They make sound, often good progress in the early part of the key stage, weaker progress towards the end of the key stage, but good progress in Year 6. Overall, achievement in art continues to be excellent, and progress is sound in all other subjects except music. Overall attainment is similar to the last inspection.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make generally sound progress in relation to their initial attainment, and some make good gains, particularly in improving their literacy skills. For most of these pupils, however, progress is variable in lessons. It is best where tasks are well matched to their needs and they have close support from teachers or classroom assistants. In these lessons they make measurable learning gains against the targets set for them. In some lessons, however, planning is insufficiently specific for their needs, so they make less progress and are often amongst the first to lose concentration. It is difficult to track progress against individual education plans because some targets are repeated or not specific enough. There are no significant variations in pupils' achievements by gender.
7. Listening skills are good across the school. The great majority of pupils listen attentively to their teachers, respond promptly to questions, and listen carefully to the contributions of others. Speaking skills are satisfactory. Most pupils speak confidently in their own classrooms, but are less confident when addressing a group. In Year 2, higher-attaining pupils read fluently with good expression, and most pupils have a suitable range of strategies that enable them to read unfamiliar words. However, a significant minority of pupils still has difficulty with basic skills such as letter-sound matching and blending. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils read demanding texts with good expression and understanding, and most pupils read competently. In Year 2, the standard of writing is below average. A minority of pupils produce imaginative, extended writing, with good spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Most pupils are able to write independently, but they forget to punctuate simple sentences and make mistakes when spelling familiar words. Many are still printing, and lower attainers have difficulty forming and spacing letters correctly. By Year 6, however, most pupils write confidently in a variety of styles and express themselves well.
8. In mathematics, most Year 2 pupils work confidently with number to 100. They are familiar with a range of calculations, and their knowledge of multiplication facts is developing. However, pupils' strategies for using more than one method to complete a given calculation are limited. Most pupils are developing appropriate measuring skills, and they can collect information and draw simple graphs. By Year 6, most pupils can multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10 or 100, and calculate using decimals to two places. They have quick recall of multiplication facts, and can convert simple fractions and percentages, successfully using their skills to solve everyday problems. They are developing good skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. Throughout the school, numeracy skills are average, and mental recall of multiplication facts is good, but these skills are not used and developed enough in other subjects.
9. Attainment in science is below national expectations. Pupils make sound progress in building their factual knowledge, but their skills in the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject are weaker. Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the way that living things grow and change. They know that plants need light, water and soil to grow, and they have observed and drawn a variety of plants in the school grounds. In some classes, pupils are encouraged to make simple predictions and draw conclusions, but in other classes these are absent. Year 6 pupils observe a variety of leaves carefully and classify them according to a range of features. Most of these pupils understand that leaves help a plant to grow using carbon dioxide, sunlight and nutrients from the roots, and higher attainers explain that leaves change these raw materials to make what the plant needs. However, their work rarely includes a clear statement of the question being tested, a prediction of the outcome and a conclusion, because they are not taught to use a common experimental format that would structure and develop their science work.

10. In art, pupils make very good progress across the school and reach standards that are well above those expected for their ages. They work with a wide range of media and benefit from very good teaching. In information technology (IT), pupils make sound progress and, by Year 6, attainment is close to national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and reach standards that match those set out in the Devon Agreed Syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, pupils make sound progress and reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages. In music, progress is satisfactory during Key Stage 1. During Key Stage 2, though those pupils who are involved in extra-curricular music make good, often very good progress, most pupils make unsatisfactory progress in class lessons because there are weakness in the curriculum and teachers' expertise.
11. Taken together, pupils' attainment when they start school is below average. They make good progress in the early years and join Key Stage 1 with average attainment overall. At the end of Key Stage 2, recent improvements have lifted attainment so that it is close to national expectations in all subjects except science and music. This represents satisfactory achievement overall, though achievement in some classes is much better than others, creating a pattern of inconsistent progress across the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have maintained good attitudes to school since the previous inspection report, which support their learning and progress. Parents say that their children like coming to school, and the children are clearly happy and secure. Even the youngest children, who have only been in school full-time for a short period, show their confidence and enjoyment in a range of learning activities. They make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. In the great majority of the lessons, pupils show interest in their work, even when the content is not particularly exciting or the pace rather slow. In most lessons, pupils are very keen to offer their ideas, as was seen when new stories were discussed in a number of literacy sessions. Teachers encourage pupils to be fully involved. There was real enthusiasm in some lessons. In a reception class, children took part with evident enjoyment in a number game which required them to jump up and down when they solved a sum, and in a drama lesson, when they had to imagine they were Jack or Jill carrying a heavy pail of water. Pupils' positive attitudes are also clear in the enjoyment they show when talking to inspectors about their work.
13. Pupils' behaviour is generally good in lessons, around school and in the playground. This supports their learning and the good relationships between pupils and with staff. Pupils know and understand the rules that are displayed in every classroom and are happy to comply with them. However, there is a minority of pupils in Year 5 and a few dispersed in other years whose behaviour is disruptive. Some of these pupils' problems are not helped by ineffective behaviour management by the teacher, but there remains a few who do not respond even when teachers are firm and fair. Staff provide good role models, being helpful, patient and polite, so most pupils respond likewise. Behaviour was good in the majority of lessons observed and very good in many. For example, in a very active dance lesson, pupils remained focused on their tasks, and moved around sensibly avoiding colliding with others. Even when pupils are waiting for attention, or have finished a task, their behaviour is good.
14. Pupils play together happily at break times. Lunchtimes are calm occasions when pupils relate well to one another and show respect for the dinner supervisors who care for them. Parents are pleased with the good standard of behaviour at the school. There are few reported incidences of bullying, and these are dealt with well. There have been two temporary exclusions during the past year.
15. The behaviour, response and attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good. Most persevere willingly and take pride in producing work that is as neat as their literacy skills allow. Pupils whose concentration is not well established are helped to stay on track by appropriate and effective guidance from support staff. Pupils with special educational needs, some with severe difficulties, are fully integrated into the life of the school and are well accepted by other pupils.

16. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Throughout the school, they are confident enough to make their contribution, such as when Year 3 pupils joined in a discussion, during a literacy lesson, about medical practices in Tudor times. Teachers encourage this confidence. Pupils work well in pairs and groups, as seen when pupils in Year 4 worked on their throwing skills in physical education. Pupils listen to each other's contributions tolerantly and recognise others' successes. They also enjoy a range of small tasks and responsibilities such as returning the register to the office, helping out in the dining room or giving out equipment. Pupils particularly enjoy being chosen to play a special part, such as in role-play or mathematics games, and they carry out these responsibilities very sensibly. In some lessons, however, particularly for the older pupils, teachers tend to over-direct learning and do not enable pupils to take enough responsibility for managing their own work. Inspectors largely endorse parents' belief that the school helps children to become mature and responsible. This is accomplished through a range of activities that enables pupils to develop their own feelings of self worth. However, the school council is not currently operating and there are generally too few opportunities for all pupils to contribute to the daily life of the school.
17. As at the last inspection, pupils' attendance rate is satisfactory and, last year, was broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences were below the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually and registers are usually completed quickly, enabling a prompt start to be made to lessons. On some occasions, however, time is lost before the register is called, which could be used to engage pupils in some useful educational activities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is sound overall, but varies significantly between classes. In a number of classes, teaching is invariably good or better, but in a few classes teaching has weaknesses, and can be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is good, overall, for children in the nursery and reception classes. It is weaker at the beginning of Key Stage 1, but better towards the end. It is good in the early part of Key Stage 2, weaker towards the end of the key stage, but good in Year 6. The better teaching is well planned and purposeful, with high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and a good range of activities that hold their interest. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the teacher's knowledge of the subject was not secure, or tasks were not challenging enough, or there were weaknesses in the teacher's management of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils did not make the gains in learning of which they were capable. Variations in the quality of teaching were also clear from the scrutiny of pupils' work, which showed better progress in some classes than others.
19. The quality of teaching was very good, occasionally excellent, in 15 per cent of the lessons observed. It was good in a further 43 per cent of lessons, and at least satisfactory in 89 per cent. In twelve of the 108 lessons observed, teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is sound overall, but varies in quality. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching of science was sound, but evidence from pupils' work shows that the impact of science teaching is unsatisfactory, overall, because pupils do not develop their experimental and investigative skills sufficiently. Teaching of art is very good, and many teachers have particular expertise. Teaching of all other subjects is sound. The overall quality of teaching is about the same as at the last inspection. At that time, teaching in Key Stage 1 was judged to be better than in Key Stage 2, but now there is little difference.
20. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is sound overall, and good in sessions where they are withdrawn for extra support. In English and mathematics lessons, teachers generally meet the special needs of pupils well, providing appropriate activities and good support. Classroom assistants play an important role in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs benefit from activities and make good progress. Additional literacy sessions are well taught resulting in good gains in pupils' skills. In some lessons in other subjects, pupils with special educational needs complete the same work as others when an easier task would promote better learning. Work in these lessons is planned without direct reference to targets set in individual education plans and this affects progress.

21. Teaching is good for children in the nursery and reception classes. Work is carefully planned, and there is a good emphasis on children being actively engaged in tasks. In these situations, the well-judged support provided by teachers and classroom assistants helps to extend children's learning. Whole-class sessions are also managed well. For example, in the nursery, children's early language skills were promoted effectively when they shared the story 'Owl Babies', whilst in a very good drama lesson, reception children acted out the nursery rhyme 'Jack and Jill' with great expression and involvement. Relationships between adults and children are warm and productive, enabling all the children to make confident progress, developing a good range of early skills, for example in literacy and numeracy. Occasionally, however, tasks are not challenging enough to ensure that children build on their existing skills.
22. Throughout the rest of the school, teachers have a secure knowledge of most subjects of the curriculum, and there were a number of lessons observed in which their good knowledge stimulated pupils' learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 6 pupils, it was the teacher's confident knowledge of how to calculate fractions and percentages that enabled the pupils to explore a range of strategies to solve problems. In an art lesson for Year 1&2 pupils, the techniques needed to draw flowers were taught skillfully, and pupils were given the freedom to choose and experiment, guided by the teacher's expertise. In many of the lessons observed, teachers used their good subject knowledge to explain new ideas clearly, to lead effective discussions, and to extend pupils' understanding. There are no overall weaknesses in particular subjects, though some teachers have better knowledge right across the curriculum than others. In a few lessons, weaknesses in teachers' knowledge led to unsatisfactory learning for pupils, such as when taped material was used to support work in music or physical education.
23. Competent teaching of basic skills was a good feature of a number of lessons. In literacy sessions for younger pupils, clear teaching of letter sounds and spelling patterns strengthens their ability in reading and writing. Older pupils are taught the structure of different types of texts, as was seen when Year 3 pupils learnt about the lay out of an encyclopedia. In mathematics, consolidation of pupils' counting and calculating skills is a feature of most lessons, though teachers do not always spend enough time exploring a range of methods. Basic skills in other subjects are often taught well, for example when teachers emphasise the need for close observation in science, or the careful mixing of paint in art.
24. Most lessons are planned carefully so that both the teacher and the pupils are clear about what is to be learned. The better plans outline a clear structure for the lesson, and show how the needs of pupils of differing prior attainment will be met. For example, in a very good geography lesson for Year 5, pupils learnt about banana production in St Lucia. The planned purposes of the lesson were very clear, and were shared with pupils, so that they knew what they were trying to achieve. A good balance of whole-class and group discussion ensured that all the pupils were fully involved and made good gains in learning. In a number of lessons, however, teachers described the planned activities, but had not given enough thought to what the pupils would learn. As a result, teaching and learning lacked focus and, in a few of these lessons, pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Some plans did not identify the pacing of the lesson and, as a result, introductions lasted too long and pupils' interest began to wane.
25. In a number of lessons, challenging activities and high expectations of what pupils could achieve resulted in good gains in learning. For example, Year 3 pupils' interest and concentration were captured by an intriguing mathematical problem about the number of boots needed by a group of animals, the cost, and how many boxes of 10 boots would be needed. Although the task was demanding, the pupils responded by working hard, and they extended their understanding of multiplication and division. In most literacy and numeracy lessons, tasks are well matched to pupils' needs, such as in Year 1&2 where higher-attaining pupils were asked to count back in tens from 72 and recognise the value of digits in numbers such as 501. Challenging tasks for Year 6 pupils resulted in some lively persuasive writing. In the best lessons, a challenging task is pursued at a lively pace, which results in pupils working hard but enjoying the satisfaction of achievement. In a few lessons, however, all pupils were given the same work; tasks were too easy for some pupils, or they finished their work and did not have another activity to pursue.

26. Most lessons are well organised, and the better teaching employs imaginative methods to promote learning. For example, in an excellent religious education lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher created an atmosphere of calm and wonder as she shared pictures and experiences of 'Special Places'. She posed questions about the mystery of nature that prompted pupils to share their own thoughts, building their capacity for reflection. Teachers generally explain new concepts clearly and draw out pupils' ideas well through skilful questioning. For example, in a literacy lesson for Year 6, it was the teacher's gathering of pupils' views that helped them to identify the features of persuasive writing, and they were encouraged to extend their reasoning, developing good speaking skills. In a number of lessons, teachers expected pupils to work independently and to manage their own learning, for example as seen in Year 6 where pupils classified leaves by their features. In these lessons pupils were well motivated and made good gains in learning. However, in a number of weaker lessons, the teacher over-directed pupils' work, and they lost interest. For part of most lessons, pupils work individually or in groups, and this is usually well organised. Teachers and classroom assistants monitor pupils' progress well and intervene by asking questions or encouraging pupils to explain their thinking.
27. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. They have good relationships with their classes, they praise good work and behaviour, and pupils respond by listening well, concentrating on their work and behaving well. In a few lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, however, the teacher failed to manage the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of pupils, or did not ensure that all pupils were working productively. Sometimes they were not vigilant or firm enough, and sometimes not consistent enough. As a result, too much time was taken gaining and re-gaining control and valuable time for learning was lost.
28. Time was used well in most of the lessons observed and, in the best lessons, not a minute was wasted. For example, in a music lesson for Years 1&2, the teacher rapidly introduced a series of activities about loud and soft sounds, which kept the pupils fully involved and extended their understanding. Some teachers use time targets well to inject pace and urgency into pupils' working, giving them five minutes to complete a task, or reminding them that they only have 15 minutes left. In the weaker teaching, there was not enough urgency. Time was lost at the beginning and end of lessons. Whole class introductions lasted too long, leaving too little time for the pupils' tasks. Teachers generally make sound use of resources to support pupils' learning, as was seen in a number of art and science lessons. Classroom assistants are used very well in many lessons, for example providing Additional Literacy Support for groups of pupils. In some cases, however, they were under-employed during the introduction to the lesson, often listening to the teacher for up to 30 minutes; this is a poor use of a valuable resource.
29. Most teachers use sound strategies to assess pupils' understanding and to ensure that work is well matched to their prior attainment. They often begin the lesson with a review of previous learning to check understanding, or begin a new topic by giving the pupils a short test to establish their existing knowledge. In a very good lesson for Year 1&2 pupils, the teacher had modified her plans based on assessments made the previous day. The quality of marking of pupils' work varies considerably between classes, with some teachers consistently offering praise and posing further questions, whilst others usually tick the work. From the very beginning, the school expects pupils to read at home each night, and most do. The school sets an increasing amount of homework as pupils move through the school so that, by Year 6, they are expected to complete an amount that prepares them for secondary school. The work that pupils complete at home makes a valuable contribution to the learning at school. Some parents feel that homework is not set consistently in all classes, particularly for the oldest pupils, but inspectors found no evidence to support this view during the inspection. Most parents are pleased that the school adopts a flexible approach.

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

30. The quality and range of the curriculum for children under five and those in the reception classes is good, and all areas of learning are covered effectively. Well-structured activities and play, and a rich variety of experiences, contribute successfully to each child's all-round development.

Particular emphasis is placed on children's social development and their literacy skills, and in these areas they make particularly good progress.

31. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and relevant to the ages, needs and interests of the pupils. It satisfactorily meets the intellectual and physical needs of most pupils. The school curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 meets all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, and those of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. All curriculum requirements are met for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans include targets for literacy, numeracy and, where appropriate, behaviour. All pupils with special educational needs have good access to extra-curricular activities and are fully integrated into the life of the school. Additional literacy support provides an effective way of giving extra help to groups of pupils. The curriculum generally provides equal opportunities for all pupils, and many year group teams work hard to ensure that their children receive a comparable set of experiences. There are, however, clear disparities in the work completed by classes of pupils within some age groups.
32. Most curriculum policies and guidelines effectively support teachers in their planning and teaching, and the purposes of the learning are made clear. The curriculum is planned thoughtfully so that aspects of learning complement each other where possible. For example, the study of Clarice Cliff pottery in art led to Year 6 pupils designing and making their own plates, capturing the style colourfully and vigorously with great success. The previous inspection report noted that the framework used by the school to develop pupils' knowledge across subjects was sound, but that plans to help pupils make progress in developing their skills were poor. The school has addressed this weakness effectively, and curriculum planning is now good. This is particularly so in art where the use of sketch books to develop pupils' skills enables them to reach very high standards. The National Numeracy Strategy is supporting teachers' termly mathematics planning well. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory overall and good in Years 5 and 6. These strategies are contributing to raising standards in English and mathematics as improved planning enables tasks to be generally better matched to pupils' previous learning. However, there is still little extended writing of reports and accounts in subjects other than English.
33. There are weaknesses in the curriculum in aspects of some subjects. In science, insufficient time and attention are given to the development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, resulting in standards that are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. As yet, curriculum plans do not enable IT skills to be used and developed sufficiently within other subjects, especially mathematics, and this limits the time available for each pupil to apply the skills they learn in IT, so that they can make more rapid progress. New teaching plans for history and geography are being developed. At present a narrow range of experiences is offered, especially in Key Stage 1, and this limits the level to which pupils can develop their historical and geographical enquiry skills. The lack of a teaching scheme for music in Key Stage 2 contributes to unsatisfactory standards at the end of the key stage. The teaching scheme for physical education lacks coherence, resulting in the pupils making satisfactory rather than good progress. The school is aware of these weaknesses and is taking steps to address them through its improvement plan.
34. Teachers within each year group plan together termly and weekly so that the content and purposes of learning are the same for all the pupils. This is mostly effective, with the exception of the science curriculum. Here repetition of work from year to year at the same conceptual level, and the difference in content offered to classes within the same year group, prevent pupils from making satisfactory progress.
35. The time available for teaching in Key Stage 2 falls below the minimum recommended time by one hour per week, and this limits pupils' progress in some aspects of their learning.
36. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is good. A well-structured plan secures this across the curriculum, particularly in physical education, science and religious education. Regular occasions are planned for pupils to talk about matters that concern them, and they are supported well as they increasingly consider their own thoughts and actions in wider

social and moral contexts. Sex education, and heightened awareness of the misuse of drugs and medicines, prepare pupils well for the future.

37. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Regular assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development, allowing opportunities for quiet reflection. The spiritual quality of these occasions is, however, sometimes diminished by the practice of making announcements at the start, rather than at the end, of the assembly, and by counting out the seconds in the time allocated for quiet reflection. Other opportunities for pupils' spiritual development occur during the Year 6 residential trip to Cornwall, where pupils are able to touch owls and watch the waves breaking on the beach. There are, however, few planned opportunities during lessons for pupils to reflect on their own experiences and learning. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound.
38. Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The strong leadership of the popular headteacher promotes good behaviour and a strong moral code. Pupils are involved in formulating their own classroom rules and they understand the consequence of poor behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. Opportunities for the exploration of moral issues are planned for in the curriculum, as when pupils consider the moral dilemma associated with finding a £10 note in the street.
39. The school provides very well for pupils' social development, and this results in high levels of friendship and co-operation between pupils. The school is a warm and caring community. All staff have high expectations of behaviour and relationships, and provide good role models for the children. They listen to pupils' views and value their contributions. The annual residential visit and the school orchestra are good examples of valuable opportunities for personal development, as is the policy for drugs' education, which links to citizenship and social responsibility.
40. The school's provision for pupils' cultural education was found to be unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. Since then the school has made a considerable effort to improve this aspect, and the provision is now good. Pupils are introduced to the culture of other countries in subjects such as art, music and geography; good use is made of the rich heritage of the local area, and representatives of other cultures visit the school.
41. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, especially in music where very high standards of performance are achieved. Visitors are welcomed to the school, and pupils take part in residential visits as well as field trips to local places of geographical and historic interest. The school enriches the curriculum by providing a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn.
42. The school has established good links with the local community. For example, the Youth Action police officer, school nurse and local clergy all make valuable contributions to the curriculum. Links with other local schools are very good, enabling teachers to meet together to discuss curriculum development. Very strong and effective links with the community college give Year 6 pupils a well-informed and confident start to the next stage of their education. The school enjoys positive links with Rolle College, Exeter, which holds the school in high regard, so many student teachers benefit from training alongside the staff.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. The governors and all the staff regard health and safety as a high priority and this makes for a safe and caring school. The governors' health and safety committee includes teachers, the caretaker and a professional health and safety officer. It meets termly and inspects the site twice each year, reporting to the full governing body. Assessments have been carried out for all the significant risks in the day-to-day life of the school. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid and the school nurse visits weekly.
44. The curriculum includes drugs' education and promotes a healthy lifestyle. The school has recently been awarded the North-East Devon Health Authority's Gold Award in recognition of its

work to improve the health of the school and its community. Circle time provides an opportunity for pupils to explore important issues in a safe setting. The school's arrangements for child protection are excellent. All staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive regular training. The co-ordinator is well trained, experienced and thorough.

45. The school has good procedures for monitoring attendance. Information is analysed daily and unexplained absences are followed up quickly. Any concerns are passed on to the education welfare officer who visits the school weekly.
46. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. There is a good behaviour policy based on a positive approach. There are school and class rules, which pupils themselves help to formulate. Pupils know these rules well and are aware that good behaviour is rewarded. Pupils are encouraged to tell a teacher or other adult if they are being bullied and, for those who feel unable to do this, a 'worry box' is provided where they can post a written note about their concerns. Although most members of staff follow the school's good guidance about behaviour management, there are some inconsistencies in its implementation. Where these occur, there is a noticeable deterioration in pupils' behaviour.
47. The lunchtime staff, led by a capable supervisor, contribute well to the quality of the school's behaviour management. At some break times, the level of adult supervision in the play areas for older pupils is too low, and there is a need to review the current arrangements.
48. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. These are largely by informal means, based on teachers' good knowledge of pupils as individuals. Pupils' personal achievements, both in school and outside, are included in a record of achievement folder. Pupils' good achievements are rewarded and this has a positive effect on their attitudes.
49. For all pupils, procedures for assessing attainment and monitoring their academic progress are satisfactory. The school's assessment policy has clear guidance, which has assisted staff in developing a more consistent approach in English and mathematics. In these subjects, staff have a clear understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, through informal daily and systematic longer-term methods of assessment. The monitoring of pupils' progress is strengthened further in these subjects by setting individual targets, shared with parents, to help pupils raise their achievements further. The targets are reviewed termly and staff use the information to plan the next stage of learning.
50. The headteacher uses a range of screening tests as a benchmark to predict pupils' attainment, and subsequent test results are monitored against these benchmarks. A detailed analysis of the results of national tests is undertaken to identify trends between different year groups, gender differences and to focus on areas for improvement in teaching and learning. Evidence of each pupil's work is kept in an achievement portfolio and this shows learning through the school very clearly. For example, the well-maintained sketchbook in art illustrates pupil's learning. These records in art ensure teachers know their pupils' achievements very well. Annual reports to parents contain clear information regarding progress and effort in the core subjects. However, very limited reference is made to children's progress in the foundation subjects. A key issue after the previous inspection was to improve assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress. This has been successfully addressed in English and mathematics. However, the school is aware of the need to develop systems of recording attainment and progress in other subjects.
51. All statutory requirements are met for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Annual reviews are carried out and involve parents appropriately. However, some decisions regarding provision reached at these reviews cannot be implemented owing to a lack of representation by the local authority. About 50 per cent of pupils with special educational needs have an individual education plan, and these are reviewed every six months. The quality of targets in these plans is very variable and some do not support the tracking of progress. Pupils often do not know what targets they are working towards and are not involved in the setting them. Fortnightly progress sheets supplement the individual education plans and, where these are used and reviewed consistently, they provide a good guide to progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school has good links with parents, which support pupils' education well. Parents have positive views of the school and support the attitudes and values that the school promotes. A number of parents provide valuable help in lessons, but the school could use more. An active parent-teacher association raises large sums of money for the school. It has, for example, provided funds to build the attractive and useful wooden shelters in the playground. Fund-raising events organised by the association are always well attended by parents.
53. The school provides good quality information for parents. The booklet for nursery parents is pleasant in tone, attractively presented and contains very good information. The main prospectus is also well presented and informative. Parents receive regular newsletters containing useful information about school life. Teachers send informative notes to parents at the beginning of each term about the curriculum to be covered. The school organises regular curriculum events for parents, but these are not usually well attended. Efforts have been made to improve attendance by changing the timing of these events from evening to afternoon, and by providing crèche facilities. The school consults parents about various matters by means of a questionnaire and provides all parents with a summary of the responses.
54. Pupils' annual reports give useful information about what has been learned in English, mathematics and science, and about what pupils need to do to improve. In other subjects, however, reports often state what the class has covered rather than what the individual pupil has learned. Following a suggestion from parents, reports now include a grade for effort in all subjects. There are open evenings each term where parents and friends are welcome to see the school and displays of children's work. Parents have three formal opportunities each year to discuss their child's work and progress with the class teacher. One of these is during the autumn term and parents value this opportunity to find out how their child has settled into a new class. Parents are, however, strongly encouraged to speak to their child's teacher at any time if they have concerns. Governors hold regular 'surgeries' where parents can discuss any matters connected with school life.
55. For pupils with special educational needs, individual education plans are shared with parents at open evenings. However, details of targets are not sent to parents when they are written or revised, which would help them to support their children. Parents are always invited to annual reviews and many attend. Parents are generally pleased with the provision for special educational needs.
56. Since his appointment, the headteacher has worked very hard to involve parents more in their children's learning, with great success. Attendance at parents' evenings has risen from about thirty per cent to around ninety-five per cent, and parents now feel as involved as they wish to be. A number of parents take part each week in the CAPER (Children And Parents Enjoy Reading) scheme by reading with children in school. However, a significant number of parents appear to have no desire to become involved with their children's education. This aspect is therefore only satisfactory overall, but this is not due to lack of effort on the part of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The quality of leadership is satisfactory overall. There are particular strengths in the leadership and educational direction provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors, but this is a very large organisation in which the impact of their efforts is sometimes frustrated. Other key members of the school management team are not effective enough in supporting the drive to improve standards. This results in inconsistent practice, which reduces the quality of learning in some classes.
58. The headteacher has a clear vision of what the school should achieve. He is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses, and provides the structure and climate within which staff can actively seek improvement. The 'message' that the whole staff team shares responsibility for the quality of learning and the standards achieved is made clear. Several teachers demonstrate a strong

commitment to improvement, but others are not clear enough about what needs to be done next and how it is to be achieved. This weakness limits the impact of good strategies to raise standards. As a result, the school's corporate capacity to succeed in making improvements is unsatisfactory. Despite these weaknesses, there are positive signs, such as the impact of improved planning and better-focused teaching on standards in Year 6. Careful analysis of the current situation, by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, has also resulted in the formation of a curriculum management team that will promote and monitor 'best' practice rigorously.

59. The school's aims and values have been reviewed and updated since the previous inspection. These provide a clear and succinct expression of the school's aspirations. They are fully reflected in the quality of care provided for pupils, but the realisation of high achievement is less secure.
60. There is effective delegation of roles and responsibilities in pastoral and organisational aspects among other staff, which helps to ensure clear lines of communication. Delegation in curricular aspects, however, is less effective. Whilst suitable managerial structures are in place, the school is slow to focus the work of subject co-ordinators with the result that too many initiatives have a limited impact across the school. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership for this area of the school's work. She ensures that all staff are fully aware of pupils special needs, understand the system for identifying pupils' difficulties, and are supported in addressing targets for improvement. The governing body is fully involved with issues regarding special educational needs and fulfils all its statutory duties.
61. The governors are very well supported by the headteacher and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. They are provided with good quality reports from the headteacher, information about trends in attainment, occasional reports on the progress of initiatives such as implementing the behaviour policy, and overviews of the quality of work in particular subjects. The work of the governing body is particularly well organised. The contribution of committees is effective, and this helps all governors to form a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors show commitment and energy in translating their strong support for the school into action. They contribute a good range of skills and expertise, and their good relationships with staff and parents is assisting them in becoming a more effective critical partners, and in holding the school to account. Governors have well-considered plans to develop their monitoring role and have set appropriate performance targets for the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Suitable targets for other senior staff have yet to be formalised.
62. The quality of monitoring and evaluation, and its impact on the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Despite a suitable programme of monitoring being in place, many of these observations lack a specific focus and the conclusions lack rigour. Even where strengths and weaknesses are identified in a subject, such as science, there is little evidence of the whole school systematically building on the pointers provided. Some senior staff and year group leaders are insufficiently aware of what is happening in other classrooms.
63. An appropriate system of teacher appraisal and professional review has been re-established. The induction of staff new to the school is good, and the quality of support provided for newly qualified teachers is very good. However, the effective use of performance management is at an early stage. In some cases, targets are not rigorously linked to the school's needs and goals. Staff are well supported by a carefully targeted programme of professional development and training. A good balance between the school's needs identified in its development planning and teacher's individual needs has a direct influence in raising standards, for example in mathematics.
64. The headteacher, deputy and governors take good account of a wide range of indicators in setting priorities for school improvement. Whole school review and self-evaluation build well on the rigorous analysis of pupils' performance in national tests and the views of all sections of the school community. An 'open debate' is encouraged, particularly within the school. However, whilst appropriate broad targets for improvement are set, the means of supporting their achievement is less secure. For example, analysis of test results is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance and the reasons why. However, the steps that need to be taken to improve teaching are not always clearly communicated to class teachers. This results in insufficiently clear and detailed action planning to focus school improvement.

65. Educational priorities are very well supported by carefully considered financial planning. Effective procedures ensure the necessary financial checks and balances are in place, good attention is paid to ensuring best value in the purchase of goods and services, and the few recommendations of the most recent auditor's report have been implemented. The quality and frequency of financial information made available to staff and governors is good. This is particularly helpful in assisting the work of governors' committees. The steps taken to review the impact of spending are appropriate, but procedures to assess value for money are at an early stage. Administrative systems are efficient and unobtrusive. The use of specific grants and funding made available to the school is efficient, with all expenditure securely targeted. The use of new technologies is developing well, such as in the library.
66. In general, the use and deployment of staff and resources is efficient, but there are two major weaknesses. Firstly, whilst the allocation of support staff is satisfactory, their use is not always well planned. For example, assistants often sit and listen to lesson introductions and the focus of their subsequent work is not always made clear. Secondly, there are weaknesses in the use and organisation of teaching time, which are compounded by the length of the teaching day. Teaching sessions do not always equate to the length of lessons. For example, sessions are either too long or too short and frequently time is taken for extra reading, which further reduces the time actually spent on some subjects. In Key Stage 2, the teaching time available is at least one hour below the nationally recommended minimum. This is further reduced for pupils using the 'shuttle' bus and interrupts the pace of learning for others in the classes affected.
67. Overall provision for teaching and support staff is good. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced to meet the needs of the curriculum. Effective use is made of specialist teachers in information technology and music. A good number of support staff have undertaken additional training and this positively enhances the quality of support provided both in classrooms and around the school.
68. The school building and grounds provide a very attractive working environment for pupils and staff alike. High quality displays of pupils' work enhance the building, and the outdoor areas provide interesting play opportunities. The school is very well maintained by a caretaker and cleaners who take a great pride in their work and their association with the school. Two extra classrooms are due to be provided shortly, and this will relieve pressure on the Key Stage 1 shared area, but rising pupil numbers will put even greater pressure on areas such as the hall, which is already too small to accommodate the whole school for assemblies. Part of the nursery outdoor play area becomes very soggy in wet weather and restricts physical activity. The quality and range of learning resources is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. There are particular strengths in provision for art, and provision is good for the under fives, and in English, mathematics and music.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. The school provides an environment that is supportive of pupils' learning and development. This enables them to make sound progress overall during their time at the school. Results of national tests for pupils in their final year have been below average; standards of attainment are improving in English and mathematics, but remain below average in science. The quality of teaching is sound overall, but varies significantly between classes. Within this context, and to improve the standards of work and the pupils' achievements, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- raise the standard of teaching, where there are weaknesses, by:
 - ensuring that there are high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and that the tasks set are appropriately challenging;
 - improving the planning of lessons, so that there is a clearer focus on what pupils will learn;
 - improving teachers' knowledge in the subjects where they are least confident;
 - ensuring that the school's good guidance for managing pupils' behaviour is implemented consistently;
 - ensuring that the pace of learning enables all pupils to make as much progress as possible;
 - enabling all teachers to share existing good practice.
(paragraphs 4, 11, 18-19, 22-29, 83, 92, 100, 111, 118, 122, 128, 131, 137)
- raise attainment in science, as planned, by:
 - improving monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, so that weaknesses are identified and addressed;
 - increasing the amount of science work completed and recorded, in classes where there are weaknesses;
 - ensuring that sufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' experimental and investigative skills, alongside their knowledge of science;
 - ensuring that the curriculum provided is consistent for pupils of the same age group in different classes;
 - strengthening assessment procedures, so that work builds on pupils' existing knowledge, skills and understanding.
(paragraphs 4-5, 9, 33-34, 95-102)
- increase the amount of time for teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 to the nationally recommended minimum, and ensure that the available time is used efficiently.
(paragraphs 35, 66)
- extend, as planned, the sound procedures for assessment already in place for English and mathematics to the other subjects of the curriculum.
(paragraphs 49-50, 101, 119, 123)
- improve the implementation of plans for raising standards, by:
 - focusing more clearly on the most important priorities for improvement;
 - evaluating more rigorously the progress made towards achieving those improvements;
 - ensuring that all staff are clear about the part they must play in raising standards, so that improvements are reflected consistently in all classes.
(paragraphs 58, 60, 62, 64, 86, 102, 115)

There are no less important weaknesses that the inspection team considered significant enough for the school to consider for inclusion in the action plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	111
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	14	43	31	11		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	564
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		88

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14	147

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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	39	30	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	29	35
	Girls	22	22	25
	Total	54	51	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (77)	74 (65)	87 (84)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	35	35
	Girls	22	22	25
	Total	54	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (73)	83 (83)	87 (80)
	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	39	31	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	26
	Girls	24	20	23
	Total	46	43	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (51)	61 (45)	70 (54)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	23	27
	Girls	23	20	22
	Total	43	43	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (60)	61 (57)	70 (77)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	563
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	
Black – African heritage	0	
Black – other	0	
Indian	0	
Pakistani	0	
Bangladeshi	0	
Chinese	0	
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups	0	

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	354

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	45

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	853154.00
Total expenditure	868278.00
Expenditure per pupil	1630.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	25298.00
Balance carried forward to next year	10174.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	614
Number of questionnaires returned	205

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	42	6	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	40	51	7	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	59	10	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	53	18	4	3
The teaching is good.	49	45	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	51	11	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	39	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	42	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	33	55	8	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	44	47	7	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	51	5	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	39	13	4	10

Totals may not add to 100% owing to rounding]

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

70. The provision for under fives is good overall in both the nursery and reception classes, and children are given a positive start to their education. The nursery has places for 52 three and four year olds, attending on a part-time basis, including five designated for children who require extra support. Children join one of the three reception classes in either September or January prior to their fifth birthday. Work planned for all these children takes account of the recommended learning requirements for under fives. The school plans to strengthen the provision for its youngest children with the creation of a Foundation Unit next September.
71. Children join the nursery with a wide range of skills, but overall attainment is below that expected, especially in language skills and in personal and social development. The teachers, nursery nurses and support assistant provide a broad, rich and relevant curriculum with a good range of interesting activities. The skilful support the children receive enables them to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the nursery, children's personal and social skills have improved, and standards are close to those expected. However, attainment is still below average in language and literacy and mathematics. It is satisfactory for children's knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Teaching and learning in the reception classes builds successfully on the good start made in the nursery and, by the time they enter Key Stage 1, most children reach and some exceed the expected standard in all areas of learning.
72. All of the early year's teachers have high expectations for children's achievement and progress, and the great majority of teaching is well matched to their stages of development. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was almost always satisfactory; it was very good in 16 per cent of lessons, and good in a further 63 per cent. Teachers, nursery nurses and other support staff work well together, and well-established routines ensure children have equal access to all activities. In the better lessons, good use of relevant learning resources and skilful questioning motivates children so that they are keen to learn. Regular observations whilst children work and play usually ensure that the planned activities successfully meet their developing needs. Occasionally, however, tasks are not challenging enough to ensure that children build on their existing skills. Good records are kept of children's overall progress in the nursery, and of progress in literacy and numeracy in the reception classes. Children under five with special needs are well supported and they make similar progress to other pupils.
73. Children in both the nursery and reception classes make good progress in their **personal and social development**. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Children are encouraged to co-operate well with each other in their work and play, and they show developing perseverance and concentration. The pattern of the nursery day encourages children to talk, work and play together in small groups, but there are occasions when more challenge is needed so that higher-attaining children progress at a faster pace. In the reception classes, children show increasing independence. They move from teacher-directed to own choice activities and are able to locate materials independently. Pupils of all ages have good relationships with adults and other children. Expectations of good behaviour are consistently reinforced in an encouraging manner and all children understand what is right and wrong and happily accept the established rules. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are good, as seen in the very good drama lesson linked to the story of 'Jack and Jill'. The school has sustained the good provision for children's personal and social development that was noted in the previous inspection report.
74. A high priority is given to **language and literacy** skills, and children make good progress. In the nursery, both planned and spontaneous discussions encourage children to listen and to talk about their daily experiences. They show growing confidence in speaking to one other and to adults, but need guidance in listening during the sharing of stories. Most are able to answer in short sentences and are keen to practise new vocabulary until they are confident in its use. In the reception classes, children communicate well in small groups in imaginative play and show improved listening and speaking skills during literacy sessions. Teaching during literacy lessons

is good overall. In the nursery, children know that words as well as pictures tell the story and they are familiar with some letter sounds. By the time they are five, most children use a range of letter sounds and picture cues to read simple texts, and higher-attaining children are beginning to read well from the early stages of the reading scheme. Nursery children enjoy mark making and early writing experiences as their control over pencils, crayons and paintbrushes develops, and they are aware of the purposes of writing such as making lists. In the reception classes, children move from random mark making to the use of familiar letters and words to communicate their thoughts and ideas. Most children are becoming independent writers and can read back their work successfully.

75. Early years' teaching in **mathematics** is satisfactory with some good features, and children make sound progress. Staff encourage children's mathematical development by intervening in their play and by ensuring that children use number in relevant contexts, such as counting the number of children in their group at snack time. The children learn a range of number rhymes, songs and counting games, which reinforces their skills. In the nursery, children recognise a range of shapes and colours. They sort, match and compare objects and recognise and name 'bigger' and 'smaller' objects. They match shapes, and are learning the meaning of a half as they cut their sandwiches into two parts. In the reception classes, work is carefully matched to children's needs, especially during numeracy sessions. Most of the children have secure knowledge of numbers to ten and beyond, use a number line for simple addition and subtraction and can sort match and recognise colours, patterns and shapes. They develop their mathematical vocabulary, such as when they compared and estimated the amounts of pasta they could pick up in each hand.
76. A range of interesting topics and good teaching helps pupils to make good progress in developing **knowledge and understanding of the world** around them. They show particular enjoyment in finding out about themselves and in exploring their senses. In the nursery, as a result of planting seeds, children are beginning to understand the conditions needed to help plants grow. They have carefully observed and looked after tadpoles, discussing their development. They understand the use of a variety of information sources such as books, television and the computer and, with support, are developing some control over the 'mouse', though this is an area for development. In reception, children have good knowledge of the work of different people, such as vets, and understand their role in keeping pets healthy. They observe, explore and discover, for example being aware of seasonal changes and weather patterns. Other planned activities enable children to gain some knowledge of past events, celebrations, and of the need to look after the environment. On the computer, children can use the arrow keys and match lower and upper case letters to locate hidden objects.
77. Children make sound progress in their **physical development**. All children understand the need for health, hygiene and safety, and they run, hop, skip and jump with increasing control. Teaching in this area is sound overall. In the nursery, children use a range of equipment with increasing skill during outdoor play. For example, they manoeuvre large trikes and other ride-on toys around the designated track, and use the adventure equipment to climb, step, and slide. However, there is no structured approach to children's physical activities to ensure good levels of challenge such as developing hand and eye co-ordination. A range of small world toys, and opportunities for painting, making and scribbling secures sound progress in children's manipulation of pencils, brushes and tools. In the reception classes, children use their bodies with increasing control, and their use of paint brushes pencils and other tools also develops well, so that, for example, most pupils can cut out straight and curved shapes accurately with scissors.
78. Good teaching and planning, including structured role-play, ensures that children make good progress in their **creative development**. In the nursery, children have a range of good opportunities for painting, and in collage work they make careful choices about colour and materials. They cut and stick carefully, mould, roll and manipulate playdoh, use construction kits to plan roads and bridges and really enjoy the tasks. In the reception classes, children increase these skills and display good creativity in a range of art and craft activities, as seen in the good quality work on display. In musical activities children are able to clap a steady beat and incorporate their names into singing patterns. They copy rhythms for nursery rhymes and enjoy using instruments.

ENGLISH

79. The results of the 1999 national assessments were well below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. At the end of both key stages, results were well below average in comparison with schools in similar social circumstances. Since 1996, the Key Stage 1 results have fluctuated, but have gradually improved over the last two years. The Key Stage 2 results have recovered from a low point in 1996 and have been improving steadily. Inspection evidence shows that current standards are still below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but good progress towards the end of Key Stage 2 has resulted in standards which match national expectations. This is an improving picture, though attainment is about the same as that found at the last inspection in 1996.
80. Listening skills are good across the school. The great majority of pupils listen attentively to their teachers, sometimes for long periods of time. They respond promptly to questions and are keen to show what they know and to share their ideas. They work well in pairs and small groups, and listen carefully to the contributions of others. For example, in a Year 2 drama lesson, pupils successfully negotiated with each other how they would demonstrate their ideas to the class. Speaking skills are satisfactory. Most pupils speak confidently in their own classrooms, but are less confident when addressing a group. They lack practice in speaking more formally and articulating clearly so that others can hear and understand. Pupils in a Year 6 class, who contributed very well to a debate, were less successful in sharing their ideas in public and winning over others to their point of view. Pupils in both key stages have a sound understanding of the technical vocabulary specific to this subject. For example, pupils in Year 2 know the difference between verbs and nouns. Older pupils are able to explain the meaning of alliteration and simile and provide examples. This sound understanding of subject specific terminology is reflected across the curriculum and assists pupils' learning, as was seen in a Year 4 science lesson when pupils discussed electricity using the terms pylon, circuit and current correctly.
81. Attitudes to reading are positive. The home-school reading diary and the very good range of books available in school contribute effectively to pupils' eagerness to succeed and the enjoyment they find in reading. Pupils are keen to talk about their favourite books and authors. The library has a good selection of books, which reflect the cultural diversity of British society, and pupils enjoy stories about different cultures and countries. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils use non-fiction books competently, including contents and index pages. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently with good expression. The majority of pupils build on the good start made in reception, developing a suitable range of strategies that enable them to read unfamiliar words. Approximately half the pupils are reading at or above the nationally expected level. However, a significant minority of pupils still has difficulty with basic skills such as letter-sound matching and blending, and their progress is slow. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils achieve standards in reading that match national expectations. Higher-attaining pupils make very good progress. They read demanding texts with good expression and understanding. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 have good recall of the books they have read and can retell stories satisfactorily. Pupils enjoy shared reading in the literacy hour and benefit from the focus on different aspects of the text. They can differentiate between fact and fiction, and older pupils are able to identify bias in persuasive writing. When provided with opportunities, they are able to scan non-fiction books for information. The school recognises the need to make better use of the very good library facilities for the development of independent research skills.
82. The standard of writing is below average in Key Stage 1. A minority of pupils achieve well and, by Year 2, they use capital letters and full stops consistently, spell common words correctly and write clearly using joined-up handwriting. These pupils produce imaginative, extended writing with good use of dialogue. Most pupils make steady progress in Year 2 and are able to write independently and structure a story satisfactorily. They generally present their work neatly, but forget to punctuate simple sentences and make mistakes when spelling familiar words. Many are still printing, and lower attainers have difficulty forming and spacing letters correctly. In Key Stage 2, pupils have opportunities to write for an appropriate range of purposes and audiences. Narrative and persuasive writing are particular strengths and pupils are able to argue a point effectively. The literacy hour is used satisfactorily in most classes to develop pupils' writing skills so that sound progress is made, particularly at the beginning and end of the key stage.

Extra, well-focused support for lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 enables them to make good progress. By Year 6, standards in writing are now close to national expectations. Pupils make particularly good progress in Year 6. They write confidently in a variety of styles and express themselves well. Planning books are used effectively to enable pupils to redraft their work and make improvements. Pupils recognise their own strengths and weaknesses and try hard to achieve their individual targets. Higher-attaining pupils write maturely using a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentence structures and good punctuation. They organise their writing in paragraphs and make good use of dialogue. A significant minority of pupils, however, are still insecure in the spelling of familiar words, the structure of their writing is sometimes unclear and punctuation erratic.

83. The quality of teaching is sound overall and good in many lessons. In a few lessons, however, in Year 2 and Year 5, teaching was unsatisfactory because expectations of what pupils could achieve were too low, or pupils' behaviour was not managed well enough. In the better teaching, a good introduction made the aims of the lesson clear, good relationships gave pupils confidence to contribute in discussions, effective questioning extended pupils' answers, and good pupil management enabled the teacher to make the best use of time. Where teaching was very good, the teacher's very secure knowledge of the subject, high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, and a brisk pace of learning sustained high levels of pupil motivation. Examples of very good teaching were seen in a Year 2 drama lesson in which the pupils role-played an Okehampton community meeting expressing concern about an escaped lion, and Year 6 lessons on persuasive writing linked to the forthcoming residential trip to Cornwall. Pupils were interested and involved throughout these lessons, and made very good progress in their learning.
84. The implementation of the literacy hour is having a beneficial effect on standards overall, but teachers have yet to have training in guided writing and this has been identified as the weakest aspect. In Key Stage 1, some strong features of the recommended format, such as guided reading and writing, have yet to be fully implemented, and so opportunities to promote optimum learning are lost. From September, intensive literacy support from the local authority will tackle this weakness. Assessment procedures are sound overall and very good in Year 6. Here teachers track pupils' progress very carefully and set appropriate targets to match individual needs and abilities. Pupils are engaged in a constant effort to improve their own standards. The underachievement in boys identified in the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests has been addressed through a change in reading materials designed to motivate boys and improve standards.
85. Classroom assistants contribute well to the learning of pupils with special educational needs who make at least satisfactory progress. The librarian offers good support for pupils' learning, but the information technology at her disposal is not fully utilised by teachers to track pupils' reading progress. The booster classes for Year 6 pupils and the additional literacy support for groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are having a positive impact on standards.
86. Overall, the subject lacks the vision associated with strong leadership. Teachers rely on year group colleagues for mutual support, guidance and encouragement. The co-ordinator and the head teacher have monitored lessons, but identified weaknesses have not always been effectively addressed. The recommendations of the local authority monitoring audit of the school's literacy strategy, carried out in February, have not yet been fully implemented and the co-ordinator makes insufficient use of the results of national examination results to take the subject forward.

MATHEMATICS

87. The results of the 1999 national assessments, for pupils near the end of Key Stage 1, were well above average compared with all schools, and well above average compared with those achieved by schools in similar social circumstances. This age group contains a far larger proportion of higher-attaining pupils than is usual for the school. At the end of Key Stage 2, results were below the national average, and well below those achieved by similar schools. Nonetheless, the results were a marked improvement on the previous year. Inspection findings show that current attainment, at the end of each key stage, matches national expectations. Standards have continued to improve at the end of Key Stage 2 because the school has given the subject more

curriculum time, teaching is generally good, and the curriculum is well structured within the National Numeracy Strategy framework. At the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be good at the end of Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2.

88. Pupils enter school with below average attainment in mathematics. Good teaching in the early years results in good progress for the majority of pupils. However, this slows for some pupils towards the end of Key Stage 1 because teaching is not challenging enough and pupils do not build sufficiently upon previous learning. In Key Stage 2 progress is variable between sets because the quality of teaching is not consistent, and work is not always well matched to pupils' existing level of learning. However, progress accelerates near the end of Key Stage 2 enabling pupils to make good progress overall.
89. Pupils' numeracy skills are average, though their mental recall of multiplication facts is good throughout the school, as observed in a Year 3 class where pupils counted easily in groups of three and six. In some lessons, pupils use their numeracy skills effectively to support work in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils collect data and draw graphs, as seen in work recording the temperature of cooling water. However, the use of numeracy skills in other subjects is largely incidental rather than planned.
90. In Year 2, most pupils work confidently with number to 100, and higher-attainers are beginning to understand the place value of digits. Most pupils are familiar with a range of calculations and their knowledge of multiplication facts is developing, often counting confidently in twos, threes, fives and tens. However, pupils' strategies for using more than one method to complete a given calculation are limited. Most pupils identify halves and quarters of given shapes and they are developing appropriate measuring skills, recording accurately to the nearest centimetre. They can collect information and draw simple graphs. Across Year 2, pupils' work shows sound achievement, though the quantity of recorded work is variable between classes. Higher-attaining pupils mostly complete the same work as others before moving forward to more challenging tasks and this slows their progress.
91. In Year 6, most pupils can multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10 or 100, and calculate using decimals to two places. They use a range of strategies successfully. Most pupils quickly recall multiplication facts to work out the perimeter and area of simple shapes. They confidently convert simple fractions and percentages, successfully using their skills to solve everyday problems. Pupils in Year 6 are developing good skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. For example, a recent 'Walk to School Week' produced a range of data for each class indicating the variety of forms of transport used. Pupils searched through the data, comparing patterns between classes to establish the healthiest class. Pupils made general statements about why they thought certain patterns appeared and explained their reasoning. Some pupils used IT to enter information into a database, which enabled them to produce and interpret graphs and diagrams, and to find out what the class average was for any given factor. Data handling is a strong aspect of the subject.
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages but, while there are strengths, there are also weaknesses, which are responsible for the slowing of progress. Teachers' planning is detailed, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and the best is informed by careful assessments of pupils' learning in previous lessons. The most effective planning clearly shows what the pupils are expected to learn in the lesson, and these objectives are shared with the pupils. This ensures that pupils are clear on what is expected of them and is a key factor in maintaining focus and pace. Most lessons start with a range of mental questions, but the sharing of ideas about methods of calculation is too limited. Most teachers explain new tasks to be undertaken carefully, and the best presentations can be imaginative. For example, sunglasses and a woolly hat on a number line were used to enhance teaching about positive and negative temperatures. Introductions to lessons are often lively and interesting, but the final session is often rushed and fails to consolidate learning. The very good teaching has a sense of purpose and urgency that holds pupils' interest and motivation. For example, pupils in Year 6 extended their understanding of data analysis through a lively whole class discussion, and Year 3 pupils explored a variety of number combinations, maintaining good pace by working against the 'clock'. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, in lessons observed in Year 1 and Year 5, tasks set for pupils were too easy,

particularly for higher attainers, so they were not challenged enough and failed to make the gains in learning of which they were capable. Work does not always build sufficiently on previous learning, for example the repetition of adding numbers to ten in upper Key Stage 1. Recording is often restricted to worksheets requiring unchallenging, one number answers rather than allowing pupils to show their mathematical understanding through a more open-ended approach.

93. The setting of pupils for mathematics in Key Stage 2 has its strengths and weaknesses. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, despite the wide range of prior attainment within some sets, pupils generally complete the same work. Higher-attaining pupils often complete the same tasks as others before moving on to more challenging work. The large number of pupils in some of the higher-attaining sets restricts time for individual support to consolidate learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported within the class and setting system and make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment.
94. The assessment for pupils' attainment and progress has improved since the last inspection. Careful assessments are carried out regularly in lessons, and half-termly testing is used to monitor the progress of individual pupils towards their mathematical targets. This information is used effectively to inform the placing of pupils in the correct ability set, but is not always used to match work to the needs of individual pupils. The school is aware that IT is not used enough to consolidate and extend pupils' skills. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, linked to better use of assessment, is having a direct effect on raising standards for all pupils. The school has made a sound start to the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy, but is aware of the need to complete all staff training. The co-ordinator has worked hard to assess the school's current provision, raise teachers' confidence and skills, and develop a clear plan for further improvement. Most teachers have observed good practice in the opening part of a numeracy lesson, and this supportive training is raising standards in pupils' mental and oral skills and teachers' subject confidence. There is a shared commitment to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

95. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment is below national expectations. They make sound progress in building their factual knowledge, but their skills in the experimental and investigative aspects of the subject are weaker and, in some classes, very little of this type of work is completed. This is a similar finding to the last inspection, though attainment then was judged to be broadly in line with national expectations.
96. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments showed pupils' attainment to be below the national average. Although most pupils reached the expected Level 2 of attainment, none gained the higher Level 3. Over the past four years, results have been broadly similar. In their current work, most Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the way that living things grow and change. They know that plants need light, water and soil to grow, and they have observed and drawn a variety of plants in the school grounds. Year 2 pupils' past work shows that they have, for example, explored the ways in which materials change when they are heated, and discussed whether the material will change back to its original form when cooled. In some classes, pupils are encouraged to make simple predictions and draw conclusions, but in other classes these are absent. Pupils have considered the properties of a range of materials, and classified them, but there is no evidence of work on forces, an important element of the curriculum that would provide opportunities for experimental work. In one class, the books contain too little work to develop pupils' skills in recording their ideas in a variety of ways.
97. Pupils start Key Stage 1 with a knowledge and understanding of the world that is, overall, about average. Most pupils gather a sound range of scientific knowledge, but they do not develop their skills in experimental and investigative work sufficiently. Overall, pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs generally make sound progress because they are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants. Higher-attainers are usually given the same work as other pupils and are not always challenged enough.

98. Results of the 1999 national assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average, and well below average when compared with those achieved by schools in similar social circumstances. Only 70 per cent of pupils reached the expected Level 4 of attainment, though 20 per cent achieved the higher Level 5. Over the past four years, results have improved steadily and, recently, at a rather better rate than the national trend. Nonetheless, pupils' attainment is not as high as it should be, largely owing to weaknesses in their experimental skills.
99. In their current work about living things, Year 6 pupils observe a variety of leaves carefully and classify them according to a range of features. Their drawings are of good quality and they can explain how to use a process of elimination to identify a particular leaf by its features. Most of these pupils understand that leaves help a plant to grow using carbon dioxide, sunlight and nutrients from the roots, and higher attainers explain that leaves change these raw materials to make what the plant needs. Year 6 pupils' past work shows a sound coverage of the curriculum, with health and sex education topics well integrated. In their work on forces, pupils investigate friction by testing the grip of different trainers, and they show their appreciation of fair testing and multiple testing to reach an accurate result. However, there is no clear statement of the question being tested, no prediction of the outcome and no conclusion. Across Key Stage 2, pupils are not taught to use a common experimental format that would structure and develop their science work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make inconsistent progress during Key Stage 2, and there are discrepancies in the quality and content of work between classes in the same year group, such as in Year 5 where only two classes have covered the topic 'The Earth in Space'. High attainers are generally given the same work as other pupils, and are not challenged enough to provide more complex explanations.
100. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was sound with some good features. It was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen, and good in just under a half. Teachers are generally well prepared for lessons, know what they want the pupils to learn, and explain new concepts clearly using a good range of scientific vocabulary. They lead discussions well, posing open-ended questions. They encourage pupils to observe carefully. As a result, pupils are interested in their science work and, in many lessons, make good gains in learning. The better teaching enables pupils to explore and experiment, as seen in Year 4 where pupils used batteries, wires and bulbs to make circuits. Although the main purpose of this lesson was to check what pupils knew from previous work, given the freedom of the activity, pupils began to make circuits in series and parallel, noting the varying brightness of bulbs, and were challenged to explain what they had discovered. As at the last inspection, however, in some lessons teachers do not allow enough time for independent activity, pupils are over directed, and higher attainers, in particular, are not challenged sufficiently. Although the quality of teaching seen during this inspection was sound, the overall impact of teaching, as seen in pupils' work, is unsatisfactory. Too little attention is given to the experimental aspects of the subject, and there are inconsistencies in the content and quality of work completed by pupils in different classes.
101. The school follows nationally recommended guidance for the content of the curriculum, but the experimental and investigative aspects of these materials are not fully exploited. Teachers plan their lessons in year group teams, and this results in a high level of consistency in some year groups, but not in others. In some classes, it is clear from pupils' recorded work that too little time is being spent on science. Pupils have made some use of information technology (IT), for example when Year 6 graph data about the effects of varying weights on an elastic band, but IT is not used enough to support and enrich scientific work. Assessment procedures are currently unsatisfactory, but improving. Teachers have begun to collect examples of pupils' recording of experimental work to judge standards, and some assess pupils' knowledge at the beginning of a topic. However, as yet there is no coherent system to monitor pupils' attainment and progress so that teachers can match work accurately to pupils' needs. This was part of a key issue at the last inspection and there has been too little progress.
102. Management of the subject across the school is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is fairly recently appointed and has worked hard to identify areas for improvement and to construct a clear action plan, including a greater emphasis on experimental work. However, there has been little monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, so the co-ordinator has only a partial view of strengths and weaknesses. Nonetheless, planned improvements have already had some impact on

standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and, if these are implemented consistently in all classes, the school is well placed to make further progress.

ART

103. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in art and standards achieved are excellent. Standards have continued to improve since the last inspection when they were very good. Eye-catching displays throughout the school make an exceptional contribution to creating a bright and welcoming environment. They show that pupils work is valued, which contributes to their self-esteem. This is immediately apparent in the entrance hall where emotive 'Dream Time' Aboriginal artwork is entrancing and thought provoking.
104. In Key Stage 1, pupils work practically and imaginatively in a range of media, using pencils, pastels and paint effectively to produce a range of beautiful work. They know how to produce a variety of shades and mix colours confidently. Observational drawings of fruit and vegetables indicate how skilful pupils are in using line and tone to capture the essence of what they see. Initial sketches made during a visit to the 'White Lady' waterfall are further interpreted in paint and pastel to provide quite breathtaking representations of what has been seen and experienced. Older pupils are aware of the ways in which texture might be captured in their work through collage and printing, and of the importance of illustrations to accompany stories.
105. The excellent standards are successfully built upon in Key Stage 2, so that pupils explore and combine media and visual elements for different purposes. They can mix and match paint and use a variety of brushstrokes and techniques to recapture the essence of the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Rousseau, but interpreted in their own particular way. Links with other subjects successfully inform and influence pupils' work. For example, Victorian artefacts were used as starting points for sketching, painting and needlework. The use of IT programs such as 'Dazzle' enables pupils to design flowers and decorative letters, which provide the pattern for cross stitch samplers of personal initials. Work on line and form resulting from a study of Hogarth prints enabled pupils to capture texture in their own work. Pupils experimented successfully with visual and tactile elements such as string and paint, fine strokes in watercolour and printing from blocks. The oldest pupils have very good control of media and visual elements, seen particularly in their work based on the distinctive craft of Clarice Cliff and their striking ceramic plates.
106. The quality of teaching is very good, and the majority of teachers display very high levels of expertise. Teachers introduce lessons carefully and demonstrate a range of techniques, which supports the development of pupils' visual language and experimentation. Pupils are given suitable time to reflect on what they might achieve and are made aware of the possibilities within different media. From the earliest stages, sketchbooks are developed successfully as notebooks for recording memories and observations, and for experimenting and planning so that original ideas can be extended in different media.
107. The co-ordinator continues to develop her role successfully and has initiated art record books, which give a clear view of pupils' developing skills and their maturity in capturing images. A portfolio, which also includes photographic evidence, gives an excellent overview of the range and quality of the work produces in each year group. Very good teaching and effective management of the subject enables pupils to achieve the excellent standards seen during the inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. No design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection, as it is taught in concentrated units for some part of each term in each year group. Most completed work had been taken home by the pupils and very few examples of their planning or what they had made were available. As a result, it was not possible to make a secure judgement on standards in design and technology.

Other judgements are made on a scrutiny of teachers' planning, a very limited amount of pupils' work and conversations with pupils and teachers. The lack of any collection of pupils' work means that it is difficult for teachers to build up a consistent and agreed view of standards and progress throughout the school, or for the pupils to judge their own progress. This is unsatisfactory.

109. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in designing and making products. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop their cutting and joining skills, improving their scissor control, for example when making a lead and collar for a pet. Correct lengths are measured and cut, and joins are carefully made with punched holes and thread tags. They choose colours and threads to make interesting abstract textile designs of a waterfall they have visited, linked to work in art and geography. In Key Stage 2, pupils satisfactorily develop their designing and making skills and extend their technical vocabulary, as when they study and use different kinds of cams in Year 6. The pupils disassemble a moving toy in order to help them design one for a young child. They research and produce several designs before choosing one to make. They draw plans, choose materials they will need, and write step-by-step instructions. The designs are individual and imaginative and the pupils say they enjoyed making them. Progress in evaluating the process and what they have made is unsatisfactory. Most pupils, at the end of both key stages, only state whether they like the product and give simple views of how they could improve their approach.
110. Teachers' planning shows that they understand the nature of the design, make and evaluate cycle. A new, good-quality policy supports the school's approach to design and technology. The teaching scheme followed by the school provides a variety of worthwhile experiences, including food technology, mechanisms and textiles. The contexts for this work are carefully chosen to enhance learning in other subjects and to be of interest to the pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils designed and made a very beautiful quilt to depict landmarks since 1930, which included the introduction of 'The Beano', gas masks and rock and roll. Pupils' learning is further enriched through such events as 'Past Times' week where craftsmen, such as basket weaver, come into school to demonstrate their skills.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall, during both key stages. However, there is considerable variation in the quality of learning across the school. In Key Stage 1, though most pupils achieve appropriate standards for their ages, this is only in a narrow range of work. In Key Stage 2, progress is also variable between classes, but the majority of pupils achieve satisfactory standards across a suitable range of work. Since the last inspection, the standards achieved have declined in Key Stage 1 but standards have been successfully maintained in Key Stage 2.
112. Pupils in Year 1 develop their knowledge of the local environment through drawing simple maps of their route to school. They learn about the jobs of 'people who help us' and collect information for traffic and car park surveys. In Year 2, pupils learn to locate countries, such as Italy, on a map of Europe. They are beginning to link particular foods with Italy and to know that the climate and lifestyle is different to their own. However, by the end of the key stage, the sound map work skills developed in Year 1 are not sufficiently built upon.
113. In Year 3, pupils have some knowledge of river features and most can use a key and identify significant countries and continents on a world map. They gain a limited understanding of how animals and people adapt to their environment, and predict the weather in different holiday destinations. Pupils satisfactorily develop mapping skills through drawing a scale plan of the classroom and carefully annotating a map of the school. In Year 4, pupils successfully extend their knowledge of the locality. They carefully plot a town walk, identify important buildings on a map of Okehampton, and have a developing knowledge of land use. In Year 3, pupils effectively extend their knowledge of rivers by studying the Nile as part of their work in history. In Year 5, pupils extend their knowledge of the locality through studying river systems and learn about the influence of geographical features, such as climate, on land use and economic activity

in St Lucia. Pupils in Year 6 further develop their map reading skills; they compare Newquay with Okehampton and link physical features such as landscape and climate to the main characteristics of the area. Pupils use mathematical skills well to present their findings about tourism and industry in the south west region, and some pupils build successfully on their mapping skills, as part of their work about the Second World War. However, throughout the school, pupils do not consistently focus and develop their writing skills through work in this subject.

114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It enables pupils to develop a basic knowledge and understanding of the topics studied but does not pay sufficient attention to the systematic development of geographical knowledge and skills. Where teaching is most effective, such as in a Year 5 lesson about trade in bananas, the purpose of the activity is clearly explained, expectations of the pupils' contribution to the learning are high and they are positively encouraged to work together and present their views to the class. Despite provision of a suitable scheme of work, in some cases, not all classes in a year group cover the same work. Teaching is less effective where activities are not directly linked to pupils' experiences and opportunities to develop pupils' research skills, through using reference books and new technologies, are overlooked.
115. Management of the subject across the school is unsatisfactory. Insufficient efforts are made across the school to ensure sufficient emphasis on the systematic development of pupils' skills and establishing appropriate expectations of achievement. As a consequence, the quality of learning is variable.

HISTORY

116. Progress is satisfactory, overall, during both key stages, but the quality of learning is variable between classes and this has a negative impact on some pupils' progress. Although the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactory standards for their ages, the range of work is often limited in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, the quality of learning is much more consistent in some year groups than others. In general, the school has successfully maintained satisfactory standards since the last inspection.
117. Pupils in Year 1 begin to develop an appropriate awareness of change over time by considering the celebration of birthdays and comparing old and new teddies. In Year 2, pupils compare their own holidays with those of their parents and learn that photographs and letters are helpful sources of evidence. Younger pupils, in Key Stage 2, have a sound knowledge of the distinctive features of life in Ancient Egypt and of key people and events during the Tudor period. Pupils order significant events over time and successfully relate changes to the study of buildings in Okehampton. Older pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the culture and lifestyle of Ancient Greece. They recognise the importance of surviving artefacts in interpreting the period and learn that the Greek civilisation leaves an important legacy, for example as seen in the Olympic Games. Older pupils gain suitable insights to life in Britain in the 1930's. They learn about the impact of the 'depression' on working families through studying events such as the Jarrow Crusade and consider the causes and impact of World War 2. They study different modes of transport and link significant developments to a date line. In general, pupils use a suitable range of sources to aid their research but they seldom write extended accounts.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is most effective, and has a positive impact on pupils' progress, where units of work are carefully planned by the year group team, tasks are presented in an interesting context and pupils are encouraged to use a variety of sources. It is less effective where the objectives for the lesson are unclear, tasks such as completing a worksheet by copying or colouring require little thought and pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to manage aspects of their work for themselves.
119. Leadership of the subject is developing well. Teachers are well supported with a suitable framework for planning; where teamwork through year group planning is effective this has a positive impact on pupils' progress. For example, in Year 4, teaching imaginatively built on

pupils' experiences of role-play in a Victorian school room, to identify similarities and differences with school today and effectively encouraged pupils to imagine how the experience might have felt. Although arrangements for assessment are unsatisfactory, the co-ordinator has reviewed achievement across the school. A subject plan setting suitable goals and strategies for improvement is in place, but opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, or influence curricular planning across the school, have yet to be formalised. This results in variable progress within each key stage and, in general, insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils developing their use of key skills in literacy, numeracy and information technology.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

120. At the last inspection, pupils' attainment broadly matched national expectations, and their progress was satisfactory overall. However, the development of pupils' skills in Key Stage 2 was judged to be uneven, being good in word processing but erratic in graphics, data handling and control technology. There has been considerable improvement since then and positive progress is being made towards improving standards further. Pupils' attainment is still generally in line with national expectations, but over a broader range of work.
121. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use the mouse and keyboard with increasing confidence and accuracy, for example to simulate dressing a teddy, or to write their news. They produce bar charts of data they have collected, such as eye and hair colour. They understand that they can control some devices, and can write instructions for controlling the movements of another pupil. This knowledge is successfully applied to controlling a programmable toy. The pupils respond enthusiastically to these challenges and work on information technology tasks with enjoyment and perseverance. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can analyse the positive and negative features of different web sites and suggest improvements. They create stories for younger children, matching text size and font to their needs, and scan in images to illustrate them. Sound is recorded and cues inserted into the text. In Year 6, the co-ordinator's good knowledge and confidence support pupils well in developing their use of sensors to control a simulated chemical plant using if/then statements. The pupils are absorbed by this programme and look forward to their computer time. Although pupils use spreadsheets to collect and display data, this aspect is underdeveloped and standards are not as secure as in other aspects of the subject. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support from staff enabling them to join in lessons fully.
122. The quality of teaching is sound. The few lessons seen were well planned and organised and their purpose was shared clearly with the pupils. Sound questioning techniques contribute to the pupils' good progress and they are encouraged to relate new learning to what they have learned previously. A good quality subject policy and guidelines, and the introduction of a supportive scheme of work based on national guidelines, support teachers well in their planning and teaching. The co-ordinator has worked hard and enthusiastically to promote staff confidence and to increase their knowledge of information technology and its applications. The majority of teachers are committed to improving provision for this subject. However, a few teachers still lack the confidence and knowledge to teach whole class lessons and rely on the technician to make up the shortfall in group sessions. This is unacceptable and leads to the pupils in these classes having less opportunity to develop their skills. In all classes information technology is used to extend learning in other subjects and pupils use the internet and CD ROMS confidently to research history and geography topics. However, planning for using IT to support work in other subjects is not yet consistent.
123. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is informal, and this is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor standards and provision formally and, though he has an accurate picture of what is happening, he has insufficient knowledge of standards in each aspect in every year group. However, he has started to exemplify the scheme with pupils' work, providing teachers and pupils with some measure of standards. This will be an increasingly valuable aid to assessment as it is extended.

124. Resources have improved significantly since the last inspection. Small groups of pupils use a central computer suite, and there are computers in every classroom. A knowledgeable and enthusiastic technician maintains the systems efficiently. Most classes have a taught 35 minute lesson each week, followed by each pupil having 20 minutes access to a computer working on a related task. This enables Key Stage 1 pupils to make good progress overall in their use and application of information technology. However, while Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in lessons, there is insufficient time for them to practise and apply new skills in more complex and demanding contexts to maintain good progress over time.

MUSIC

125. Pupils' make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress, overall, during Key Stage 2. This finding contrasts starkly with attainment in extra-curricular music where standards are very high. A similar discrepancy was noted at the last inspection and the school has not done enough remedy it.
126. In Key Stage 1, pupils recognise that musical sounds can represent the world around them. They are able to distinguish between the sounds of a gentle breeze and a strong wind, and to improvise their own sounds using voice and body. In Year 2, pupils can repeat a pattern of sounds using a range of untuned musical instruments and maintain a beat satisfactorily. Most can identify a simple pattern from informal music notation and they understand the concept of rests. Pupils enjoy singing and concentrate well when learning a new song. They maintain the tempo successfully and are able to respond to the teacher's signals for loud and soft.
127. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2 but, from the standards observed in that lesson, together with the standard of singing in Key Stage 2 assemblies, it is clear that progress is inconsistent and does not build sufficiently on what the pupils have learned before. In Year 6, pupils listened carefully to a tape when learning a new song linked to a history theme, but lacked confidence in repeating the phrases. With help they were able to mark the phrases on a music score but were unable to sing the chorus correctly without much prompting and encouragement. The final performance was poor. This standard of singing was reflected in the full Key Stage 2 assemblies observed during the inspection, when many older pupils failed to participate and the singing was unenthusiastic. It contrasted with the standard of singing in the Year 3 and 4 assemblies where the pupils sang melodically and with good expression.
128. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 enjoy music and participate with enthusiasm. Older pupils lack interest and motivation. This is not helped by the absence of a scheme of work to ensure activities build on what has gone before and to provide less confident teachers with appropriate guidance. At present, teachers use a variety of published programmes to guide their planning, but coverage of the National Curriculum is patchy and the standard of teaching is variable. The best teaching seen reflected confident subject knowledge and sound planning with clear learning objectives. Unsatisfactory teaching was characterised by lack of confidence, which was transmitted to the pupils, and planning which described the content of the lesson but which did not consider what was to be learnt. Resources and accommodation for teaching music are good but the subject lacks strong and committed leadership. The failure to address the findings of the last inspection reflects an unacceptable complacency.
129. Extra-curricular music contributes significantly to the spiritual, social and cultural development of the school and to the community. It is led by a dedicated member of staff who has high expectations of what the pupils can achieve. She gives recorder lessons in the lunch hour, to any pupil in Key Stage 2 who wishes to learn, and the standards of ensemble playing are very good. String, woodwind and brass tuition is provided by peripatetic teachers. The standard of the junior orchestra is very high and the school is justifiably proud of the accomplishments of its pupils. The instrumental teachers and other volunteers who accompany the orchestra make an invaluable contribution to this important aspect of the life of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. During both key stages, pupils of all abilities make sound progress and reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages. Attainment is similar to the last inspection. In dance, Year 2 pupils move expressively keeping in time with the rhythm of the music. They move at different heights, and can vary the speed of their work. They perform a variety of movements and, though there is a range of attainment, most pupils have the expected control of their bodies and can practise and improve the quality of their work. They link together ways of moving to perform a simple sequence. In athletics, Year 6 pupils respond well to coaching, developing their techniques to produce a triple jump. Their skills in sending, striking and catching a ball are generally as expected for their ages, with a few pupils showing higher attainment. However, older pupils do not appreciate the need to warm up or cool down. In football and netball competitions, a number of the oldest pupils show high achievement. Pupils make sound progress in swimming and reach standards that are close to those expected for their ages.
131. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Teachers plan and organise lessons methodically and this enables pupils to improve their skills systematically. However, lessons do not always include warm up or cool down activities. All teachers dress appropriately for physical activity, and most provide useful demonstrations that help pupils to learn new skills and to understand what is required. They give clear instructions, expect pupils to respond promptly, and are vigilant in matters of safety. A weakness in some lessons that were otherwise satisfactory was that instruction and organisation took too long, so that pupils did not have enough time to perform, practise and improve their skills. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was confusion amongst pupils about how to improve their performance because instructions and demonstrations were not clear, and behaviour management was less secure. The best teaching uses good examples of pupils' performance to stimulate improvement but this strategy was not always emphasised enough. Some teachers have better expertise in the subject than others, but all plan lessons carefully and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils clearly enjoy their physical education lessons, work sensibly, and try hard to improve their performances.
132. The school provides a broad and balanced range of activities, including swimming in Key Stage 2. However, difficulties with timetabling mean that some lessons in the halls cannot be completed. The policy and framework are detailed but provide limited support for teachers' planning. Both require updating, which is recognised by the co-ordinator. The current range of extra-curricular sporting activities is rather limited, and mainly caters for older, higher attainers, but the school has plans to extend provision. Involvement in sporting activities makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social and moral development, such as when pupils take part in a netball or football competition.
133. Co-ordination of the subject across the school is sound. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic. She has been in post since last September and has formulated plans to advance provision for all pupils. Monitoring of planning and observation of teaching are underdeveloped but there are plans to observe lessons in order to provide a clearer picture of how work in the subject can improve.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. During both key stages, pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in religious education and achieve standards that are close to those set out in the Devon Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the last inspection.
135. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, but evidence from teachers' planning and discussions with pupils suggests that they just achieve a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding. Through their studies of Christianity and other major world religions, both in lessons and in acts of collective worship, pupils develop a satisfactory awareness of the importance of respect for other peoples' faiths and for those who are less fortunate than themselves. Pupils in Year 1 recall the Easter story and understand the symbols that are important to Christians. Younger pupils also

know a suitable range of Bible stories and are beginning to relate the teachings of Jesus to their own lives. For example, they understand the need to work hard and put any special gifts or talents they might have to good use. Pupils are encouraged to think about the questions that give meaning and purpose to their lives and have produced Millennium prayers. However, the oldest pupils do not record enough information to support their developing ideas and beliefs.

136. In Key Stage 2, pupils broaden their understanding of different faiths and are beginning to explore spiritual dimensions through the sharing of beliefs. Pupils show very good elements of spiritual development where music, beautiful pictures and visualisation are used to good effect. Pupils are able to relate to cycles of life and share aspects of their own experiences with others; they have a good sense of community. In their study of 'special places', pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited a variety of religious buildings such as the parish church and Buckfast Abbey. Their ensuing work reveals their understanding of different ways of life and special ceremonies. Pupils consider the Ten Commandments and, with support from the community policeman, understand their relevance to present day life. They have good understanding of the need for rules and laws and, in the daily life of the school, show how these contribute successfully to their understanding of right and wrong. Pupils in Year 6 easily define the positive attributes of friendship and show how religious beliefs, ideas and feelings can be expressed in a variety of forms.
137. The quality of teaching is variable across the school but is satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, it ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. Although some teachers are successful in motivating pupils to express their own thoughts and ideas, tasks sometimes lack sufficient challenge and limit creativity, especially for the higher attainers. A good feature of the teaching is the high quality of language used during discussions, and good relationships that ensure all suggestions are handled in a positive and sensitive manner. This has a positive impact on learning where pupils enjoy and gain much from the experiences provided for them. However, learning was less secure in a lesson seen in Year 5 because of the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
138. The co-ordinator is having an impact on the quality of learning through the well-planned scheme of work. The scheme provides teachers with a suitable structure for planning and good coverage over time, so that pupils are learning about religions as well as from religion. The co-ordinator has not yet monitored teaching but, from an audit of pupils' work, she has identified the areas that will enable pupils to make more progress, such as increased recording in Key Stage 1, and a better knowledge of major world faiths. Visits and visitors enhance the quality of the religious education curriculum, but these are mainly for Christianity. Teachers do not assess pupils' attainment formally but, where the teaching is good, lessons have relevant learning objectives that meet the needs of the majority of pupils.