

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WITHYCOMBE RALEIGH C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Exmouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113355

Headteacher: Malcolm Elliott

Reporting inspector: Geoff Burgess  
OIN: 23708

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 189607

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled C of E
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Withycombe Raleigh Exmouth Devon
Postcode:	EX8 3BA
Telephone number:	01395 263397
Fax number:	01395 225496
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr N Pearce
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## Information about the inspection team

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23708	Geoff Burgess	Registered inspector	Geography; History	Results & achievements
			SEN	Teaching & learning
				Leadership & management
				School improvement
13911	Julie Gallichan	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values & personal development
				Partnership with parents
				Personal welfare & care
				Adequacy of resources
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	Under fives	Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development
			Physical Education	
			Religious Education	
28014	Peter Buckley	Team inspector	English	Learning opportunities
			Art	EO
			Design Technology	
23330	Tony Burgess	Team inspector	Mathematics	Assessment & academic monitoring
			Music	
27925	David Smith	Team inspector	Information Technology	Strategic use of resources
			Science	

The inspection contractor was:

Geoff Burgess Inspections  
 4, Dodhams Farm Close  
 Bradpole  
 Bridport  
 Dorset  
 DT6 3EZ

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 Alexandra House  
 33 Kingsway  
 London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Withycombe Raleigh CE Primary School serves a wide spectrum of families of mainly British heritage in the northern residential suburbs of Exmouth. With most pupils coming from private housing, a below average 10 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils on roll has increased steadily over the years and is currently over 460. An average number of pupils are on the special needs register of whom, eight have statements of special need. Attainment on entry shows a full spread of abilities but overall is similar to that found in most schools. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

This is a good school, very well led and managed, with good academic standards and teaching. Current expenditure per pupil and attainment on entry is similar to most schools and the school provides good value for money.

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

- Consistently good teaching with much of it even better, and very good work by support staff, ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school
- It makes very good provision for its youngest boys and girls in their foundation year and they make very good progress
- Pupils with special needs, some very special, are very well catered for and make very good progress
- The school sees pupils' personal growth as very important. Most boys and girls behave and relate well, work hard and are growing into mature, responsible and self-reliant citizens
- It works very well with parents and the community in the best interests of the children and provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the curriculum
- Excellent leadership by the headteacher and deputy head is making it possible for all members of the school community to contribute fully to the improvement of provision and standards.

#### **What could be improved**

- Although there is much good practice in many parts of the school, it does not have a planned programme for developing pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education to ensure adequate coverage and consistency
- Uncharacteristic misbehaviour by the few sometimes inhibits learning and play for the many
- Work is marked regularly but in many classes it does not provide pupils with the sort of feedback which will help them improve this or subsequent work.

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

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

Since its last inspection in June 1996, standards have improved across the school much more than most schools except in English at the age of eleven where the improvement has been less than the national trend. All the issues from the last inspection were sorted out at the time and subsequent national initiatives have supported the improvements made. Standards in design technology match those in other subjects. The literacy and numeracy strategies have ensured that pupils receive plenty of direct teaching in Key Stage 1. Tracking and target setting systems are ensuring that work is pitched at the right level for pupils of all abilities and the school improvement plan includes longer-term priorities. Standards for school leavers continue to improve and pupils achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	B	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	B	B	B	
science	D	C	B	B	

Overall standards have improved at a similar rate to the national trend since 1997 when results in mathematics and science were well below the national average. However, while the improvement in these two subjects has been better than the national trend, English standards when compared with all schools have actually fallen from above average to average in the same time. In spite of this, the percentage of pupils achieving higher grades in all three subjects was above average. Standards have improved dramatically in Key Stage 1 in the last two years from well below average to well above in writing and mathematics and average in reading. The improving trend at the end of Key Stage 2 continues with current standards above average in all three subjects. Both boys and girls are making very good progress in their foundation year and are achieving well in most classes. The attainment of seven-year-olds in reading, writing, mathematics and science is above average. Standards are higher than in most schools in art, music, physical and religious education in most classes, in information technology in the younger classes, and in other subjects where teachers have particular expertise.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Boys and girls are very positive about school and join in wholeheartedly with all it has to offer. They are very keen to talk about their work, proud of their achievements and their school and work hard to complete tasks set. Attitudes to school and learning are very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour all round the school makes a very significant contribution to the standards achieved and the happy, ordered feel of the school. Behaviour in class is usually good, often very good, sometimes excellent but occasionally poor behaviour by the few wastes time for the rest.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Everybody gets on very well with everybody else and visitors and newcomers are made to feel very welcome. All adults act as excellent role models in this respect and help to foster the family feel of the school. Pupils are growing into very confident, sociable and sensible citizens who recognise their own worth and appreciate the contribution made by others.
Attendance	The school ensures that it provides a secure and happy environment and that good attendance and punctuality support pupils' learning.

Pupils make a substantial contribution to the life of the school by their good behaviour, cheerful and positive attitudes and interest in their work. All relationships are very good and older pupils are taking increasing responsibility for aspects of the life of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses. Nine-tenths of all teaching is at least good with none unsatisfactory. More than a quarter of lessons are very good and these are found in most classes. Four excellent lessons mainly



involved classes with four and five year olds with one excellent history session in year six. Basic skills are particularly well taught with nearly a half of numeracy lessons and a fifth of literacy lessons very good. Relevant and interesting activities are well planned and prepared with good use made of all available resources. Very good work habits have been established and pupils of all ages are encouraged to work hard and do their best. In many of the minority of satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning is slowed by teachers having to deal with inappropriate behaviour. More than two thirds of lessons in the three classes containing foundation age pupils are very good or excellent with the teachers providing a rich range of appropriate activities very well matched to pupils needs. Classroom and learning support assistants form a very important resource especially in helping pupils who find learning difficult and in supporting teachers in the foundation classes.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a rich and suitably varied curriculum much enhanced by the contribution made by extra-curricular activities and the school's emphasis on caring for the environment. Literacy and numeracy are strongly represented and the arts and humanities provide stimulation and balance. Good planning arrangements ensure adequate coverage and that parallel classes receive a similar diet. Much good provision is made to enhance pupils' personal, social and health education but this is not consistent across the school. The curriculum for under-fives is very well developed and appropriate and relevant to their needs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Any children who show signs of not achieving as well as hoped are identified early and the school has a comprehensive system for assessing and meeting their needs and monitoring progress. Parents are fully involved and appropriate targets in their individual plans are regularly updated. Provision and teaching is very good and pupils with special needs make very good progress. The school is rightly proud of the way pupils with very special needs are supported and included in all the school has to offer.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Staff make very good provision for the development of pupils' social skills and attitudes and moral awareness. Curricular provision for pupils to appreciate their own cultural heritage, learn about and value cultural diversity and reflect on their feelings & life is also very good. This adds up to very good provision for promoting pupils' personal growth in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. All areas of their health and welfare are taken very seriously and governors and staff are constantly checking to ensure that all is well. Physical arrangements and procedures for ensuring pupils safety are well known by the whole school community. Good attendance has a high priority. Assessment procedures are well established, especially in the core subjects and good use is being made of information provided by this and national tests to track pupil's progress and guide planning.

The great majority of parents are very pleased with the way the school is helping their children to learn and mature. They feel comfortable in their formal and informal dealings with school and make a very good contribution to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership & management by the headteacher & other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher complement each other very well and, as a team, they provide the school with excellent leadership and management. A key element of this has been the way all staff have been encouraged and helped to develop their leadership roles and they now form a significant force for good in the

	development of the school. Very clearly expressed aims and values drive the school's work and these are reflected in its efficient & unobtrusive management & positive, caring ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive and keen for the school to succeed. They have very well developed arrangements for fulfilling their responsibilities, know the school well through hands on monitoring and reports from managers and are keenly aware of its strengths and limitations. The senior management team has ensured that they are fully involved in identifying what needs to be done to keep improving and as a group, in committees and individually they are providing the school with great expertise and necessary practical and moral support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A significant factor in the school's success is the very good way the head leads an on-going analysis of what the school is doing and the impact it has. Staff and governors are involved in the process and this results in a noteworthy degree of informed discussion about the direction of the school. Relevant data at every level, starting at the baseline, is used to set priorities and targets and to track the progress of individuals and the impact of initiatives. The very useful school strategic plan based on this process appropriately identifies specific areas for improvement, each of which is directly related to standards, but also includes a thorough programme for maintaining what is already working.
The strategic use of resources	Available funds have been very wisely spent on uprating and improving the existing buildings in imaginative ways so that a potentially difficult site now constitutes a good learning environment. Parallel development of the school's grounds is making the most of the accommodation. Very good use is being made of generous numbers of teaching and support staff. Good levels of well-used resources have been accumulated and the budget is thoughtfully allocated and efficiently managed.

The headteacher, energetically supported by the deputy head, has provided the vision, direction and determination to lead the school in substantially improving its learning environment and provision year on year. Very well supported by the governors and staff, their contribution to the current success of the school cannot be overestimated.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy going to school</li> <li>• teaching is good and their children are making good progress</li> <li>• the school is helping children to grow up sensibly and behaviour is good</li> <li>• children are expected to do their best</li> <li>• the headteacher and staff are very approachable</li> <li>• the school is well led and managed</li> <li>• staff provide a good range of activities in addition to lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the work their children are expected to do at home</li> <li>• the information the school provides about how well their children are doing</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. The school expects its pupils to do more at home than many schools but is well organised and makes a positive contribution to pupils progress. Information about progress and attainment is similar to most schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards achieved by school leavers in national testing have gone up over the years especially in mathematics and science where the improvement has been well above the national trend to above average in 2000. However, in English the improving trend has been less than in most schools and results once above average are now average. In contrast to this overall trend, the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels in English matches those in the other subjects being above average. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 improved dramatically in 1999 and were sustained at well above average levels in writing and mathematics, with every pupil achieving level two, and above average in reading in 2000. As in Key Stage 2, relatively more pupils achieved the higher level. No significant differences were noted between the performances of boys and girls.

2. Substantial improvements in provision over the past two years have ensured that four year olds are making very good progress in their first year in school especially in their personal and social development and in the early stages of reading, writing, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT). Pupils are making good progress and achieving well in English, mathematics and science subjects in both key stages. Standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above average in all three subjects with a particular strength in mathematics. However, standards at other ages vary a little with year three being a 'good' year and year five, not quite so good. This is mainly due to the differing ability profiles of the two year groups when they started school. The full implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, together with other improvements in planning, curriculum and teaching over the last few years has had a positive impact on the standards achieved throughout.

3. Standards in art, music, physical education and religious education throughout the school are better than those seen in most schools and pupils are achieving well in these subjects. With the relatively new computer suite, pupils are now achieving well in ICT so that higher standards are growing through the school. Attainment in ICT in the infants and younger junior classes is now good and older pupils are doing all that is expected of them. They are generally achieving appropriate standards in all other subjects but with small differences between subjects and classes according to the confidence and expertise of individual teachers. In the case of design technology, this is an improvement since the last report, which said that 'standards should be raised in design technology'.

4. Detailed monitoring arrangements mean that the school is very aware of trends and anomalies among various groupings and deals with them appropriately. Boys and girls with any degree of need are identified and assessed very early in their foundation year. This enables steps to be taken in good time to ensue that they do not fall behind or lose confidence. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is good and consistent with that made by other pupils. Targets on individual plans are almost always met in the time allowed and often, additional targets are added as pupils' progress accelerates. The small number of pupils with very special needs are fully included in all the school has to offer, and with sensitive, high quality support their achievements are very impressive. Setting (ie teaching in ability groups) arrangements in numeracy ensures that pupils with the most need receive the skilled additional support they require in smaller groupings and the achievements and confidence of these pupils in mathematics is striking.

5. The school has set challenging targets for itself and expects standards to keep on rising. The quality of provision has improved steadily and with the energy and commitment of the whole school community, it is on course to meet its targets.

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

6. Boys' and girls' attitudes to learning and their personal development are very good. Behaviour both in classes and around the school is good overall. Parents responding to the questionnaire agree their children enjoy coming to school and that they behave well. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their learning. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the last inspection.

7. Children in their reception year have very good attitudes to learning and are responsive to all the school offers. They enjoy very good relationships with all adults who help them to learn, listen attentively to their teachers and each other and move to 'table work' quickly, settling down to produce a good amount of work. Boys and girls engage willingly in activities, co-operate with their friends, share resources fairly and respond to instructions. Their very good response is directly linked to consistent teaching, which meets their needs as young learners, and this has a positive impact on their learning. Young children behave very well at all times.

8. Throughout the rest of the school pupils have very good attitudes to learning and most are keen to work hard and do their best. They listen carefully during class introductions and are actively involved in discussions. Often they just cannot wait to answer a question or make their contribution. They are interested in their studies, sustain concentration well and are well motivated and eager to learn. Teachers providing support and encouragement results in a confident response from pupils. Pupils' attitudes in a year one mathematics lesson were excellent as the teacher used a variety of activities to maintain their interests. The teacher's own enthusiasm rubbed off on the children resulting in a very successful lesson. In year six, pupils were totally engrossed and focused on the accounts of three gentlemen who related their experiences of life during the war. With well-prepared questions, pupils were keen to find out more. On a few occasions inconsistent class management results in pupils calling out and others then lose concentration; progress is then inhibited.

9. In most classes, behaviour is at least good and often very good. However, on a few occasions the behaviour of a few effects the overall learning of others; the pace of learning slows when teachers have to waste time dealing with inappropriate behaviour. During a class assembly, behaviour was exemplary. Pupils listened with interest and reflected thoughtfully on the story of Jesus rising from death from the perspective of birds telling the story. Lunchtimes are sociable and enjoyable occasions and behaviour around the school and in the playground is mostly good. Pupils are not concerned about bullying or oppressive behaviour. There have been four temporary exclusions in the last year for poor behaviour.

10. Relationships across the school are very good with pupils working collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They are polite and friendly towards visitors and engage in conversation readily. Equipment, resources and books are treated with care and the school's emphasis on caring for the environment results in pupils having a keen interest in their surroundings. Pupils respect the views of others during class discussions and 'circle time'.

11. In all year groups, pupils are expected to take on responsibilities and do so in a sensible way. The youngest pupils clear up after activities willingly and as they become older, take responsibility for looking after plants and small animals in their rooms as well as acting as general helpers or table monitors. By the time pupils reach year six, they are taking responsibility for jobs around the school, such as organising the hall for assembly and helping at lunchtimes. Pupils use their initiative and during lessons make use of the resources available, such as dictionaries or wordbooks to assist them with their work. They are growing into confident, sociable and sensible citizens ready to play their part in the wider community.

12. Pupils attend school regularly and attendance levels over the year are good with very little unauthorised absence. Most pupils arrive at school in good time, keen to start the day's activities.

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

13. Teaching was said to be good when the school was last inspected but one key issue related to insufficient direct teaching in Key Stage 1. More than three-fifths of teaching is good with a quarter very good and better and none unsatisfactory. This represents a considerable improvement since the last report when fewer lessons were very good and a tenth were unsatisfactory. This time, 14 teachers taught at least one very good lesson in one of eight different subjects or aspects and almost all teachers had more good or very good lessons than satisfactory. Teaching overall is good with particular strengths in numeracy and the under-fives.

14. An important factor in this has been the contribution made by pupils to their own learning through their good behaviour and interest and enthusiasm for what they are learning. They learn from and help each other and complete tasks in good time. It is significant that lower standards of behaviour and poorer attitudes to learning by a minority of pupils are the main reasons why a few lessons are just satisfactory. Although the quality of teaching is generally associated with the teachers involved, the structures of the literacy and numeracy strategies have had a beneficial effect on the teaching of basic skills throughout the school. This is most clearly seen in numeracy where pupils of all abilities are able to achieve well in the smaller, very focused ability grouped sets. Nearly a half of numeracy teaching is very good or better. In other subjects, mainly in the older classes, class exchanges for particular subjects make it possible for teachers to use their strengths and interests, such as physical education in years five and six, with classes other than their own. The acquisition of a fully integrated computer system has made possible big improvements in the teaching of information technology.

15. A good deal of effort has gone into improving and developing teaching over the years, especially in the core subjects and the foundation classes. The benefits of this are obvious in the very impressive consistency shown in the quality of the basic structures of the teaching and learning process throughout the school. All lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives carefully matched to the needs of the pupils concerned and the expected learning outcomes usually well defined at the beginning of lessons. Activities and children are usually very competently managed and controlled and good use is made of all available adults through well built up routines and the provision of clear instructions and information.

16. A half of all teaching in the foundation year is very good with two excellent lessons and the rest good. Very good use is being made by the two reception class teachers of their well-resourced accommodation to provide pupils with a rich range of learning opportunities. An excellent example of this came in a number session at the beginning of the day where boys and girls were involved straight away in real counting using the self-registration charts. Other well-established routines, including the class diary, lead onto counting marbles in the jar with the visually impaired child able to join in. Good use of number fans and skilled support makes possible a sharp counting and counting-on session with the teacher using targeted questions to stretch the higher achievers. This in turn leads on to an excellent range of activities planned to meet the needs of the different ability groups. A very good session in the hall showed how all the very good elements displayed in the classroom are extended into work around the school. Not a moment is wasted, boys and girls know exactly what to do and with everything well prepared and very clear instructions, the pace of learning is very good. Constant praise and great sensitivity to the needs of individuals means that children are happy and confident in their movement. A small number of pupils spend their first year in a class with year one pupils. The teacher skilfully adapts her planning to ensure that both groups receive the same high quality provision as the boys and girls in the reception classes.

17. More than four fifths of teaching in years one and two is at least good with a fifth very good in mathematics and English and one excellent mathematics lesson. The impact of the school's arrangements for making good use of available teaching and support staff in teaching numeracy in smaller ability groups (or sets) is obvious. Where, as in Key Stage 1, enthusiastic and creative teachers exploit this, the effect it has on learning is magnified. Many good examples of this were observed at all ability levels. Year one pupils in the 'top' set are very proud of their achievements in manipulating numbers and delight in finding ways, many very complex for six year olds, for making 77. Less proficient and positive year twos are very happy to have a go at practical activities at their own level in an investigation on the lengths of their names. Despite several having difficulty with the language, the teacher manages to get them to articulate what it is they are doing and make valid and sensible suggestion about ways of working. The quiet, spacious classroom, interesting well-matched work and extra attention helps a very mixed group to

succeed and enjoy their mathematics.

18. Nearly nine-tenths of teaching in Key Stage 2 is at least good with a sixth very good, mainly in mathematics but also in English, design technology, physical education and personal and social education. These lessons were spread across all year groups with one excellent history lesson in year six. This illustrated another strong feature of teaching throughout the school, the very good use of the grounds, of the local area and of visitors to provide stimulus and interest. As a means of bringing life to the current topic on World War II, the teacher invited three grandparents to talk about their wartime childhood. The resulting discussion, stimulated by questions prepared in advance by the pupils and managed very well by the teacher was spellbinding to everyone involved. The opportunity presented by 'setting' (teaching in smaller ability groups) was well demonstrated by a very good numeracy session involving a mixed group of lower attaining top juniors. The space and quiet of the hall, the calm and encouraging approach of the teacher and the very focussed match of the work to the capabilities of the pupils meant that boys and girls who could well have been disenchanted with mathematics were confident, enthusiastic – and successful - in dealing with challenging work.

19. Learning support assistants (LSAs) make a very good contribution in the area of special needs. They have formed good working relationships with teachers and the pupils in their charge and whether enabling pupils to work alongside their classmates or working with individuals and groups in or out of the classroom, they constitute a very important teaching resource. Several LSAs have received extra training on matters connected with special needs and the school plans to extend this. When no ancillary support is available, work is often matched to the needs of individual pupils and the teacher focuses on these pupils to give support and explanations.

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

20. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good with the early years curriculum being a particular strength and the main school curriculum broadly based and well balanced to meet statutory requirements. Staff have appropriately developed the school's curricular planning by incorporating and adapting national guidance into its schemes of work. These structures substantially improve the levels of challenge and avoid gaps or duplications. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school has introduced the national literacy and numeracy strategies effectively and these well taught skills make a good impact on standards. In delivering the curriculum the school has a variety of arrangements for setting and grouping pupils to raise standards. Pupils are set for mathematics with additional groups being formed, with some specialist teaching of the foundation subjects and science in year six.

21. A great deal of hard work in the last two years has gone into developing the taught curriculum in the foundation classes largely through the Effective Early Learning initiative. Boys and girls receive a very good introduction to the curriculum through very good planning based on the stepping stones to the Early Learning Goals. It provides for all areas of learning to be taught, including personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. No mention was made of this stage in the last report but now activities are practical, relevant and purposeful. They include very good opportunities for the development of play, with clear learning objectives and very good progression of skills. Boys and girls are well prepared for the first stages of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

22. Curricular provision for pupils with extra needs is very good. Four-year-olds who make slow progress in the foundation year are identified very early and through their individual education plans are provided with a suitably modified curriculum to meet their targets. This process carries through into the main school with an increasing range of approaches and organisations being used to meet the needs of pupils who find learning and conforming difficult. In Key Stage 1 this largely consists of support for literacy and numeracy in the classroom or in groups withdrawn for extra help. Elements of this continue in Key Stage 2 mainly in literacy skills with most work in numeracy being carried out in smaller, lower attaining groups as part of the setting (grouping by

ability) arrangements. For other pupils, appropriate activities to meet their needs in class are usually provided by the class teacher. The school is to be congratulated on the way it has adapted its organisation and elements of the curriculum to ensure that children with very special needs are able to access the full curriculum. A good example of this came in a mathematics lesson where marbles dropped into a bottle enabled a visually impaired child to count along with the rest of the class in the 'mental maths' session.

23. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils and these are accessible to all. Lunchtime and after-school activities include sports, French, gardening, choir, recorders, orchestra and country dancing. Parents recognise in their response to the questionnaire that the school offers an interesting range of activities.

24. The school places great emphasis on caring for the environment and is working towards 'eco-status'. As well as parents, volunteers from the community have been closely involved in working with the school to develop its grounds. Pupils' learning opportunities have been enhanced considerably as the various environmental projects have been planned and completed. They enjoy a wide range of facilities, features and habitats that are used constantly to support learning. Boys and girls are currently working with students from Rolle College, University of Plymouth, making a film about caring for the environment featuring the school grounds. Work is ongoing and continues to draw interest and support from the community.

25. Very good links with the wider community enrich pupils' learning experiences. Close links have been made with the church with the rector regularly taking assembly, pupils using the church building as a resource and several school services being held there. Members of the local community come into school either to help as volunteers in classrooms or to share their expertise or experience. Pupils share their talents with the local community and sing at town events. Good use is made of links with businesses such as when a removal company recently visited with a van and work was carried out on volume and capacity.

26. The curriculum successfully promotes the physical, personal and intellectual development of the pupils. Provision for personal, social and health education is sound. The strong Christian ethos of the school and the committed teaching staff provide a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge. Visits by the school's nurse deal with sex education and raising drug awareness in year six. Religious education and collective acts of worship also make a significant contribution. However, there is no overall programme that ensures that all areas are systematically addressed. Time is not regularly set aside for quiet discussion about moral and social issues such as friendship, bullying, caring for others and making choices. The curriculum promotes intellectual development by providing increasing opportunities for personal study as pupils get older. The school is socially inclusive by ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.

27. Very good arrangements for promoting pupils' personal growth through spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been maintained since the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development is very good and pupils are given very good opportunities to gain a clear understanding of the values and beliefs that the school promotes. Collective acts of worship and class assemblies are well planned and the school has very good links with the local church. A lighted candle acts as a focal point during quiet times of reflection in assemblies and the school works very hard to provide opportunities for reflection and spiritual awareness through the whole curriculum. Reception class children experienced moments of awe and wonder of the world in which they live during a walk in the grounds to spot signs of spring. The school is committed to an ecology project, which has enabled everyone involved to focus on and appreciate their environment. Pupils are able to reflect on the beliefs of others through the well-structured programme for religious education. The school aims to ensure that everyone is fully included and valued and that there is a very strong ethos of mutual respect.

28. Staff make very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. It actively promotes positive behaviour management and fosters moral values such as honesty, tolerance and respect for others. Moral issues are often discussed during collective acts of worship and

during times when pupils sit in a circle and talk about them. All staff in the school provide excellent role models for the pupils, relationships are very good and staff encourage pupils to relate positively to each other. The wide range of extra-curricular activities available for many pupils and annual residential visits for older pupils, provide very good opportunities for them to develop their social skills. Pupils of all ages contribute very well to the smooth running of the school community by taking responsibility for a range of jobs within their classroom and around the school. Older pupils set up the hall for collective worship and help at lunchtimes. Pupils in year five take over these responsibilities in the summer term before they go into year six. In particular, year five pupils are responsible for showing new children, who are about to start in the reception classes, around the school. They also take them to lunch during their visit and, when the four-year-olds start school, they support them during break and lunch times until they know the routines. The school also has a very active group of pupils who, as part of the Parent/ Teachers' Association, are very involved in organising such events as the Family Fun Day and the Key Stage 1 Sports Day.

29. Provision for cultural development is also very good. The school encourages visits from people such as artists, musicians, drama groups and the local rector is a very regular visitor. Many pupils participate in musical concerts in the community. Multi-cultural aspects are also very well promoted particularly in art, music and religious education such as when a parent recently spoke to pupils about Hinduism and a representative from a local mosque spoke about the customs and beliefs of Sikhs. In geography, pupils study cultural aspects of the world through 'The Adventures of Barnaby Bear' around the world in Key Stage 1 and in 'What's in the News' in Key Stage 2. The school makes very good use of the local area to develop pupils' understanding of their local cultures and of some of the people in the community. Pupils in year six were extremely interested in hearing from three granddads about their experiences during the Second World War.

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

30. Pupils receive very good support and guidance from teachers and all adults in the school. Very good relationships underpin the positive and caring ethos. There is a good level of care of pupils during lunchtimes and pupils are confident to approach adults for help and advice. Good provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

31. Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety. The premises are checked regularly for potential hazards and safety checks made of electrical, physical education and fire fighting equipment. Good maintenance and excellent caretaking helps to ensure a safe environment for pupils. First aid procedures are carried out carefully with records of treatment kept. Whole staff training for first aid is organised regularly and specific training to meet the needs of individual children carried out by the school nurse. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. A suitable policy is in place, which offers good guidance, but further training is now needed to ensure everyone is clear about procedures. This need is recognised by the school and training is planned. Close liaison is maintained with the educational welfare officer and the school contacts outside agencies as necessary to support the needs of individual pupils.

32. The school encourages pupils to attend regularly and parents are reminded of the procedures to follow when their child is absent from school. The computer system for recording attendance is used effectively enabling close monitoring. Early contact is made with parents if there are concerns and unauthorised absence followed-up carefully. Records show that some children's targets include improvements to their attendance.

33. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour are good. Agreed school procedures are implemented well by most teachers and the whole-school reward system works well to encourage most pupils. Pupils receive recognition for their efforts in whole-school assemblies. Class teachers use additional systems within their own classes and class rules are discussed and agreed with pupils. The 'traffic lights' warning system encourages self-discipline and is used well in some classes. Specific programmes are devised to support those pupils who have particular difficulty in behaving consistently. Aggressive or oppressive behaviour is not tolerated



and if any incidents do occur, they are dealt with promptly. All pupils are treated fairly in a way that supports their individual personal development.

34. Pupils are taught how to protect themselves from danger through drama workshops on topics such as bullying. A Life Skills Day organised by the major services helps boys and girls to learn how to deal with real life situations. Planned quiet times are provided in some classes for pupils to discuss their thoughts and feelings and seek solutions to difficult situations or arguments, which might have occurred in the playground. A lot of good provision is made across the school for pupils' personal, social and health education. However, a planned systematic programme to meet the needs of pupils as they mature, is not yet in place although it is featured in the school improvement plan.

35. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are good. In the last inspection one of the key issues for action was that 'assessment procedures should be developed to ensure curriculum planning and teaching address the full ability range, and in particular the able pupils.' The school has made good progress in addressing this issue so that the work is well matched to the full range of ability. More systematic and rigorous procedures for monitoring standards and evaluating progress are now in place including analyses of assessment data, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching and learning. The headteacher, senior teachers and teaching staff have worked hard to maintain a realistic level of change and improvement over time in relation to assessment and recording procedures. As a result of some of these changes the school gained Assessment Accreditation from the local authority. The school now has a clear and manageable policy for assessment, which gives clear guidelines for the various assessment activities and procedures used throughout the school. The timetable of assessment activity for each year group is identified in the school self-evaluation framework.

36. Following the last inspection the school began the process of building up a more rigorous collection of formative assessment data, including details of national tests for seven and eleven-year-olds and optional tests in years three, four and five. An electronic database (Assessment Manager) was introduced and is used to monitor progression and look at trends. Tests used as pupils enter the school identify areas for development and provide valuable information to help set baseline targets with each child's parents. The targets are reviewed at the end of the first year to monitor progress. Standardised tests, such as the Salford Reading test, are used regularly to support teachers' judgements.

37. Alongside these more formal assessments a number of planned teacher assessments are identified throughout the year, particularly in the core subjects. Samples of children's work in English, mathematics and science, including teacher's comments and National Curriculum levels, are collected and updated at least once a year. Teachers are able to use exemplar material produced by the school, the local Academic Council or the DfEE to ensure sound judgements when identifying levels. Most recently the school has introduced a yellow tracking book for writing profiles to help monitor progress in writing more effectively. Teachers keep good records of pupil progress against national programmes of study in their assessment file, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology, while more routine on-going assessments are recorded in the teacher's mark book.

38. Information from the tests and from teacher assessments enables the school to identify pupils who require extra support and to set group and individual targets for improvement. There is now a greater emphasis on target setting being used in the school to give direction and purpose to teaching. This, no doubt, is having a positive impact on learning. For example, the use of assessment data to identify group targets for writing within a class ensures a good match between pupil's ability and appropriate targets within tasks set and a means of measuring progress. Children are being increasingly encouraged to have active involvement in the target setting process. Individual targets focus not only on attainment, but also other aspects including behaviour. Several good examples of individual targets setting were seen during the inspection. However procedures and practices vary across the school and a more consistent approach would make it easier for pupils to understand and help when monitoring the effectiveness of the target setting process. Additional help through additional literacy and numeracy support is provided for pupils who do not reach targets. The number of support staff has increased to

provide focused and targeted help and learning support assistants provide very good support to pupils. Procedures for placing pupils on the register are effective and consistent. Children who give concern are listed on the special needs register and good quality individual educational plans (IEPs) are drawn up with the pupils and their parents to set targets for improvement which are reviewed twice yearly. Procedures, where necessary, for identifying those pupils who require statements of special need are very effective as is the support provided for the individuals concerned and the annual review process in setting targets.

39. The detailed marking policy outlines marking guidelines for English, mathematics and science for all year groups in lessons and homework. Pupils' work is marked regularly and consistently, but mainly to indicate right or wrong. Although the policy emphasises the importance of providing a comment to support further progress and development, only rarely were helpful comments and guidance provided to show pupils how they can improve.

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

40. The great majority of parents are very happy with the way the school is helping their children to learn and grow. Most strongly agree that boys and girls make good progress because teaching is good, expectations are high and their children are being helped to become mature and sensible. Some question the amount of homework provided, with more saying there is too much than not enough, and a few feel they are not well informed about how well their child is getting on.

41. Information provided for parents and the school's communications with them are good. Parents are encouraged to approach the school immediately if they have any concerns and most parents responding to the questionnaire feel comfortable about doing this. The prospectus contains helpful information about how the school is organised, its procedures and expectations. Regular letters from both the headteacher and year group teams keep parents informed of events and give information about what their child will be taught. The governors' annual report summarises the work of the school and reports on activities and achievements at the end of the year. Satisfactory annual reports give a good overall impression of pupils' work and effort over the year but there is little information about actual levels of attainment and the progress made in each subject. Parents have the opportunity to meet formally with teachers to discuss their child's progress each term if they wish and those with children who need additional support are invited to progress reviews regularly.

42. Most parents make a very good contribution to the life of the school and many give very good support to their children's learning at home. Parents are guided on how best to help their children with reading. Written instructions for homework help parents fully understand the work their children need to complete at home so that they can give help and support where needed. Some parents make regular use of the home/school link book to communicate with teachers.

43. A good number of parents regularly help in classrooms. This has a positive impact on progress, particularly for the youngest pupils, as more pupils have the support of an adult when working in groups. Their contribution is valued and appreciated by the school. Many others have supported the recent development of the school grounds both by backing up fund raising events organised by the extremely active parents' association and with practical help. Parents are invited into school regularly to join in celebrating their children's achievements or sharing in their work when attending events such as the infant Christmas performance or the junior choir concert in the church.

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

44. The last report was very positive about all aspects of the leadership and management of the school with high praise for the headteacher, the contribution of the governing body and the 'high level of financial competence'. One small area for improvement was the short-term nature of the school development plan. At that time, the head had not long been in post and had taken over a school that had gone through a difficult phase. Since then, in his own measured, pragmatic and determined way, he has overseen a quiet revolution in the development of the school's

environment and the education it provides. Key to this has been the way he has recognised and made best use of the energy, enthusiasm and creativity of the deputy head to complement his own, more thoughtful approach. Together they make a formidable team and provide the school with excellent leadership and management. Working closely with the senior management team, staff and the governing body, they have helped the school to evolve as a high quality learning community. Their contribution to the present very healthy state of the school is outstanding.

45. Governors are very supportive and committed to the school, many visiting on a regular basis. They have a well defined and understood structure of committees and individual responsibilities and a clear programme related to the priorities identified in the school development plan. Many bring considerable expertise to the governing body and all are very keen for the school to succeed. They take their monitoring role very seriously visiting regularly and receiving feedback from staff on the effectiveness of various current policy developments. As individuals and as a body they know their school and their responsibilities very well. The special needs governor is very knowledgeable and supportive and is a regular visitor to the school. As the school's former special needs coordinator, she has a clear insight into provision in the school and reports regularly to the rest of the governing body on special needs issues.

46. Everyone in the school fully understands his or her respective role and is committed to fulfilling it and in constantly improving. Staff manage their responsibilities effectively and are very conscientious. The special needs coordinator (SENCO) has managed the continued development of her area, which was described as a strength of the school at the last inspection, extremely effectively. Good use is being made of information technology to help with the administration of individual education plans and their monitoring and there has been a considerable increase in the number of learning support assistants working with pupils who find learning or conforming difficult. All aspects of the management of the identification, assessment and monitoring of pupils with special needs are dealt with very efficiently and arrangements for supporting pupils in and out of the classroom are very well organised. Outside agencies are full of praise for the way the school, through the SENCO, made it possible at relatively short notice, for a young man with very special needs to become a full member of the school community.

47. Overall, the leadership and management of the school continue to be very good. In the past few years, levels of professionalism, leadership, responsibility and confidence have increased greatly and the staff team now constitutes a powerful force for good. Governors are becoming ever more efficient and effective in their group and individual roles. Every issue from the last inspection has been addressed and weaknesses have become strengths. No aspect of the school has been ignored and, despite the difficulties, every opportunity taken to make the most of its site and accommodation.

48. Monitoring and evaluation have high priorities in the school community with the lead taken by the head and deputy head who keep a very close watch on what is happening. Very good use is made of available data and other information to identify trends and make comparisons. The evaluation of assessment data is used effectively to inform strategic planning. For example, in the past the data indicated that the school needed to focus its improvement planning on writing. This it has done to good effect. Results of the 2000 national tests show a significant improvement (8%) over previous results in writing.

49. Standards, classroom practice and the effectiveness of policies and procedures are kept under review by responsible staff and governors. Individual members of staff are encouraged to think about their own performance through professional interviews and professional development through in-service training has a high priority. The previous inspection recommended that the school improvement plan should extend to three years 'to ensure more strategic planning'. However, the governors have taken a considered view that a two-year period is a more useful time-scale in which to target resources to meet development needs. Governors also take a long-term view with a three-year financial forecast of income and expenditure that assists forward planning. Financial planning is consequently very effective in supporting the school's educational

priorities. These are determined after consultation with staff and reflect local and national priorities. The well-structured and comprehensive plan includes estimates of financial costs. Coordinators contribute to the plan with a strategic overview for their subjects. With financial support from the standards fund they are able to monitor their subject and to manage resources. Governors discuss plans with link-subject co-ordinators and strategic planning is additionally informed by a detailed analysis of pupil attainment.

50. One major decision taken over recent years was to provide a computer suite. This major investment that is now having a beneficial impact on pupils' capability with information technology. Following a strategic review of the foundation year it was decided to provide additional staff for the year and this has enabled the school to retain experienced staff and plan for continuity. The decision was also taken, following an analysis of need and cost effectiveness, for the school to provide its own library resources. The governors are proactive in proposals for a new building and have commissioned a plan to replace the temporary accommodation in which most of the school is housed. Although the temporary buildings are well looked after they do present constraints to the curriculum and a comparatively high proportion of the budget needs to be spent on routine building maintenance.

51. Office staff administer very good systems for financial control very effectively. The latest audit report recommendations have been fully addressed. The budget is regularly monitored and governors are kept well informed with financial reports making good use of new technology in administering and reconciling the budget. Securely established administration systems support the day to day running of the school. The finance policy outlines the school's policy of seeking best value for supplies and services with comparative prices analysed by the finance secretary. The headteacher and governors are prudent in making spending decisions and make best use of the budget to support educational priorities. Good use is made of grants for specific purposes such as literacy, numeracy and information technology.

52. The school is well staffed. Teachers have a wide range of qualifications and expertise to meet fully the teaching demands of the National Curriculum and the needs of the pupils. Pupils benefit from the imaginative use of teachers' expertise, particularly in year six where the pupils are taught by the two teachers for different subjects. Teachers' particular strengths are used effectively. Staff training to develop their ICT expertise has addressed a weakness identified at the last inspection. The number and expertise of learning support assistants (LSAs) enhance pupils' learning. Many have undertaken additional training, which enables them to offer effective support to groups of pupils, such as those trained to deliver additional literacy support. Lower attaining pupils particularly, benefit from their effective and encouraging support. The school operates as a cohesive team with the efforts of office staff, lunchtime supervisors, kitchen and caretaking staff making their own very significant contribution to the its success.

53. Overall teaching space available is good. Together with the good sized hall, computer suite, two libraries and small rooms for music and special educational needs group work, it enables all the areas of the National Curriculum can be taught effectively. However, staff work extremely hard to overcome the inconveniences caused by the wide variety in quality and layout of the school buildings. Reception and year one children enjoy very good facilities in the modern block. Years two to five are housed in temporary classrooms which means constant movement around the school (often in the rain) to reach other facilities such as the hall or computer suite. Everyday access to computers is restricted as they cannot be housed in the temporary classrooms. Year six are taught in adequate sized classrooms in the Victorian building which stands rather isolated from the other buildings. The cloakroom and toilet facilities here are unsatisfactory. They are old, outside and some doors do not lock. The girls' cloakroom is used for changing but there is no heating. It is a pity these oldest pupils have such poor facilities and pupils very understandably express their dissatisfaction.

54. Most classrooms are enhanced with good quality displays that celebrate pupils' achievements and stimulate further learning. Reception and year one classes, in particular, are 'text rich', encouraging learning and independence. The school works hard and is very successful

in providing a well-maintained and comfortable learning environment within the constraints of the existing buildings. The spacious and well-developed grounds have a positive impact on learning. Marshland areas, the nature trail, butterfly gardens, amphitheatre and different types of shelter such as the Celtic hut and American Tepees provide 'real' learning experiences and encourage pupils to be conscious of their responsibility to look after the environment. Learning resources that were sound in the previous inspection report, are now good for all subjects, well organised and accessible. Pupils have access to a wide range of books and artefacts and resources borrowed from Devon Learning Resources and Exmouth Museum, and use of the locality enhances provision further.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. To build on the impressive improvements in recent years and ensure that the quality of provision is equally high throughout the school, the headteacher, governors and staff of Withercombe Raleigh School should:

- (1) Develop a cohesive planned programme for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education and awareness of citizenship by:
  - auditing what already happens and bringing together all the policies, good practice and elements of planning already in existence
  - using these and national guidelines as the basis of a scheme of work which identifies who does what, when and how to ensure consistency.
  - evolving a manageable system for recording and monitoring significant trends and landmarks in pupils' personal development to judge the effectiveness of the above  
Paragraphs 26 & 34
  
- (2) Minimise the time wasted by inappropriate behaviour in a minority of lessons by:
  - using the above process to help pupils to manage their own behaviour and support their classmates who find it difficult to conform
  - ensuring that school and class rules are applied consistently across the school
  - making this a priority in individual teacher's professional development  
Paragraphs 8, 9 & 14
  
- (3) Ensure that, whenever possible, marking provides pupils with the sort of feedback that will help them improve or develop current or subsequent work. Paragraph 39

## OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Some staff require training in Child Protection procedures (Paragraph 31)
- Target setting procedures are not consistent across the school (Paragraph 38)
- Reports do not reflect actual levels of attainment (Paragraph 41)
- The year six cloakroom and toilet block is unsatisfactory (Paragraph 53)
- Display in some classrooms does not reflect the school's ethos (Paragraph 93)
- Assessment arrangements in most foundation subjects are limited  
(Paragraphs 93, 97, 103, 115, 121 & 125)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

94
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

28
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## Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	22	62	12			

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)		467
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		88

### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.9

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
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
	2000	33	32	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	33	33
	Girls	26	32	32
	Total	55	65	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (84)	100 (91)	100 (96)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	33	32
	Girls	28	31	29
	Total	58	64	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	98 (94)	94 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
	2000	34	31	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	26	29	32
	Girls	22	24	26
	Total	48	53	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (83)	82 (80)	89 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	27	26
	Girls	19	21	20
	Total	44	48	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (61)	74 (63)	71 (73)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	2
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	391
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	4	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	31.1

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

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	290

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	728860
Total expenditure	734504
Expenditure per pupil	1608
Balance brought forward from previous year	21085
Balance carried forward to next year	15441



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	467
Number of questionnaires returned	149

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	32	6	2	
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	39	5	1	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	40	21	3	1
The teaching is good.	56	38	4	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	35	14	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	28	5	1	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	46	43	7	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	62	32	2	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	40	4	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	41	5	2	2

## **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**

56. Children are admitted to the reception classes in September and January. There are seventy-one children in the foundation stage; some older children are currently with a group of year one pupils and the rest in single aged reception classes. The quality of teaching and learning provided for the children is very good with that of mathematical development excellent. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan together very effectively to ensure that all children have equal access to a very well organised and stimulating curriculum. Both their expectations and management of behaviour are excellent. This makes a significant difference to children's learning and as a result, all children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in the foundation stage. The school's involvement in the Effective Early Learning Project has provided a real focus for developments in this phase and has had a very positive impact on its approach, provision and standards achieved.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

57. By the end of the foundation stage most of the children have made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and are achieving above the expected levels of the early learning goals. The children are interested and keen to learn because of the very stimulating environment provided for them by their teachers. They listen carefully to each other in a range of situations and are taught to respect the views of each other. For example in one lesson they sat in a circle and talked about an 'extraordinary experience'. Very good progress was made in learning because of the teacher's sensitive approach and high expectations of behaviour during the session. At the start of another lesson boys and girls talked briefly about 'playing together' during break and most had a very good understanding of the teacher's expectations. They also show consideration for others by sharing both school equipment and their belongings. For example some children brought an extra cuddly toy to school in case someone forgot theirs'. During a lesson in the information technology suite children happily share the 'mouse' and work collaboratively together extremely well. Boys and girls play well together as was evident in a role-play activity in the giant's kitchen. The school's policy of including all children also has a very positive impact on the development of the children's personal, social and emotional skills.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

58. Children enter the school with average skills in communication, language and literacy and by the time they leave the foundation stage their attainment is above that expected in the early learning goals. Most speak clearly and confidently in a range of situations. For example children describe their cuddly toys and why the toys are important to them, speaking clearly in sentences. They use story sacks and role-play activities well to retell favourite stories such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. They listen carefully and respond enthusiastically to stories, poems and to the parents' entries into 'Teddy's Diary'. The highest achievers read simple text fluently with expression and talk confidently about a range of stories. The average children read repeated phrases in the books and use picture clues effectively to read some unfamiliar words. Lower attaining children can tell the story using picture clues and by the end of the story read repeated phrases accurately. All children are enthusiastic about books and several children share dual-text books to experience reading using Braille. This experience has a positive impact on their learning and demonstrates very well the school's policy of the inclusion of all children, particularly those with very special needs. Most children are developing writing skills well and many can copy key words using correct letter formation, although the sizes of the letters are sometimes inconsistent. Higher achievers can write at least a sentence unaided and are beginning to understand the use of full stops. Lower achievers trace accurately over the teachers' writing and some are beginning to convey meaning using familiar letters. The very good range of activities and the effectiveness of the teaching methods used have a positive impact on children's learning.

#### **Mathematical Development**

59. Children's attainment in mathematics is above that expected for children of this age. They make excellent progress in their learning because of the excellent teaching in this area by all the

teachers. Most children count confidently to 10 and many beyond 10 to 20. In one class children counted the number of marbles being dropped into the jar and in another class children act the story of 'Lots of Legs', deciding how many children were needed for each group to have the correct number of legs. They knew they needed five children, one of whom had to hop, for nine legs. Higher achievers can count on in order to add two numbers together correctly. Lower achievers can identify numbers to 10 and make them correctly in sand and playdough. All join in number rhymes such as '5 Little Ducks'. Many children recognise simple shapes such as square, triangle, rectangle and oblong and at least half of the class know some of the properties of the shapes. In a mixed reception/year one class, most of the reception children create their own number stories with objects and about half record their answers well with numbers written correctly. Many are beginning to use mathematical language appropriately.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the World**

60. Attainment in this area is above the expected levels and well above in their knowledge and use of information technology (ICT). Most children are confident to 'log on and off' on the computer and show confidence in drawing a fish using line and colour. Some change the thickness of the line and colour with confidence and very good control. They change the colour of the background and others discuss adding things such as bubbles and scales. One group of children suggested how to program the turtle to move towards their toys and made good progress in stopping the turtle in the right place. Very good support from the classroom assistant has a very positive impact on children's progress in using ICT. Children predict what might happen to objects in water and talk confidently about their observations. They sort materials into groups of rough, smooth, soft and hard. Older children investigate materials using their senses and test objects to see if they move in the wind. Several groups of children draw a map to show Rosie's walk around the farmyard. Children recall an event from the Easter story and during a walk around the school grounds look for signs of spring and new life. All children make very good progress in learning about the world around them through the very stimulating environment provided for them and very good teaching.

### **Physical Development**

61. Boys and girls are provided with a very good range of activities both in the classroom and outside to develop their physical skills and as a result attainment is above that expected in the early learning goals. They can move around the hall with a good awareness and control of their own and other spaces and respond creatively in movement to stories such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Most move from one marker to the next using crawling, stepping and jumping movements. They show a good understanding of safety in the hall and listen to and watch each other's performances carefully. Most children handle tools such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes confidently and their manipulative skills are developing very well. A very good range of play opportunities, including the use of wheeled vehicles, scooters, stilts and space-hoppers for children to develop their physical skills, are available outside.

### **Creative Development**

62. Children achieve standards of work better than those expected in the early learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. They explore colour and texture well as in one class, where children experiment to create different effects using a range of objects for printing. They mould a piece of clay into an egg shape and use tools effectively to make an attractive design on the egg. One group of children use scissors carefully to cut out an egg shape from a piece of card for an Easter Card. Children make close observational drawings of daffodils using pastels and use their sense of touch and sight to create attractive pictures using a weaving technique. An interesting display for children to match the different smells in one classroom, enables the child with impaired vision to take a full part in many creative activities. Children use their imagination well during role-play activities in particular those offered outside in the wooden cottages and in 'Bob the Builder's' shed.

63. The whole staff in the foundation stage work extremely well as a team and this has a very positive impact on children's learning. They are well supported by parents who are fully involved in their children's learning, reading regularly at home with their children. Several parents help

regularly in the classrooms. All parents are involved in writing entries in 'Teddy's Diary'. A very good induction programme for parents and children involves staff and Governors. Children make several visits to school before starting and have lunch with pupils in year five. Very good links have been forged with the local playgroups and nurseries and the school receives very helpful information about each child from them. Children are assessed when they start school and this information is used very well to plan activities to meet the needs of the children. The teachers keep very detailed records to track individual children's progress in all areas of learning. They have recently introduced focussed observations on individual children during child initiated play sessions to ensure that their individual needs are being met. The overall provision in the foundation stage has a very positive impact on children's learning.

## **ENGLISH**

64. Between 1997 and 2000 standards in English have fallen from above average to average when compared to other schools. However, inspection evidence suggests that current standards at the ends of both key stages are above average and that the school, through good teaching, well targeted support for individual and groups of pupils will meet its challenging yet realistic targets. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.

65. Boys and girls attain standards in speaking and listening above national expectations. In whole class shared text work; pupils are attentive and interested in answering questions. Teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of speaking and listening. They plan activities in various group sizes, to provide opportunities for pupils to ask and answer questions, express opinions, describe events and predict outcomes. In developing listening skills pupils respond to a range of stimuli such as poems and nursery rhymes, complex instructions and word games. In a year two lesson after reading a poem about a zebra, pupils were asked whether the zebra was black with white stripes or white with black stripes. Year three pupils use instructional language when describing bread making. Pupils generate ideas in brain storming sessions and contribute well through question and answer in plenary sessions at, for example, the end of the literacy hour. They listen well to their teachers and to each other and this enables them to answer questions in a relevant manner; the more able pupils often support their answers with a good deal of detail. Pupils are keen to discuss the characters in shared stories they read and they express their ideas logically using a suitably growing vocabulary and clear speech. Learning support assistants are skilled at asking questions and encouraging pupils to articulate their thoughts. Further opportunities are provided for pupils to speak and listen during assemblies and in drama sessions in the amphitheatre.

66. Most pupils achieve standards in reading above national expectations at the ends of both key stages. The school promotes the value and enjoyment of books very effectively and pupils clearly gain pleasure from them. The last inspection criticised the location of the library and this has been put right. Well-stocked libraries in the main school building are a great improvement, providing a rich environment for reference and fiction reading. All classes have weekly library sessions led by the headteacher and volunteers and arrangements for pupils to change books are very thorough. Younger pupils have an area rich in books and imaginatively developed 'Story Sacks' contributed to pupils' enjoyment of reading. Books within each classroom add to the school's rich reading environment. The school has a range of strategies to encourage pupils to read. For example, pupils in year two are encouraged to follow 'Book Tracks', where they read a wide range of texts at an appropriate level and are rewarded at points through the programme. It is planned to extend this to upper Key Stage 2.

67. Shared reading as a class using common text and guided reading in small ability groups, not only teaches the necessary skills of reading but also enhances pupils' enjoyment of reading. Pupils read texts from a wide selection of books accurately and with understanding. In a year four lesson, pupils read and edit text, using connectives to make complex sentences. Year five pupils consider different non-fiction books and texts about honey in terms of technical vocabulary, preferred audience and pictorial detail. In year six, pupils read excerpts from stories of mystery and suspense enthusiastically. They identify features of the genre, such as short sentences and starting sentences with an adverb such as, 'suddenly'. Pupils are heard to read regularly in school

and at home and records of their progress are well maintained

68. Pupils achieve well in their written work and by the ends of both key stages attainment is above national expectations. High priority has been given over the past year to the improvement of narrative writing. Lessons with a narrative focus have been observed by the co-ordinator and children's work is regularly assessed against national curriculum criteria and moderated between teachers. Targets are set for improvement and pupils as young as year two have challenge cards that identify specific areas for improvement such as using capital letters and full stops or joining up all the letters in words. These strategies are having a positive impact on raising standards. Pupils show an increasing fluency in the range and style of their writing as they progress through the school. For example, in a year two lesson pupils read 'Gerald the Giraffe' together with the teacher and then write a character profile using key words and phrases. In year three, literacy was well used across the curriculum when a parent helper demonstrated making bread, as a food technology topic, talking through the process while pupils made notes. Some set them out as bullet points while others used numbers. Good initial modelling of the process by the teacher contributed to a successful lesson.

69. Year six pupils write open paragraphs to create mystery and suspense using features identified when reading stories in the genre. They use planning structures of differing complexity to organise their writing and appropriate grammar for their age, identifying adjectives and replacing verbs such as 'went' and 'said' with more powerful words. Their spelling is usually accurate or phonetically justifiable. They understand the use of paragraphs, connectives and subordinate clauses to improve their writing. Most appreciate the expressive power of a simile in, 'like a bit of cork in a sea of foam' and personification in 'the head of a mighty wave'. They have well formed legible joined handwriting and take a pride in the presentation of their work.

70. The quality of teaching of English is good throughout the school, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are well planned and begin with good introductions. The format of the lesson is clearly shared with pupils. Teachers are skilled at questioning and they have good subject knowledge, particularly in the format of the literacy hour, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attainments and pupil management is generally good. Pupils respond with very positive attitudes to their work, good behaviour and equally good relationships with adults and each other. This creates a stimulating environment for pupils. Achievement in English is good and pupils make good progress. Teachers monitor progress well and use their assessments to plan for pupils of different prior attainment. While marking is generally satisfactory, most pupils receive little written feedback on what they need to do next to improve.

71. English is well led and managed by an experienced and well-qualified subject leader. She has ensured the effective implementation of the Literacy hour through monitoring teaching and teachers' planning. The school analyses and uses information from test results to monitor pupil progress and set school targets. A well-developed action plan has a clear focus on raising standards throughout the school as well as for groups of pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

72. National tests results taken by 11 year olds in 2000 indicate that attainment in mathematics is above the national average when compared to all and similar schools. In the 2000 tests for 7-year-olds attainment was well above average using both comparisons and consolidated the significant improvement in the previous year. The results at Key Stage 2 are largely consistent with the evidence obtained during the inspection from lesson observation, talking to children and analysis of work. However, inspection evidence also suggests the attainment of this year's oldest infants is lower, but still above the national average. This is acknowledged by the school, who, because the year group has relatively fewer higher attaining pupils, expect a slight dip in this year's test results for seven year-olds. Nevertheless, overall standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection, when they were said to be '...sound overall in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and 2' and that attainment was 'not significantly

different from the national average.'

73. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented. Planning is now more rigorous, with an appropriate progression to the development of the subject through the school. The new planning framework ensures a consistency of approach and the requirement that the work is suitably matched to children's age and ability. This, with a greater emphasis on mental mathematics, direct whole class teaching and a planned daily mathematics lesson has meant standards are improving through the school.

74. In Key Stage 1 pupils are introduced to mathematical vocabulary through a range of practical activities, which promote understanding of patterns, number and shape. Pupils in year one successfully find many different ways of making 24 and use games to reinforce their understanding of number bonds. They are encouraged 'think and do' in real situations, like trying to find the capacity of a real furniture removal lorry! By the age of seven, pupils typically identify half past, quarter past and quarter to on a conventional and an analogue clock and are able to construct a simple bar chart. In mental maths seven year olds double and halve numbers, count on in fives and tens starting from a given number, identify odd and even numbers and speedily recall number bonds to 20.

75. Key Stage 2 pupils build on and extend their mathematical skills and knowledge. Year three pupils recognise simple fractions, such as  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  and are beginning to identify equivalent fractions. They identify lines of symmetry and are improving their understanding of simple division and multiplication. By year four, pupils use a Venn diagram to classify shapes by using different criteria. They calculate the area and perimeter of a rectangle when given the length and breadth. Year five pupils count forward and backwards in 25s and solve money problems to £10 accurately using addition and subtraction. Many pupils know their tables well. In the oldest classes pupils are able to create their own number sequences involving quite sophisticated patterns. Pupils use a function machine to perform multiple number operations and recognise the concept of inverse operations. They change fractions to decimals, multiply decimals and identify coordinates in all four quadrants. The standard of presentation of pupils' work is generally good, with some examples of some very neat work.

76. Overall pupils' attitude to mathematics is very good. However in a very small sample of lessons the poor behaviour of group of pupils adversely affected the pace of learning. The vast majority of pupils, are nevertheless, fully engaged in their work, interested and work hard. Pupils respond enthusiastically, particularly in oral maths and are eager to volunteer answers or explain the strategy they are using. The changeover from mental / oral activity to the main activity is usually achieved with a minimum of fuss so that the pace of the lesson is maintained.

77. The teaching of mathematics is very good in both key stages and particularly so in Key Stage 1 where 75% of lessons observed were very good or better. Of all lessons observed, 90% were good or better, 38% very good and one lesson was excellent. This is an improvement on the last inspection when the quality of teaching was 'sound' and 'the pace of learning sometimes suffers from unnecessary repetition of previous work, or from lack of challenge for abler pupils in particular.' Following the school's application and acceptance as a pilot school for the National Numeracy Strategy in 1998, staff have received intensive training in mathematics from both external and internal providers. Planning is now thorough with learning outcomes clearly identified in each lesson. The subject knowledge of the teachers is often good; indeed the deputy head has been identified by the local authority as a 'Leading Mathematics Teacher.' Pupils are encouraged to develop different strategies to work out problems in their head and there is a consistent approach to the way children are taught to carry out operations; for example the way children are taught to multiply. Pupils are well managed and clearly know what is expected of them. Work is matched to the ability of the pupils, not only through the ability setting, but also within a set where, quite often, the teacher provides three levels of work. Resources such as digit cards, often teacher produced, are used to ensure as many pupils as possible participate in the lesson. Displays in rooms and central areas are used to help reinforce learning, such as the year six display on rotational symmetry.

78. Pupils acquire and consolidate mathematical knowledge and skills and learn well during lessons. Through the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the commitment of the staff to raise standards in the subject the pupils, including children with special educational needs, are now making consistently good progress throughout the school and are achieving well. In some years pupils are achieving very well. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was 'sound or better.' Pupils work purposefully and try hard. They learn to use correct mathematical vocabulary as they move through the school.

79. The curriculum is now based on the National Numeracy Strategy Framework. Its systematic approach provides a broad and balanced curriculum and ensures progression and continuity as pupils move through the school. Work is selected from a variety of sources to ensure it is suitably matched to the ability of all the children. The school's decision to set pupils by ability from year one upwards has helped raise standards by making teaching more effective and also by ensuring those requiring the most help receive the support they need. Pupils who find mathematics more difficult flourish in the smaller group setting with a greater emphasis upon practical activities. They make good progress and their confidence in the subject improves as a result. Well-focused homework enhances the quality of provision. In year one, for example, homework includes a letter to parents providing background information and suggestions for home support activities, a mathematics challenge for the child and an opportunity for the parents to comment on the work and how their child responds to it.

80. Assessment arrangements are good. Following baseline assessment on entry information obtained from national tests, optional tests in years three, four and five and records of achievements matched to key objectives is carefully analysed to assess standards, identify trends and incidents of underachievement. Targets are set for each child using this information. Work is regularly scrutinised and teaching observed by colleagues, the subject leader and senior managers. Satisfactory records of on-going assessments of pupils progress are kept by teachers, either by informal notes or records kept in the teachers' mark books. However the impact of these assessments would be considerably improved by a more consistent approach throughout the school. Pupils' work is regularly and consistently marked, but mainly to indicate right or wrong and rarely includes more helpful guidance to show pupils how they can improve.

81. Mathematics is strongly led by an experienced, well-qualified subject leader ably supported by an assistant subject leader. Her drive and commitment is having a positive impact on the development of the subject. Well targeted training to improve subject knowledge and the monitoring of teaching and learning are already helping to raise standards. Resources for mathematics are good, with enough equipment etc to properly resource the full implementation of the numeracy strategy. The school has built in some flexibility in planning to allow for the efficient use of resources. Good cross-curricular links have been established with other subjects. For example, pupils in year three use computers to collect data on 'ways of getting to school' and then present this in the form of a chart or graph.

## **SCIENCE**

82. The standard of attainment in science at the ends of both key stages is above that expected nationally. Pupils throughout the school develop good investigative skills and are able to record and measure their observations. They are able to make simple comparisons, identify patterns and relationships and offer explanations based on their knowledge and understanding. Boys and girls are confident in making predictions and have a good understanding of fair testing.

83. Pupils in both key stages are provided with a comprehensive programme of science activities that enables them to acquire a knowledge and understanding of the world around them, of materials, living things and physical processes. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn that plants need light and water in order to grow. They talk knowledgeably of conditions for growth and discuss and predict the growth of cress seeds planted in sand with no food, and of others planted in compost. After a week of growth they discuss the differences they observe and record their

measurements. When looking at how toys work pupils know some are driven by clockwork, some are battery operated and others, like a model windmill are driven by wind. Not all experiments go to plan and when learning about wind as a source of energy one pupil predicted that the weight of the label on a balloon would prevent it from flying. Unfortunately, this proved to be the case but it did not dampen pupil's enthusiasm and resulted in lively debate about the problem. In other investigations pupils learn that the thickness and weight of paper determines the extent to which it can be moved by wind. Model vehicles made in design and technology lessons are fitted with lights and buzzers as pupils make and put electric circuits to a practical use. Metals, wood, plastic, and fabric are classified, pupils understand concepts such as transparent and waterproof and they can distinguish between magnetic and non-magnetic materials. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the range of investigative and experimental work.

84. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to learn about themselves. In year three, they study teeth, and from a survey of their own mouths decide which are milk teeth and which are adult teeth. They are able to describe the functions of different teeth, such as canine, incisor and molar. Year six pupils learn about micro-organisms and know they can be the cause of ill-health and infections, how infections can be spread and how the body fights diseases. They understand the need for good health, a good diet and the benefits of exercise. Practical skills are developed and pupils make and test ear defenders. Their choice of materials is discussed sensibly and the ear defenders are tested and compared following discussions on what would be a fair test. From observations of different types of rocks, pupils have developed a good understanding of permeable and impermeable rocks, and samples of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rock have been accurately identified. Pupils learn that some substances, like sugar, will dissolve, whilst others like sand will not and that filtering can separate some mixtures. They are able to provide elaborate explanations in demonstrating their understanding of reversible and irreversible change. From work observed over the year, there is good evidence of pupil's own research skills and thinking and of progress in knowledge gained.

85. Pupils have a good attitude towards science and their enthusiasm for practical activity is evident. Most pupils sit quietly, listen carefully and are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussions. Some pupils take a time to settle and their behaviour can interrupt the flow of the lesson, particularly the introduction. They express an interest in their work and are excited, responsive and enthusiastic about the investigations they have undertaken. Good co-operation and teamwork between pupils, particularly when they comment on and evaluate the work of others, makes a good contribution to learning in science.

86. The quality of science teaching throughout the school is good. Consistent planning is based on the agreed scheme with lesson objectives clearly stated and frequently supported by key words being written on the board. Good differentiation is made for less able pupils who are given effective support by classroom assistants. The subject knowledge of teachers is good and appropriate scientific language is used to clarify learning. Introductions to lessons are often lively and enthusiastic with established routines enabling lessons to proceed smoothly. Lessons proceed at a good pace which keeps pupils focused, particularly where challenging activities and deadlines are set. Questioning is used well to challenge pupils and check knowledge and understanding and effective praise encourages positive behaviour. Where pupils cause minor disruption they are dealt with calmly and efficiently. Support assistants ensure that time is not lost by providing teachers with good support in managing unsettled pupils. Challenging homework is used to support classroom activities. Expectations of time given to science homework are made clear and this increases as pupils proceed through the school. Progress is routinely assessed to see whether pupils have met the expectations of each unit of work.

87. The weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been remedied and the school has introduced a scheme of work and linked assessment to clearly defined learning objectives. Although in post for only a short period of time, the science coordinator provides good leadership in the subject. The role is well defined and includes a programme for classroom visits and lesson observations. Positive links have been made with local schools and the school is involved in initiatives, such as the Astra Zeneca project, which will provide science teachers with a website forum for sharing ideas. Displays throughout the school promote learning and reflect work in the



classroom. Resources are well organised and the school grounds, particularly the environmental areas, the pond, marshland and butterfly gardens, are used extensively to support work in the classroom and provide good links to other subjects.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

88. Only one art lesson was timetabled during the inspection, but from that year six lesson, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of sketchbooks and the school's portfolio of work, standards are judged to be above those for pupils of a similar age. This is in line with the judgement during the last inspection. The school has adopted national guidance into its scheme of work and also incorporated expectations of what most pupils should achieve at the end of each unit. This encourages teachers to assess pupils' ability in art and contributes significantly to ensuring progression in developing skills and the standards that pupils achieve.

89. Year one pupils investigate the qualities of natural and man made materials. They make collages using materials and weave thread wool and string. Year two pupils look at objects such as vases and bottles and recreate them in textile designs. They explore an event in their lives, learn how to use a viewfinder and record their observations and ideas in drawings. They look at and comment on the work of photographers and illustrators.

90. In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to improve their skills with a strong emphasis on evaluating and developing work and pupils' increasingly using their sketchbooks to explore ideas. Year three pupils develop stencilling and printmaking techniques and explore ways of combining and organising shapes and colour patterns when designing a T-shirt. Pupils in year four exploring fabric design look at the past and other cultures as an inspiration for their own design. Year five pupils, having selected and arranged part of a Tudor house as part of their history topic, cut out their detailed design on a polystyrene tile and print their work.

91. In a year six lesson, pupils make masks that communicate the emotions of a character that they will use in the summer when acting in the school's amphitheatre. Pupils look at the work of landscape artists such as John Constable, David Hockney and L.S Lowry before committing drawings to their sketchbooks. These pupils benefit from specialist art teaching. In the lesson a feature of good teaching was the organisation and management of pupils that encouraged independence and the exploration and development of ideas.

92. An enthusiastic and knowledgeable learning support assistant makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement in the use of clay and older pupils have the opportunity to throw pots using a wheel. The school has a well-equipped pottery room with a kiln and a range of examples of pupils' work is displayed throughout the school. The use of designs from other cultures, such as Roman oil lamps made by year three pupils, feature strongly in pupils' work and the quality of glazes contributes to high standards.

93. The co-ordinator works hard to maintain high standards and the quality of display is generally good throughout the school although a few classrooms in Key Stage 2 do not reflect this ethos. Current priorities for improvement include the further development of assessment and monitoring of the subject. Good resources for art are centrally stored with an adequate supply of consumable materials. Opportunities for pupils to take part and appreciate art outside the school are regularly taken such as when pupils contributed hanging sculptures on a theme 'Wonders of the Sea' at a millennium celebration in Exeter Cathedral.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. Low standards in design and technology were identified as a key issue in the previous inspection report. From lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work and pupils' planning books, standards are now appropriate for the ages of the pupils concerned. Planning is related to national guidance with a much more systematic approach to the learning of skills and evaluating and modifying designs.

95. Good teaching contributes to good levels of achievement. Year one pupils make moving pictures working from their design sheets, the teacher questioning pupils about their choices. In year two pupils make wheeled vehicles that move to match their designs. Pupils are well managed and organised with resources readily available. The teacher and learning support assistant circulate, questioning pupils to help them and assess their understanding. They question, for example, the difference between fixed and rotating wheels and the different ways of securing a wheel to an axle.

96. In Key Stage 2, pupils progressively build on their skills. Year three pupils consider sandwich snacks in terms of purpose quality and design. They discuss the contribution to a healthy diet by balancing carbohydrates, proteins and fats, and seriously think about the likes and dislikes of the person for whom they are making it. 'I can't put onions in it for my sister in the reception class', said one boy. A well-planned lesson focused pupils thinking onto the choices of bread, spread, fillings and appearance. Year four pupils design pop up picture stories for the reception class. However, planning was not clearly focused on expected outcomes and the expectation of what pupils can achieve was not high enough. In a year five lesson, following on their work with gearing using cogs, pupils make a fairground ride with two turntables working in different directions. Pupils understand gearing up and down depending on the relationship between the driving and driven cog. In their design technology books they draw different combinations and predict the outcome. In a well managed plenary session the teacher used specific vocabulary such as, 'mesh' and 'transferring movement through a right angle', to promote good standards and develop skills in speaking and listening. Pupils enjoy design and technology and respond positively to challenges.

97. The co-ordinator has worked hard to raise standards in design and technology since the last inspection and has an action plan to further develop and monitor the subject including improving assessment procedures. Resources are good and stored centrally, and there is an adequate supply of consumable materials.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

98. The school organises termly topic themes with either a history or geography bias. During the period of the inspection it was not possible to observe geography lessons being taught in Key Stage 2 and judgements are based on discussions with pupils and staff and the analysis of pupils' previous work. The skills, knowledge and understanding of pupils in these subjects are as expected. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

99. Pupils' geography skills are steadily developed as they progress through the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils acquire first hand experience of Exmouth, with visits to the town and the docks to initiate or support work in the classroom. Good use is made of maps to find places. They have good awareness of continents and seas and know the location of Australia, India and Gambia on a map. During the inspection, teachers in the year two classes used different approaches to achieve the same learning objectives of using coordinates and relating maps and plans to actual places. One concentrated more on the actual features of the school grounds and their relative positions while the other brought in historical elements by making the exercise a search for Sir Walter Raleigh's treasure. The practical nature of the work, good use of the grounds and emphasis on promoting skills are all features of the work of the school.

100. Most geographical work in Key Stage 2 is programmed for the summer months but all that is available shows good evidence of continued emphasis on developing skills such as map work in year four. A substantial piece of work by year six pupils on Kenya shows good evidence of pupils' increasing awareness of the differences and similarities of life in a contrasting culture and environment. Good care is taken not to stereotype the local inhabitants and good awareness shown of the various influences involved. Another positive element is the use of an evaluation form including comments by parents to provide feedback and encouragement.

101. In history, pupils' finished work shows that they understand the features and events of past societies and the consequences of change. This is well demonstrated in year four work on ancient invaders. Current work again showed the school's emphasis on providing interesting and relevant activities and on the promotion of historical skills. Year ones use a good collection of toys to prompt pupils to decide which their grandparents might have used and which must be modern. Most soon decided that skateboards and Action Man were today's toys and that dolls could be Grandma's 'if they have a china head'. A class lesson on the Romans in year three concentrated on the various sources of evidence and identified 'what the Romans left behind' as pottery, buildings, money, language etc. Year five pupils make good use of local parish records to find out about aspects of life and death in Withycombe in Victorian times. The outstanding activity in the humanities during the week involved granddads recounting their experiences of life during the blitz in Exmouth, Plymouth and London. Year six pupils gained a huge amount of information and understanding from the exercise and showed real maturity in their responses.

102. The quality of teaching in geography is good. Teachers plan interesting and stimulating activities that challenge and engage pupils. The local area is well used and visits to local places provide good support to the geography and history curriculum. A good variety of other resources including computer programmes are used as a stimulus to geographic enquiry. Questions are used well to encourage pupils to discuss their experiences and to expand upon their answers. Teachers make provision for pupils needing support and additional attention. The management of pupils is good with an effective partnership with support assistants who use their initiative in working alongside pupils who have difficulty focusing during discussions. Class routines are firmly established and good behaviour is praised. Restless pupils are managed well and the teacher stops lesson where behaviour falls below expectations.

103. Coordinators for history and geography are working together to further develop the cohesive humanities programme. Teachers are given sound guidance and support. Since the last inspection, subject plans have been revised based on the latest national guidelines. Monitoring of the subjects is being developed and the coordinators' work with staff across the school in ensuring planned progression and continuity. A good emphasis is made on practical experience and fieldwork, and the environment within the local area is used well to enrich class-based learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

104. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) since the last inspection and the school has made ICT a high priority. A suite of networked computers has been installed with internet access and a range of programs appropriate for different age groups. The suite is timetabled for all classes and this is making a very strong contribution to improvements in standards. Pupils throughout the school are already achieving very well and standards in Key Stage 1 are better than in most schools while pupils in the older classes are working at the levels expected for their ages.

105. Pupils are learning to use an appropriate range of programs to support their learning. They are confident in logging onto the network system, loading the required program and retrieving saved work. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, pupils gain confidence in using computers using the mouse to navigate around the screen and the keyboard to write and enter information. Pupils in year one learn to use a database and enter information on their favourite party food. Having entered data, they are able to create and print a graph and to interpret the results to identify their most and least favourite foods. Pupils are able to save and retrieve their work. Logos designed for model vehicles made in design and technology lessons and Easter cards with text and graphics show what they can do at this young age.

106. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to learn to collect, organise and present data in a bar chart. Year four pupils work together to enter the properties of 2D shapes into a database and then answer questions that identify the shape. This is a challenging activity requiring careful thought and although one pair of pupils included right angles in a rhombus they realised and were

able to remedy the error. Effective links are made with other subjects and in a maths investigation on pocket money, pupils enter a formula in a spreadsheet to determine the preferred method of payment. Most pupils learnt to copy and paste the formula and to use the program shortcuts and others require further experience to consolidate their learning. Good use is made of the Internet in searching for other schools involved in an ecology, Eco-Code, project and in searching for information on micro-organisms. Year six pupils confidently discuss work undertaken earlier in the year where they entered the length of shadows into database and turned the results into 2D or 3D graphs, pie charts, line graphs or scattergrams. On the theme of "How to design a good Level 5 story", pupils make a presentation, which includes pictures, video clips, sound and flying text. A newspaper report demonstrates their capability in presenting work appropriate to the theme with headlines, two-column layout and pictures with captions. The range of work on display shows pupils have access to a broad range of activities which includes a music program where melodies are composed, data handling, drawing and presentation programs including the use of a digital camera and programmable devices.

107. Pupils enjoy working in the computer suite. Throughout the school they are able to work co-operatively with a partner, are willing to share resources and are patient if waiting for help. They enjoy using the technology and are interested and enthusiastic. The behaviour observed was sensible and pupils have good relationships with the class teachers and support assistants. Concentration is sustained particularly where there is a measure of challenge in the activity.

108. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers subject knowledge has advanced since the introduction of the computer suite and the workshops organised by the co-ordinator. Their expertise is evident in lessons through the guidance given to pupils and the familiarity with the programs. Good links are made with other subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy. Lessons are well planned and prepared with differentiated activities for mixed age classes. Clear Learning objectives build on previous experience. Resources such as a flipchart are used well to demonstrate teaching points. Time is well managed and this enables pupils to achieve the lesson objectives. The plenary session, when used effectively, is used to check and reinforce learning. Support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and help to keep pupils on task and enable them to develop independence.

109. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has introduced a scheme of work to ensure there is planned progression of the curriculum. Assessment of pupil progress is made against the objectives of each unit and the subject folder contains samples of work as exemplars for each year group. The resource provision for ICT, overall, is satisfactory with the computer suite providing a very good learning environment but, partly due to the recent burglary of eight laptops, few computers are available in the classrooms for pupils to develop their computer skills in other subjects throughout the day.

## **MUSIC**

110. Inspection evidence from the observation of a small sample of lessons, music associated with assemblies, extra-curricular activities and individual instrument tuition indicated that the standard of music in both key stages is above average. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were said to be 'at least in line with national expectations.' Many children are involved in musical activities outside the classroom, both playing instruments and singing, and it is obvious pupils enjoy their music making activities. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers in strings, woodwind, brass, guitar and percussion, together with the extra curricular activities of choir, recorders and orchestra greatly enhance the provision for the pupils. It enables more able pupils to achieve well. Some pupils progress to the Exmouth Primary Orchestra, joining other pupils from local schools in a weekly workshop session. The school choir performs within the community, singing in a local superstore, at the Hospice and on stage with Myleene Klass of 'Popstars' fame. In September Jeff Rich, the drummer from Status Quo, will be running a workshop in the school for older pupils.

111. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to maintain the quality of provision in

music despite the inevitable time restraints on the subject brought about by the implementation of the numeracy and literacy strategies. A new commercial scheme has been introduced to support planning by identifying the learning activities and outcomes. This has proved valuable in ensuring both progression and adequate coverage of the National Curriculum. The Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 overviews ensure the requirements of Curriculum 2000 are being met.

112. Pupils make good progress in lessons and achieve well in music throughout the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils sing songs from memory and hear, repeat and devise rhythm patterns. They name and use untuned percussion instruments to develop a simple composition. Boys and girls listen well, are confident performers and an enthusiastic audience. Their knowledge of songs is increasing and they sing with great enthusiasm. In Key Stage 2, pupils use musical notation including minim, crochet and quavers to help perform a simple composition using percussion instruments. The oldest juniors use the computer program 'Music Explorer' to create their own compositions for woodwind and percussion instruments. Children are given the chance to perform their own composition, while classmates are encouraged to listen and evaluate. Year six pupils recognise and discriminate between various elements of music, such as pitch, rhythm, tempo and timbre.

113. In the two music lessons observed the quality of teaching was good. Both lessons were well structured with clear learning goals and objectives. The teachers have good subject knowledge and organise the lessons with an appropriate mix of information, demonstration and practical activities. Resources available are used well, and all pupils are encouraged to participate. More able pupils, who receive individual tuition, use their skills and knowledge to support and enhance classmates' compositions, such as the flautist in a Y6 music lesson. Typically pupils are enthusiastic in music lessons and relish the opportunity to both compose and perform, and this is equally true of both boys and girls. They really enjoy singing and are proud of their accomplishments and as a result behave well. This is better than the last inspection when 'the behaviour of a small number of pupils was unsatisfactory and adversely affected the pace of the lessons and the progress made by the class.'

114. Singing in assembly is good. Pupils know by heart a good range of songs including some two-part singing. Music is played on entry to assemblies to allow pupils to listen and compare music from a variety of sources. Pupils sometimes perform assemblies to the rest of the school, often using songs learnt in their music lessons. In the summer the school is planning to perform a musical version of 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin' entitled 'Rats.' Appropriate links are made with other subjects in the curriculum. For example as part of their topic on the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, year four pupils devised dance routines to the music of the Big Band sound of Glen Miller.

115. Music was the degree specialism of the subject co-ordinator. At present she has little real opportunity to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the scheme, other than by scrutinising lesson plans and talking to colleagues. Teaching is not observed. The subject co-ordinator recognises the need to develop suitable assessment procedures and records for the subject so that progress can be monitored more effectively. In general, the range of musical instruments and other resources available are plentiful and in a satisfactory condition. However some of the Glockenspiels and xylophones available to the juniors look a little 'tired'. Resources for music are well used. The school's range of musical instruments includes some from different cultures such as the drums displayed in the year six class.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. Standards in physical education are similar to most schools in Key Stage 1 and better in Key Stage 2. Standards in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection.

117. Seven-year-olds travel around the room using different types of movements well, for example running, hopping and jumping. Their starting positions are imaginative and they travel across the room using straight and curved pathways. All pupils practice to improve their work and by the end of the session they are able to change directions and vary the types of movements to form an interesting sequence with both good starting and finishing positions. Most pupils listen

carefully to comments made by their peers, following their performances to each other and are able to give positive comments on how their work could be improved. No other areas of physical education were observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1 but evidence from planning indicates that the pupils receive the full range of the physical education curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress in their learning.

118. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils, attainment is above average and they make good progress in their learning. Consistently good teaching of physical education in this key stage is having a positive impact on standards. In dance, pupils in year three perform skilled movements, appropriate to the style and beat of the music. They apply creative effort to their work and produce a dance based on 'The Pied Piper' of high quality. Boys and girls make thoughtful use of space and improve their performances with good support from the teacher. Pupils in year six perform a dance from World War 2, based on music from Glen Miller, well. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and as a result, pupils devise and perform sequences of a good standard. In games lessons pupils in year three develop their skills of controlling a ball well. They control, dribble and pass a ball with increasing accuracy and begin to understand the use of tactics. In a year four lesson, the teacher skilfully changed the activity planned for outdoors because of the weather. Pupils were able to plan, on paper, how to adapt their game in order to improve it and to make it more difficult. In year five pupils respond effectively to a poem 'The Mean Machine' by gradually building up a group image of ideas based on the poem. Pupils are able to improve their performance because of very good teaching to support them in their work.

119. Pupils in both key stages learn to swim in the school's pool and older pupils have access to the local swimming pool to improve their skills. By the time they leave the school most swim at least 25 metres and many successfully complete personal survival courses.

120. The quality of teaching is good overall. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and gives colleagues very good support with planning and developing their expertise. Teachers are enthusiastic and planning is good. During lessons teachers provide pupils with good points to enable them to improve their work. Behaviour management is often very good and as a result most pupils respond very well in lessons. They are enthusiastic, interested and generally behave well. Where the behaviour management is satisfactory a minority of pupils interrupt the flow of the lesson by consistently having to be reminded about their behaviour. Pupils, in both key stages, also benefit from close links with the local teachers training college and students regularly work with groups of pupils in the school.

121. Management of physical education is good and the coordinator has already identified the need for a system to be put in place, to support teachers with assessing individual pupils' skills development. A good scheme of work supports teachers with planning to ensure progression of skills in both key stages. Resources are good with a field, adequate playground space and covered swimming pool available for use. A very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities supports pupils' learning very well.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

122. Standards of attainment in religious education are better than expected in the locally agreed syllabus and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Standards have improved since the previous inspection mainly because the teaching of religious education is predominantly good in both key stages.

123. By the age of seven, most pupils understand the significance of some of the important customs, beliefs and practices of Christianity. In year one, pupils know that Jesus died on Good Friday. They discuss the 'cross' as a symbol of Christianity and pupils learn that 'hot cross buns' are a traditional custom associated with Good Friday. They begin to understand the importance of Easter to Christians, through careful explanations about Jesus' resurrection. The teacher

effectively compares the event with new life in spring in particular with daffodil bulbs that reappear in springtime. A group of pupils in year two act the story of 'The Last Supper' for the rest of the class. The teacher makes good use of resources to enable the pupils to visualise the occasion. Most pupils have a good understanding of the events leading up to Easter. They also begin to understand some of the practices and customs of other religions, including Judaism and Islam. From photographic evidence, pupils in year one set the table for Shabbat, a Jewish festival and in year two pupils begin to understand some Muslim beliefs.

124. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are better than they should be according to the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in year four have a good understanding of the events of Palm Sunday and of those leading up to Easter. Some pupils give good suggestions of how the 'The Son of God' might have appeared, for example he could have worn a crown. They also make interesting comments about why people, in the crowd, were waving palm leaves at Jesus. Pupils in year six have a sound grasp of the story of the 'Stoning of Stephen' and retell the events, well, in a newspaper account. By the end of the key stage most pupils also have a good understanding of Judaism and Hinduism. They know about their places of worship, family customs and important festivals.

125. The quality of teaching is good and teachers plan effectively to ensure good progression in pupils' knowledge and understanding. They have good subject knowledge and question skilfully to promote discussions. Teachers value all pupils' contributions to discussions, which has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Management of behaviour is good and pupils are interested and enthusiastic. Good use is made of religious objects to support pupils in their learning during lessons. The coordinator has very good subject knowledge and has worked hard to support teachers in implementing the scheme of work. She monitors standards effectively, although has not observed any teaching of religious education. Satisfactory use is made of visits to Christian places of worship but this area is underdeveloped with regard to other religions. A portfolio of pupils' work has been started and this will support teachers with assessing individual pupils' attainment when the new assessment scale is available from the diocese.