

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **OLDWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Paignton, Devon

LEA area: Torbay

Unique reference number: 113215

Headteacher: Mr. P Maunder

Reporting inspector: Chris Glynn  
Rgl No: 2741

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 190417

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Higher Polsham Road Paignton Devon
Postcode:	TQ3 2SY
Telephone number:	01803 557190
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Tucker
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Glynn	Registered inspector		What sort of School is it?  How high are standards?  The school's results and achievements  How well are pupils taught?
Jean McKay	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gordon Tomsett	Team inspector	Geography Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Peter Kerr	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Music Special educational needs	
Hilma Rask	Team Inspector	Information technology Design technology Under Fives English as another Language	
Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Science Religious Education	How well is the school led and managed?
Stephanie Matthews	Team Inspector	English History Equal opportunities.	

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Inspection Quality Division  
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Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Oldway is a much larger than average primary school. With 652 pupils on roll and a nursery it is oversubscribed. The pupils are drawn from a wide area around Paignton with an equal number of boys and girls taught by a staff of 24 teachers including the headteacher.

The number of pupils who claim free school meals is in line with the national average. However, evidence suggests that many more families than is indicated by these figures are experiencing a high level of disadvantage. Since the previous inspection the school has admitted a greater number of pupils from families experiencing the impact of unemployment and re-location.

Most children entering the school have had the opportunity to attend pre-school or nursery education sessions. The number representing ethnic minority communities or for whom English is an additional language is low and the number of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is below the national average. However, the attainment of pupils on entering the school whilst representing a wide range of attainment, is below average.

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

Oldway is a very effective school with some excellent features, particularly in the way it is led and managed. Teaching is very good and as a result pupils learn well and make good progress. Standards achieved match the national averages and are improving since the last inspection. The cost of educating pupils at the school is very low but pupils still make good progress and have very good attitudes to learning. As a result the school gives very good value for money.

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

- The leadership and management of the school are excellent.
- Pupils learn very well as a result of very good teaching; their behaviour is good and they have very positive attitudes to school.
- Very high standards are achieved in science and art.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and those pupils make very good progress.
- Parents make effective links with the school.

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

- The provision for outdoor play and the development of physical skills for the Under 5s.
- The procedures for storing and retrieving registers.
- The accommodation and toilet facilities, especially for the youngest children.

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

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

The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection in 1996 and all the key issues arising from that inspection have been addressed satisfactorily. The curriculum now fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the governing body now has a curriculum committee to monitor developments. Standards have been raised in the core curriculum subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology (IT). Assessment procedures have been revised and successfully implemented. Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) has increased. The spiritual development of pupils has improved. Major investment has been made in the provision of a suite for information and communication technology (ICT) development. Toilet facilities in the nursery have been improved and the outdoor environment enhanced with covered recreational areas. The school has achieved the "Investors In People" award and improved its procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing staff performance.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Pupils enter the school with below average attainment. They make good progress in the early years classes and by the end of the infant phase are achieving in line with national expectations in reading. Reading is a particular strength throughout the school but in the Key Stage 1 tests writing was marginally below the national average. Mathematics is below expectations for seven-year-olds. By eleven results in all subjects have improved to match the national averages and science exceeds them for the higher grades awarded in tests. Standards of work seen during the inspection show a similar picture to the results published. English attainment is sound overall; mathematics has improved to be in line at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and science is above average in both key stages. Realistic targets for improved results are set and achieved. The school's improving trend matches that of schools nationally. Art and science are strengths of the school, and IT and design and technology (DT) though still weak for many pupils are improving following major investment in staff and resources. More needs to be done to develop some physical skills of the youngest pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite, behave sensibly and move around the school in an orderly way.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Staff are good role models and pupils respond well to the respect shown to them and have good relationships with adults and other pupils.
Attendance	Good. Unauthorised attendance is below the national average.

These are strengths of the school. Pupils show very positive attitudes to school and most attend very regularly. They behave very well and show a genuine concern for the needs of others. Relationships are of a very high quality throughout the school and pupils respond positively to opportunities to take responsibility and initiate learning themselves. They co-operate well in their learning.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is very good and is a strength of the school. Ninety-nine per cent of lessons seen were satisfactory and 83 per cent of lessons were good or better. Planning is very thorough and the provision for pupils of differing abilities is very good. Provision for SEN pupils is impressive and like all pupils they learn well. There is very little difference in the learning success of boys and girls. Most lessons seen in English and mathematics were at least good and some excellent teaching is found in these subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught. The best teaching was observed in Key Stage 2 but very good teaching is found throughout the school and in most subjects.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. A broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum is offered to all pupils. Some elements of physical development need improving.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The quality and support for pupils with special educational needs are impressive.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	(The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are fully competent users of the language).
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school very successfully promotes the values expressed in the school's aims through a wide range of activities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Staff know the pupils well and monitor their performance and pastoral needs carefully. Concerns raised are dealt with quickly.

The school works very well with parents and many are very involved in the daily life of the school. The school provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities and the statutory curriculum is in place. Improvements could be made in the development of some physical skills for very young pupils but the provision for SEN is very good as is that for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are generally good but there are some issues relating to the early years provision that need addressing. Effective monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress is central to the school's work.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher, assistant headteacher, senior management team and governors all work very effectively to improve the accommodation and teaching quality and to raise standards achieved by pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. They contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. It is outstanding in monitoring and evaluating teaching and a comprehensive development plan reflects concerns raised by the monitoring of performance.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The principles of "best value" are applied rigorously. Plans are carefully costed and financial systems effectively administered.

Leadership and management are of the highest quality. The headteacher has a very clear vision of the school's needs and future and is very strongly supported by the assistant headteacher and the governing body. Procedures for monitoring of performance and the strategic planning of developments are exemplary. Staffing and learning resources are sufficient to achieve the aims of the school and deliver the National Curriculum but accommodation is cramped and the school is overcrowded. There are still insufficient toilets despite the governor's efforts to increase provision. Some of the space is too restricted for the youngest pupils and there is no hall big enough for the whole school to assemble together. This is a very well run school that gives very good value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• That the children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The way the school is managed and led.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching.</li> <li>• That their children like school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided and the access for all pupils to participate in them.</li> <li>• The amount of work pupils are given.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by the parents. The negative remarks made in written responses and at meetings represent a very small percentage of parents' views. The inspectors found no serious weaknesses in these areas. Pupils are kept very busy and, given the size of the school and the other demands on them professionally, the staff offer a good range of extra activities involving a wide range of pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment of pupils entering the school is below average. By the age of five many children are still working towards the expected standard of attainment in language and literacy, as are some in mathematics. Pupils are broadly in line with others for their age in achieving the desirable learning outcomes in knowledge and understanding of the world and in their social and creative development. Personal and physical development, however, is impeded by inadequate provision for outdoor play.
2. Language and literacy development in the nursery demonstrates that the youngest pupils are just starting to understand that print carries meaning and to enjoy simple stories. The speaking and listening skills of some children are not yet well developed and this inhibits their early literacy development.
3. Children make good progress in the reception classes and by the age of five all are able to write their own names correctly and to recognise the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet. They are able to count from 1 to 10 and some can count beyond this with support. They are acquiring a growing understanding of time, simple sequencing, number symbols and size and shape. Nursery and reception class pupils develop early skills in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and in the use of simple tools and construction kits in technology. They enjoy role-play. Development of some greater physical skills is hindered by the lack of access to appropriate climbing and balancing equipment. Pupils' smaller scale hand skills of cutting and stitching are satisfactory and by the age of five the children's physical development is broadly average as is their creative attainment.
4. In 1999 pupils aged seven attained standards in reading which were average when compared with pupils in all schools but standards were marginally below in writing and well below average in mathematics. Over the past three years pupils have attained standards in reading that exceeded the national average but in writing and mathematics standards have been below average during this period with girls slightly outperforming boys. Compared to similar schools in 1999 tests, pupils' performance in mathematics well below average. In reading it was average but writing was below average. However, statistical analysis reveals that this result was very close to an average grade and inspection evidence shows that performance in both writing and mathematics has improved and is now better than the 1999 tests reveal and that reading is a well-developed skill for most pupils. Given that attainment on entry is below average this represents satisfactory progress.
5. Pupils aged eleven in 1999 attained standards that were close to the national average for English, mathematics and science for the expected Level 4 grade in the standard attainment tests. However, for the higher grade 5 while English and mathematics were close to the average, science results were above it. When compared with similar schools nationally pupils attain average standards in all three subjects.

6. Standards of literacy are satisfactory. The National Strategy for Literacy has been effectively introduced and is having a positive impact on learning. Pupils speak confidently and listen well. At age seven and eleven attainment is broadly in line with national expectations with the results in the 1999 standardised tests being close to the national average. Boys performed slightly less well than girls in writing which remains the least successful skill in English at Key Stage 1. In tests at age eleven the number reaching or exceeding the expected national level ( Level 4) was close to the national average. This is confirmed by the inspection's findings with attainment in reading and writing being at least in line with those found nationally and with many pupils showing considerable skills in reading. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Speaking and listening attainment is good; there are many really able readers in all age groups and standards in writing are sound overall. The use of ICT in English is underdeveloped but the range of written work in Key Stage 2 is very impressive although handwriting skills and the correct use of spelling and punctuation are weaknesses in some pupils.
7. In mathematics the results in 1999 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average when comparing the school nationally and with similar schools. There is a declining trend in these results which contrasts with the positive picture in Key Stage 2. At age eleven pupils achieve results that are average and in line with those expected nationally. There is no significant difference between boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that there is an improving picture in Key Stage 1 work, reversing the declining trend and that attainment is being brought up to average. In Key Stage 2 standards are still average but with some pupils achieving above and well-above average level work, especially in the lower junior classes. Higher attaining pupils are now achieving much better results than was reported at the previous inspection and there is a strongly improving picture across the school generally. Numeracy skills are well used across the subjects and the National Strategy for Numeracy has been introduced successfully.
8. The school sets realistic targets for eleven-year-olds to achieve in English and mathematics and is successful in achieving them. For instance, in 1996, 52 per cent achieved level 4 in English and 51 per cent in mathematics. In 1999 these figures were 75 per cent for English and 68 per cent for mathematics. The trends in the school's attainments when comparing national average point scores show Oldway to be broadly in line with the national picture.
9. In science, in 1999 at age seven, attainment was broadly in line with the national expectation of Level 2 and was above it for the higher grade, Level 3; a picture that was similar when comparing the school with similar schools. By the age of eleven the percentage reaching the expected Level 4 was close to the national average but for the higher grade 5 was well above it. Compared with similar schools, Oldway pupils match the performance of others for Level 4 and are above it for Level 5. There is a significant improvement in the 1999 results and the inspection findings confirm that the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above average and have been well maintained since the last inspection.
10. In other subjects of the curriculum well above average attainment is achieved in art and especially in pupils' work with clay. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Above average standards are achieved in physical education. Attainments are in line with what is expected of pupils of a similar age in history geography, music and religious education and for pupils in Key Stage 1 in ICT where rapid progress is being made in the subject. In Key Stage 2 although attainment is average overall many pupils are still working towards the standards expected for their age group in ICT and design and technology and the school has recently invested heavily in staffing and resources to address these weaknesses.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the very good procedures that the school undertakes to monitor and evaluate their work. The school has invested well in providing support for pupils with special educational needs, including the highest attainers; a point that needed addressing following the previous inspection.

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

12. Parents at the meeting held before the inspection thought that the school promoted a very positive attitude to good behaviour, and inspection evidence confirms that overall the attitudes of pupils are very good. Although a small number of pupils have difficulty in concentrating, the response in almost all lessons is very good, and this has a positive impact on learning. Standards in this area have been maintained since the previous inspection which praised the quality of relationships, and maturity of pupils.
13. Children under five settle quickly into school routines, and parents spoken to during the inspection felt that this early introduction to school routines built their children's confidence, and led to continuity of progress from the early years. Children under five mix well with older pupils in their class and make very good relationships with their teacher and the various classroom assistants with whom they work. They follow adults' instructions very well, and show very good levels of concentration and involvement in their tasks. They are encouraged to work independently, were seen to take turns patiently, and to give a helping hand when needed, for example by putting each others' aprons on before a painting session. Older pupils show independent thinking when answering teachers' questions, and mature attitudes when working away from immediate adult control. Pupils have developed a good capacity for personal study, particularly in art, of which there are many excellent examples decorating classrooms and corridors.
14. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In classrooms, around the school at break and lunch times, pupils behave sensibly and move around the school in an orderly way. The reception classes have a rota of two different playgrounds to enable them to share different types of play equipment, and playground rules are prominently written on the outside walls. Pupils were very polite to visitors, for example showing them to classrooms, opening doors, pouring water at lunchtime. Older pupils help younger ones, for example bringing in a younger child who had fallen in the playground for first aid. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection. Parents spoken to during the inspection were confident that if such instances occurred they could approach the school. Pupils are encouraged to help out around the classroom, for instance putting out resources before lessons, and tidying away afterwards. Pupils in older classes are allocated tasks by the monitor system, but were seen to spontaneously offer their assistance to members of staff during the inspection. Exclusions are rare and there have been no permanent exclusions.

15. Relationships throughout the school are very good. All staff are very good role models in attitudes, behaviour and dress. Pupils respond very well to the respect shown to them by all adults in the school. They were seen to show caring attitudes to each other and to teachers and other staff, for example a young pupil was observed offering to help a lunchtime assistant set out lunch boxes in the classroom. Pupils have developed good tolerance and understanding of the differences between other people's values and opinions. Assemblies, curriculum based studies, and the many attractive art features showing cultural differences are an important feature of the daily life of the school. Each Friday there is a weekly Praise Assembly, to celebrate the significant achievements of pupils through the awarding of certificates, for class work or for behaviour. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are mainly positive during lessons, and they are well integrated into all aspects of school life. These pupils respond well to the praise and encouragement given by staff, and have good relationships with adults and other pupils. The school gives a high priority to tolerance towards individuals with special educational needs, especially those with behavioural problems. As a result, these pupils are respected and their successes are celebrated well. After school activities such as the performing arts, rugby, ICT have waiting lists of pupils wishing to participate. The boys' football team is presently league champions, and the girls are in the semi-finals of the President's cup.
16. Parents spoken to during the inspection said their children looked forward to coming to school, and are happy there. Levels of attendance are good, and unauthorised absence is below the national average. A prompt start is made to the beginning of lessons, and pupils' regular attendance has a positive impact on their achievement.
17. Overall, the very good attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development of the pupils, contribute significantly to the school's distinctive ethos.

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

18. Teaching is very good and is a strength of the school. All but one lesson seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory and 83 per cent were graded as good or better. Of these, 28 per cent were judged to be very good and a further three per cent excellent. The best teaching observed during the inspection was found in Key Stage 2 where 37 per cent of lessons were very good and six per cent excellent. However, high quality teaching was seen throughout all phases and in most subjects. Very good teaching was seen in art, English, mathematics, music, physical education, PSHE, religious education and science. The excellent teaching was seen in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics.
19. The teachers know their subjects well and in those areas where there is some insecurity such as Numeracy, IT, physical education (PE), music and science the school has established good programmes for teachers' professional development. However, literacy and numeracy skills are generally well taught.
20. Teachers also know their pupils well and the relationships within the school are supportive and friendly. Teachers are good role models for pupils and they plan the work very well and very effectively to match it to pupils' needs and abilities. They have high expectations of pupils, especially of older pupils. Classes and pupils' behaviour are very well managed throughout the school and time and resources are used very well. A strength of the teaching is in the very effective way support staff are used. All these factors make a strong contribution to enabling pupils to learn well.
21. Staff create very attractive and stimulating learning environments and use displays well to support the pupils' learning and to celebrate their successes. Improvements have been made in the quality and use of assessment procedures and these are now

good. Homework is used satisfactorily to support learning.

22. The very strong leadership of the school has created an ethos wherein all are involved in pursuing high professional standards and there has been significant effort made in developing teachers' and others' skills. The school has gained the award of "Investors in People" and the impact of this is seen in the extensive and high quality practice in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching force and in the support given to them and to the non-teaching staff. This has raised teaching quality and pupils' learning benefits as a result.
23. Clear priorities for development and targets for action help teachers to focus their planning and to evaluate their work. Teachers work in very effective teams to deliver the curriculum and this was noted particularly in early years work and in the way the unit structure of the school is designed to ensure sharing of ideas and resources across age groups. This is done well.
24. As a result of this high quality teaching pupils' learning is very good. The pupils enjoy learning and are enthusiastic in class. They acquire new skills, increase knowledge and understanding very well and they respond by working hard and often very independently. They sustain concentration and have a good insight into their own performance as learners. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well and benefit from the impressive provision made to extend their development through the special needs co-ordinator, teaching and support staff.
25. The only areas for improvement identified during the inspection concerned planning for outdoor play; the use of time and ensuring pupils remained on task in some English lessons; some support for SEN pupils in mathematics; in some skills development in geography and in the match of some work in music to pupils' abilities. The school is aware of these weaknesses and is taking appropriate steps, as in the appointment of specialist staff to address them.

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

26. The school provides a broad, balanced and well-planned curriculum, to which all pupils have equal access. It promotes the progress of pupils of all ages effectively except for some elements of physical development for the youngest pupils. Apart from this statutory requirements are met in all subjects including the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This represents an improvement from the last inspection when the curriculum did not meet statutory requirements for design technology and information technology. The curriculum provides a range of worthwhile opportunities for learning, which meets the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of the majority of the pupils including those with special needs.
27. The school has effectively implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. There is a strong focus placed on these areas of the pupils' learning and as a result standards are rising. This again represents an improvement from the last inspection when the programmes for study in mathematics were found to be under-developed. All other areas for concern at the last inspection have been addressed and improvements made. Greater challenge for the highest attaining pupils, fully implementing the special needs code of practice, reducing the variation between subjects in the quality of planning and developing a more consistent approach to assessment have all significantly improved.
28. Since the previous inspection a considerable amount of thought and effort has been given to the content and delivery of the curriculum. Schemes of work are now in place

for all subjects. Planning has been reviewed and improved. Policies have been developed with whole staff and governor consultation to cover aspects such as teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluation, homework, assessment, teaching targets, marking, an annual assessment cycle and personal, social and health education. This last area is now a strength of the school. The policy and teaching includes sex education, the dangers of drugs misuse, bullying, citizenship, equal opportunities and emphasises how to live and work together in harmony and understanding. The school is supported in this work by visits from the community liaison police officer, local clergymen of different denominations, the fire brigade, local businessmen and the 'Life Skills' programme organised by the police.

29. The monitoring and evaluation of the provision, planning and delivery of the curriculum is very good. The senior management and subject co-ordinators constantly check, maintain and improve this area of the school. The governors also play an important part in this process with well-defined curriculum roles and frequent visits into school and classrooms.
30. The provision for equal opportunities is good. The school has an equal opportunities statement in the staff handbook. Pupils' results are monitored by gender and the school has developed strategies to promote the higher attainment of groups of pupils who were considered to be underachieving. The school encourages everyone to give of their best and ensures that they have every opportunity to do well. In most classes teachers aim to match classroom activities to the aptitudes of pupils. In some English and mathematics lessons pupils are set by ability, the most able pupils are identified and pupils in higher sets are provided with work that matches their ability level. Support for pupils with special needs is good. Pupils are supported in class as well as being withdrawn from lessons for support in literacy.
31. All pupils have equal access to resources and out of school activities and all pupils have the opportunity to play a variety of competitive sports and go on a variety of visits.
32. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, with which the governors and senior management are well satisfied. With such large numbers within the school it is difficult to cater for everybody's needs and wishes and each activity can only accommodate a certain number of pupils. The activities include soccer, rugby, netball, athletics, cricket, sewing, recorders, gymnastics, tennis, computers and performing arts. Other activities run by adults from outside the school include violin, keyboard, guitar and swimming. The sports clubs are open to all, not just members of the team, and it is not unusual to have more than 60 pupils on the field after school.
33. Out of school visits and trips are planned to enrich the curriculum. A recent visit by Year 5 to Pixies Holt on Dartmoor inspired some excellent artwork entitled 'A sense of place' that greatly enhances the learning environment in the year area.
34. The school very successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a range of activities, which reflect the values, expressed in the school's aims. The Personal Effectiveness Programme Initiative (PEPI) scheme and its thought for the week are seen throughout the school. It is used as a theme for assemblies and in the classrooms. It addresses many aspects of moral, social and spiritual development in a thought provoking way. The increase in the spiritual dimension represents an improvement from the previous inspection when the provision for spiritual development was seen to need greater emphasis. Several very good examples of spiritual development were seen during the inspection. Reception pupils were filled with awe and wonder during art, when a computer screen pattern



was printed. In a literacy lesson, good teaching created an atmosphere of amazement when a glove puppet was used. In a Year 5 assembly the pupils meaningfully reflected upon the consequences of their approach and attitudes to their friends. During the visit to Pixies Holt the pupils were so entranced by the atmosphere created by the good teaching they kept on working when the weather was not conducive to concentrated efforts. The provision for acts of worship that did not meet statutory requirements at the last inspection has been improved and is now satisfactory. The assemblies add greatly to the spiritual experience and awareness raising of the pupils.

35. Provision for moral education is very good. Pupils know right from wrong. From their first days in school they learn to take turns and to be fair in their dealings with others. Each class has its own simple rules for behaviour clearly displayed and there are also displays in the hall and in the playground to reinforce good, polite behaviour. The pupils are courteous, hold doors open for adults and are generally polite and well behaved. They also learn the rules of fair play through sport and games.
36. Social development is promoted well through daily opportunities to work in small and larger groups. Pupils relate well to each other and move purposefully around the school with good self-discipline. The teachers provide good role models by being friendly and approachable. They treat each other with consideration and courtesy and they expect the pupils to do the same. Social development is also promoted through the extra-curricular visits and residential trips. Pupils have a range of responsibilities throughout the school. In Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils elect class representatives who form the school council and discuss with the headteacher any matters they wish to raise on behalf of the class as a whole or individuals. Pupils are encouraged to realise that they are part of a wider community by contributing and raising money for charity.
37. During the week of the inspection the school celebrated the diverse cultures of this country through displays and awareness is raised of different faiths and customs through many subject areas and in religious education. The promotion of pupils' awareness of other cultures is very good. In geography pupils learn about the life and culture in India and The Gambia. In religious education they learn to appreciate the aspects of many different world religions. In Year 4 maths and dance aspects of Indian symmetrical mathematical patterns and Kathakali dance are taught. Around the school there are several examples of ethnic art which enhance the environment. Pupils are taught to paint in the style of famous artists such as Matisse, William Morris, Picasso and Mondrian and learn traditional country dancing in physical education. Pupils have a clear understanding of their responsibilities within the global community; they raise money for various charities and they show particular interest in environmental issues.
38. Since the last inspection, the school has instituted a number of policies to cover the provision for pupils' personal and health education. These include policies on bullying, sex-education, drugs, equal opportunities, and behaviour. The newly appointed pastoral assistant works in the school every day. The PEPI initiative develops pupils' skills in problem solving and decision making. A link governor actively monitors and contributes to the drugs education scheme, for example by helping to write the documentation dealing with drugs. There are many visitors to the school such as a local vicar who conducted a baptism and three Catholic priests who recently talked to a Year 5 class. These visits and curriculum based work including the life of Jesus and the Easter message, to key features of the Buddhist and other faith communities encourage pupils to reflect on the implications in their own lives of religion.
39. The school has very good links with the local community. Through the Prosper business initiative, some teachers in the school have direct links to commercial

companies, and through these links various training activities such as training for the specialist teacher assistant, the school administrator, and pool lifeguard are shown to be of great benefit to the school. The school has good links with local colleges and comprehensive schools, and students from these organisations come into the school for work experience. It also tutors and mentors students from Exeter University who carry out teaching practice. The school is currently involved in a research project with Exeter University: "The Improvement and Development of Pupils' Writing." It also acts as a host to students who are in their initial stages of training to be teachers. At the meeting held before the inspection, parents said their children were well prepared to go onto the next stage of their education, and other parents spoken to during the inspection very much appreciated the home visits made before children entered the nursery.

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

40. The school cares very well for its pupils. Parents at the meeting, and those spoken to during the inspection feel that teachers have a very good knowledge of their pupils, and this helps pupils in their personal development and academic performance. The school supports and promotes the pupils' personal development very well, for example, through assemblies, where awards are presented for good work and good behaviour, and during circle times. Effective procedures are in place for eliminating intimidating and oppressive behaviour. Issues of behaviour concern are reviewed and progress is recorded. Behaviour modification programmes, in which parents are involved, are negotiated. Since the last inspection the school has instituted a carefully structured bullying policy, known to teachers, pupils and parents. When asked, pupils were able to say how they would deal with bullying and during the inspection instances of inappropriate behaviour were swiftly and calmly dealt with. All staff provide good role models, and are consistent and fair in their promotion of discipline and order. The school has appointed a pastoral support assistant whose activities include work on self-esteem, relationships, managing aggression, taking responsibility and managing independence. She also monitors playtime detention frequencies and is available to discuss any personal problems such as bereavement or bad attendance. Many instances of teachers giving "well done" stickers, and inviting class applause for work well done were seen during the inspection. The Friday Praise assembly celebrates significant achievements of pupils who have received good work awards, or have made good efforts in behaviour at lunchtime or in class. All pupils know their class, playtime and lunchtime rules. They know and understand the sanctions for bad behaviour, although these are rarely needed. The staff were seen to take every opportunity to praise good effort in work and behaviour.

41. Informal monitoring of pupils' progress constantly takes place. The staff know the pupils well, and parents feel that concerns raised with teaching staff are promptly dealt with. The school supports and promotes the children's personal development well, and encourages good behaviour. Parents believe that this aspect of school life creates an effective learning environment, and is a strength of the school.
42. Parents spoken to during the inspection said they would have no hesitation in asking teachers if they had a problem. They also appreciated the informal monitoring by teachers, where parents are informed after school if there has been a particular problem.
43. The quality of support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff are accessible and responsive to the needs of pupils with learning and behavioural problems. There are good links with the local education authority's support agencies such as the behavioural support team, educational psychologist, educational welfare officer, and speech therapist. All problems are monitored through frequent visits by the outside agencies. Pupils' needs are identified early, and their progress is noted regularly. New targets are set for them at the beginning of each term. All assessment is carefully recorded in their individual education plans in which parents are also involved.
44. The statutory procedures for child protection are in place, and staff are well aware of what to do. These procedures are also clearly outlined in the Staff Handbook, which is regularly updated. The school uses a computerised program to record pupils' attendance and the educational welfare officer comes into the school weekly to monitor figures. Admission into the Reception class is well managed and pupils are given a daily target card which they are proud to show visitors. Links with the local comprehensive schools are well established, and pupils spoken to during the inspection were confident about moving on to their next school. The co-ordinators of this and the receiving school also discuss the needs of pupils with special educational needs before these pupils go onto the next stage of their education.
45. The governors and teachers take very seriously the health and safety of pupils, and make regular risk assessments of the premises. During the inspection a number of minor concerns were raised with the school who undertook to address them within their ability to do so. There are good arrangements for first aid and medical support, including provision for pupils with specific needs. The school has no access for disabled pupils but given its location, the nature of its buildings and with current financial constraints the cost of such provision would be prohibitive. The toilet accommodation is still not sufficient for the numbers of pupils on site, despite the efforts of governors to improve provision. The arrangements used to store registers limits staff knowing precisely how many pupils are on site at any one time. The arrival and departure of the children in the nursery is carefully managed by the staff. However, the nursery does not have a safety surface, and there are no large permanent play features. In the nursery the cloakroom area, which is used for play, is out of sight of the class teacher. The interior of the school is cleaned to a high standard, and there is no vandalism or litter. Staff and parents believe that the very attractive wall displays and good examples of pupils' work contribute to a stimulating learning environment.
46. The systems for assessing attainment and progress are good and have been much improved since the last inspection. The school now has a clear policy on assessment which is being effectively implemented and closely linked with target setting. There are very clear guidelines on marking and there is a clear expectation that work will be marked regularly and in a way that is appropriate both to the age of the pupils and to

the specific requirements of the subjects. There is an annual programme of assessments that is firmly linked to National Curriculum attainment targets. A system of baseline assessment is in place and there is effective use of standard attainment test results and other data to monitor progress. The school has an ethos for improvement and is developing strategies to ensure that all pupils, including the most gifted and those with learning difficulties, fulfil their potential. Assessment procedures are fully established within the core subjects and in foundation subjects the co-ordinators are in the process of developing appropriate assessment practices and procedures.

47. Assessment is used particularly effectively in placing children in groups within the classroom for different subjects and activities. In most lessons pupils are given a variety of resources, tasks and levels of support to meet their individual needs. In lessons teachers use effective questioning to ascertain pupil understanding and progress. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good. Teachers keep detailed records and pupils are now being involved in some self and peer group assessment. The overall use of assessment information to help in planning is good; the focus on monitoring and review in this area makes a considerable contribution to the raising of attainment of pupils.

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

48. The school works very well with parents, and this is a strength of the school. At the meeting before the inspection, parents thought that the school dealt well with suggestions or complaints, and that staff always made time to see them. They felt that the school had much improved since the last inspection, particularly in I.T. They also thought that the institution of the literacy and numeracy hours had a significant effect on pupils' learning. Parents appreciated the termly parent consultation, family class assemblies, the annual reports and curriculum afternoons and evenings.
49. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school, and many do so, for instance by helping groups in the reception class to complete their allotted tasks, helping with cooking, swimming, reading and numeracy lessons. Some parents and grandparents were pupils of the school, and those spoken to during the inspection spoke proudly of this link. Many parents and grandparents regularly assist in classes and make a very significant contribution to the learning of pupils. The school believes that this input by parents reinforces the importance of education in pupils' eyes.
50. Reading diaries go home every night in Key Stages 1 and 2, and most parents add comments before they are returned to school next day. This is effective in supporting pupils' learning. From results of the questionnaire and at the meeting, some parents raised concerns about the amount of homework set. However, inspection findings conclude that an appropriate amount of homework is set which supports pupils' learning in lessons.
51. Parents are pleased with the regular newsletters, which the school numbers in order that parents can check for continuity. There are also parents' notice boards and termly curriculum plans for parents to inform them of work to be covered, and indicating how they can help. This information also includes arrangements for homework. Parents feel they are kept well informed. They are invited to class assemblies. The annual reports of pupils' progress contain targets for improvement.
52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs spoke highly of the good efforts of the school to improve both educational and behavioural problems. They are involved in setting realistic and achievable targets, and pupils' individual educational plans are

informative and up to date.

53. All parents are members of the parent/teacher association, and they have made a valuable contribution to the school. The parents' Swimming Pool Committee runs the swimming pool, which generates funds for the school. The parent/teacher association also holds many social events that are always well attended. They are able to provide the school with valuable resources such as PE equipment, computers, books and a seated, covered, quiet area in the playground.

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

54. Leadership and management of the school are outstanding and notable for some excellent practice. They are strengths of the school.
55. The head teacher provides excellent leadership and management of the school. His vision and direction for the school clearly takes account of its aims, which are to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which very good personal attitudes are developed and pupils are offered a broad and relevant curriculum, enabling them to fulfil their potential. He is very well supported by the assistant headteacher and by an active, informed and deeply committed governing body. High standards of learning are achieved, and where any areas for development have been identified, they form the basis of a very comprehensive school improvement plan. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. The governing body now contains a curriculum committee and the provision for pupils with special educational needs now fully complies with the national Code of Practice for addressing the special needs of children. The school's management structure is now well established and extremely effective, with all curriculum and pastoral areas being well led, and managed very efficiently.
56. Leadership and management are delegated positively through the assistant headteacher, senior management team, subject and year leaders, who along with other teachers, support and administration staff, are fully committed to the school's success and improvement. Subject leaders have been empowered to lead and manage their subject areas and to take responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning. Their 'subject position statements' and annual action plans demonstrate their responsibility and accountability. The planned introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been effectively led.
57. The governors contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school. Through the range of committees, which report back to the full governing body, they share, with the head teacher, a clear vision of the direction for the school's work which includes continuing to improve standards in teaching quality and accommodation. They are very well informed, observing lessons and helping out in classrooms, reading relevant documents and receiving reports, contributing to and attending school events such as plays, assemblies and talks to parents. They have all received initial training from the local education authority and many have taken courses linked to their specialist interests. Among governors there is a good range of expertise including, building, engineering, accountancy and education. The work of the headteacher is appraised regularly and realistic targets are set for him, linked to the school's priorities for improvement.
58. The school is outstanding in its practice in the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching. The headteacher and senior management team have observed lessons to monitor the quality of teaching, and carefully discussed performance with individual teachers. Any overall strengths and weaknesses are shared with the staff, for example through the 'characteristics of best lessons' sheet

prepared after observing literacy hours. Any individual areas for development become part of a teacher's personal development through appraisal, with targets being set. Every opportunity is given to assist teachers to reach these targets through discussion, observation and training, all of which are carefully reported on. Subject leaders look at teachers' planning, sample pupils' work, often discussing it with pupils, to ensure the continuing effectiveness of teaching and learning. There is extremely good provision for the induction of new staff and newly qualified teachers to the school. Unit leaders act as mentors, as well as support being given by year leaders. Newly qualified teachers receive their full entitlement of non-contact time and training, and are encouraged to become integral members of year groups, sharing lesson planning and preparation.

59. The school has an extremely comprehensive improvement plan which reflects shared concerns arising from the monitoring of teaching and learning. It contains a curriculum review, prioritises areas for development in all aspects of the school and sets clear targets for action. The plan makes a budget forecast for the coming three years. For the year ahead, it is carefully costed, sets time for the completion of targets, and how action taken is to be monitored and evaluated. The plan sets out a realistic and relevant way for the school to develop and improve and is acted upon effectively. The principles of best value are applied rigorously to all spending decisions as in the case of developing and equipping the new information technology suite. Systems for financial administration are extremely efficient. A recent audit made some minor recommendations which have all been acted upon. The finance committee of the governing body meets regularly and receives a full update on the budget; subject leaders have an agreed budget to spend within their areas which is carefully accounted. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is good; full use is made of it in the administration of the school and, since the recent opening of the school's information technology suite, its use by teachers and pupils is developing rapidly.
60. The local authority defines the school as overcrowded and oversubscribed. The school recognises there are some significant difficulties given its above average size roll and its large and sprawling site especially with regard to the youngest children. Despite the school's efforts since the previous inspection, an increase in toileting needs means provision is still inadequate. There is no safety surface for children from the nursery to play on, and there is no large fixed outdoor play equipment. As a consequence, the curriculum is restricted as far as physical development for the youngest children. The library is too small to cope well with the large numbers of pupils on site.
61. The overall number, qualifications and experience of teachers matches the demands of the school curriculum, and of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are very well supported by the classroom assistants, and also in the earlier key stages by the numbers of parents who help out in school. Pupil/teacher ratios are satisfactory. New teachers are supported well by the assistant headteacher and by a personal mentor, and are made to feel part of a team. The school is very well placed to offer placements for students on initial teacher training. The number of midday supervisors available to supervise the pupils in the playground, classrooms and dining hall is satisfactory. The site supervisor and staff work very hard to maintain the accommodation to a high standard. Learning resources in art are of a very high quality. Other learning resources, except for some in design technology and in the library are also of good quality.
62. Extremely careful budgeting and efficient use of grants, such as those for the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the development of information technology, have enabled the school to achieve its priorities and provide

very good value for money.

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

63. There are no significant weaknesses but the governing body and the school should take steps to improve
- (1) The physical development of the youngest pupils by working with the appropriate authorities and, as funds become available, increase the space and equipment for the provision of outdoor play.  
(paragraphs 1, 3, 25, 26, 66, 68, 70, 77, 78, 151)
  - (2) procedures for the storage and retrieval of registers.  
(paragraph 45)
  - (3) the accommodation and outdoor provision of the nursery areas.  
(paragraphs 1, 45, 66, 67, 70, 77)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

89

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

36

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	28	52	16	1	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	652
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	na	101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	132

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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



### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	48	43	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	35	40
	Girls	39	39	38
	Total	77	74	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (79)	81 (79)	86 (80)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	39	44
	Girls	39	38	38
	Total	75	77	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (83)	85 (84)	90 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	50	47	97

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	35	33	39
	Girls	38	33	41
	Total	73	66	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (70)	68 (59)	82 (65)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	36	36	42
	Girls	39	36	42
	Total	75	72	84
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (66)	74 (64)	87 (69)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	650
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	22
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Average class size	31

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

Total number of education support staff	12.3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13.3

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	3

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	1,092,201
Total expenditure	1,068,670
Expenditure per pupil	1,579
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,312
Balance carried forward to next year	23,531

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	500
Number of questionnaires returned	257

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	30	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	41	3	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	48	12	3	4
The teaching is good.	64	32	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	32	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	25	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	37	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	49	43	6	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	67	29	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	44	11	6	9

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

- The content of newsletters and how more information about the curriculum could be included
- Earlier notice of meetings for working parents

## **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**

64. Children enter the nursery class at three years of age and are accommodated in a 52-place unit on a part time basis, attending either a morning or an afternoon session. The oldest four year old children are admitted to the two reception classes at the start of the autumn term and summer born pupils are admitted to a third reception class which opens at the beginning of the spring half term. All reception children attend on a full time basis and almost all have attended the school nursery. Very good links exist between home and school and between the nursery and reception classes to enable a smooth transition to full time schooling.
65. Evidence from early testing as children are admitted to the school i.e. baseline assessment shows that many children enter the school with overall levels of attainment that are slightly below average. By the age of five, children have built upon their entry levels, but many are still working towards the expected standards of attainment in language and literacy as are some in mathematics. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world, social and creative development is broadly in line with the expected standards for children of this age. Children with special educational needs have the same opportunities to participate in activities as their peers and their individual learning targets are well monitored. Thorough assessment procedures are in place. These are generally well used both to monitor children's progress against the desirable learning outcomes expected nationally for this stage and to plan appropriately for their further progress.
66. In the nursery teachers have created some attractive classroom environments. However, the outdoor area for play has no fixed climbing apparatus or safety surface, although there is a limited range of outdoor play equipment. This does not adequately promote children's personal and physical development. The school has recognised the need to develop provision in this respect and many of the points relating to issues of provision and accommodation appeared in the previous report and feature in the action plan following it. Although the school has made several improvements to the environment for the nursery there is still a need to monitor practice and reinforce accommodation and resources as priorities are identified and funding becomes available.
67. The accommodation in the nursery now includes a toilet and washroom area, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, facilities are inadequate for the number of children in attendance, and there are insufficient toilet facilities for under fives in reception classes, especially for those in the youngest reception class.
68. Teaching observed in the Under 5s phase was always at least satisfactory and was good or better in 58 per cent of the lessons seen. The very good teamwork that exists between teachers and support staff is a strength, making a positive impact on children's learning. Very good records are kept of the results of the assessments made on children's work and targets set for their future progress. The curriculum planned for children under five is of a good quality apart from the use of the outdoor area. There is a clear policy statement on how children are to be inducted into the school and on the curriculum to be covered. Children settle well into school and are constantly encouraged. The under fives co-ordinator works hard to promote the interests of children and to maintain effective links between home and school, and the school has identified areas which are in need of development.

## **Personal and social development**

69. Independence is well promoted in both nursery and reception classrooms through the common use of planning boards from which children choose a range of learning activities. This also eases the transition from nursery to reception classes for children under five. Relationships between children and adults are very good. The teaching is characterised by the calm and reassuring approach taken by the teachers who set challenging tasks and are supportive in helping the children attain them. Expectations are high as to how well children will work independently, mix socially and maintain concentration. Children share resources well and co-operate together, showing sustained interest in both teacher instigated and self-chosen tasks. The use of circle time in reception classes makes a very positive contribution to children's moral thinking, and by the age of five, most children understand the difference between right and wrong.
70. However, opportunities for outdoor play are very limited in both nursery and reception classes and this has an impact on children's personal and social development. There is no covered outdoor area leading from the nursery and children under five do not have daily opportunities to extend their investigations and activities outdoors in either nursery or reception classes. Current arrangements for nursery and reception class children to play together during school playtimes are weakened when the appropriate ratio of adults to children is not consistently maintained. The school needs to address this point.

## **Language and literacy**

71. In the nursery children enjoy handling books which focus on counting and stories about animals. They participate with interest in a range of familiar action songs and rhymes and enjoy hearing simple stories linked to animal homes. A colourful classroom display on the story of "Mr Gumpy's Outing" reflects the children's growing experience of stories. Children enjoy mark making, using a range of materials and are just starting to understand that print carries meaning. Clear learning intentions are outlined in the planning by teachers. This enhances children's learning and the interaction by the teacher extends children's vocabulary and skills. Speaking and listening skills are developed through the regular opportunities to talk with interested adults, for example, as children construct large brick houses for toy animals. However, speaking and listening skills are still not yet well developed in some pupils, and this has an impact on their early literacy development.
72. In the reception classes, children under five enjoy recalling key events with their teachers in an amusing big book version of the tale of "Red Riding Hood". In one class, children confidently sang and acted out the story of "the Little Yellow Chick" with older classmates during a class assembly. Writing skills are still developing, but most children start to experiment with different writing activities, such as writing a letter to the "wolf" or recording an activity undertaken and now know that print carries meaning. Good use is made of children's drawings to compose "My First Reading Book" and teachers make the reading process explicit for children and encourage them as writers by scribing for them. By the age of five children are able to write their own names correctly unaided, with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters and all recognise their own names when they see them written. All children show an interest in books and early literacy skills are well fostered through classroom activities. Many children are starting to develop recognition of the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound by the age of five, for example, they enjoy looking for "sh" treasures in the sand during self-chosen structured play activities. Children make good progress in the reception classes.

## **Mathematics**

73. Teachers' planning takes account of the desirable learning outcomes for this age. Children in the nursery are familiar with a range of number rhymes and action songs and enjoy counting the number of items in 1 -10 books with their friends. They have opportunities to sort and classify and to focus on mathematics in everyday contexts.
74. By the age of five children's attainment is broadly average. Most children in the reception classes are able to undertake simple counting from 1 -10 and some can count beyond this independently. With support all the children can count to 100. Good teaching in one lesson observed was characterised by the brisk pace and good management strategies adopted to ensure full participation of all children. Tasks were well introduced and resources well set out in advance which promoted immediate involvement in the task set. Through participation in counting games, children begin to show an understanding of number operations, e.g. 'add one more', and 'take away one'. They can sort objects by colour, size and shape. They have a growing understanding of time through the school day and most children can undertake simple sequencing. Higher attaining pupils use some recognisable number symbols in recorded work. Some children can make repeating patterns with support but are still developing their mathematical language to talk about relationships such as size and shape. The majority of children know the names of basic shapes and some can identify them by their properties, such as the shapes of things that can be rolled. They identify these when using construction kits to build objects.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

75. Children in the nursery investigate ways in which to care for animals as they undertake role play in the vet's surgery and construct homes for animals. Children are confident in their use of the computer in the classroom, using direction keys to move Noddy and his car around the town, for example. They develop their use of technology through handling a range of tools and equipment, including cutting and joining materials together. Children undertake cooking activities, observing how biscuits flatten and turn crisp in the oven. However, staffing levels need to be deployed more effectively, if small groups of nursery children are to continue to access the cooking area in the main building. Fuller use of the outdoor area needs to be planned in order to investigate the natural world.
76. Children in reception classes build on their experiences in the nursery and continue to investigate and explore their environment. A visit from a local Doctor provided an opportunity to investigate specialist equipment and children enjoyed taking on the role of the Doctor during their role-play. Technological skills are developed through the provision of a range of materials for designing and constructing, and children have many opportunities to develop their cutting and sticking skills and to use a range of tools. Photographs of their younger selves are well used to promote discussion with the children about past and present events, and family life. By the age of five, children in the reception classes are confident in using the computer mouse to click onto selected programmes, and show a genuine interest in, for example, matching pictures which rhyme. Their delight in this work is typified by one child who remarked to his friend; "Oh. I just moved the mouse and the puzzle came on !"

## **Physical development**

77. In the nursery, teachers' planning does not take full account of the desirable learning outcomes for this age with regard to the development of larger and stronger physical skills, although planning pays due regard to all other aspects of physical development. Because of accommodation issues, children in the nursery have insufficient

opportunities and challenges to use a range of small and large equipment and balancing and climbing apparatus outdoors. This has a direct impact on the quality of curriculum which is provided for children's physical development. Children demonstrate satisfactory fine manipulative skills when cutting and sticking, and when handling a range of construction materials, crayons, pencils and puzzles.

78. By the age of five, children's physical development is broadly average. Children's fine hand skills are well developed during a range of classroom activities and the use of small apparatus. Children in the reception classes have weekly games lessons and have a range of physical education equipment for outdoor use, such as bats and balls. Children under five do not have sufficient use of appropriate outdoor climbing and play equipment. This impacts on the progress made overall in their physical development. Their understanding of their physical make up was enhanced in a reception class lesson using computers when children were asked to identify and match parts of the body on screen. Good pacing and timing of this lesson by the teacher resulted in increased skills' development by the children.

### **Creative Development**

79. Children in the nursery have opportunities to experiment with a range of materials and a range of different media. The curriculum provided in the nursery would however, be further enhanced by additional resources, such as a wider range of games and play equipment.
80. By the age of five, children's creative development is broadly in line with the expected levels for their age. Well-structured teaching ensures that all children get an opportunity to try different art based activities. Teachers encourage choice and build confidence in the children in the handling of materials and paints. Children in the reception classes develop their skills in cutting and sticking when making shape collages. They draw pictures to represent their everyday experiences of friends and families, moving from scribbles to recognisable images over time.
81. The quality of role-play areas provided in each reception classroom and also in the nursery, is variable and could be further enriched to provide more inviting and stimulating play and learning experiences.
82. By the age of five, all pupils can sing a number of familiar songs by memory and enjoy using actions to accompany the words. They use percussion instruments during singing times and in assemblies.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Literacy**

83. Standards in all aspects of literacy are satisfactory overall and there is a clear emphasis on developing skills in literacy within all subjects.
84. Pupils are confident and articulate. In reception and in Years 1 and 2 pupils are able to talk in small and larger groups as well as in assembly and to listen and respond to stories and instructions. They all understand how to use books and can talk about the pictures in them and some are already able to read fluently. Older pupils make sound progress in speaking and listening and their skills are extended by work in the literacy hour, in drama and in other subjects such as history and art.
85. The development of reading is fostered in all subjects with pupils being encouraged to

develop their reading comprehension in subjects such as science and geography, their ability to express their ideas in mathematics and religious education and their written work in all subjects.

86. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are sound overall with achievement in reading being sound or better for the majority of pupils in all year groups. Pupils value books and respond well to the creative aspects of English, especially to poetry and plays. Pupils enjoy their work in English and talk with enthusiasm about the books that they have read.
87. Pupils can write in a variety of ways depending on the subject they are writing about and the audience it is for. The highest attaining pupils can express themselves clearly and their presentation skills are good. Pupils are developing well-established skills in handwriting although the use of pencil is to the detriment of the development of fluid styles in handwriting and the use of cursive script is introduced quite late.
88. Although many pupils are able to use word processors when appropriate there was insufficient opportunity for them to do so during the inspection. The quality of work observed during the inspection indicates that the literacy hour has made a considerable impact in raising standards of attainment in all aspects of English.

### **English**

89. During the inspection it was found that attainment in English at age seven and eleven was broadly in line with national expectations.
90. In tests, standards in English overall at age seven in 1999 were close to the national average. Attainment of pupils at age seven in writing was slightly below the national average of 83 per cent with 81 per cent reaching level 2 or above. The performance of boys was slightly below that of the girls. Standards in reading were slightly above those expected of pupils of their age, with 85 per cent of pupils reaching Level 2 or above against a national average of 82 per cent. The standards observed during the inspection showed that for the majority of pupils standards are broadly satisfactory and the new focus on literacy is having an impact on writing and a considerable impact particularly on skills in speaking and listening and in reading.
91. At age eleven the number of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in tests (75 per cent) and Level 5, (19 per cent) were close to the national average. Standards observed during the inspection indicate that at age eleven pupils' attainment in reading and writing are at least in line with that expected nationally for pupils of a similar age with many pupils showing considerable skill in reading.
92. The school has improved on the standards noted in the last inspection. While maintaining a focus on technical accuracy pupils are also encouraged to be creative and imaginative and this has improved the quality of their written work. They are encouraged to discuss issues and contribute ideas and there has been a major improvement in speaking and listening skills. This has contributed to both the confidence and creativity of pupils. The school has a very good approach to the management of reading and this has had a considerable impact on standards.
93. Attainment in speaking and listening is good. In the reception classes pupils are provided with a secure basis for work in the National Curriculum and in all year groups speaking and listening skills are well developed through discussion activities. Younger pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in assembly. They can generate ideas in brain storming sessions - for example when pupils in Year 2 were considering the possible problems for the mayor when a town had to deal with an



escaped elephant. The work planned for in the literacy hour fosters the development of skills in speaking and listening and in role-play. Pupils in Year 6 studying "Romeo and Juliet" examined in a very mature way the problems caused by family feuds in Verona.

94. Standards in reading are sound for the majority of pupils and there are many really able readers in all year groups. Most pupils enjoy books and take pleasure in reading. The majority of younger pupils can use a variety of strategies to support their reading including the use of phonics and picture clues. The school does not use one specific reading scheme; instead pupils are encouraged to use a variety of books appropriate to their ability level. This is carefully monitored and ensures that pupils make progress as they read to adults frequently and have targeted reading activities. Many pupils belong to public libraries and their library skills are well developed despite the inadequacy of the school's library accommodation. Some older pupils are not clear about the use of a classification system and are unsure about how to find information in a library but they are all able to use reference books and an index. Individual pupils have very good reading standards and they are encouraged to make extra progress because of the challenging activities provided in lessons and the range of books available. Older pupils have been introduced to a wide range of literature including examples of traditional and modern writing. All pupils study a range of verse including haiku poems and a poem "Sunflakes" inspired some interesting creative ideas. Some pupils with special educational needs have difficulty with reading but they are well monitored and are making good progress.
95. Standards in writing are sound overall with creative work and extended writing often being very good. Written work is usually well presented, with most pupils being able to use joined up writing well as this is practised frequently. However, the use of pencil rather than pen hinders some and a number of pupils are reluctant to abandon printing. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, can write sentences and put simple stories in order by the end of the first key stage. The range of written work is very varied, for example in work in Year 2 includes writing poems, stories and letters. Older pupils are also good at producing writing for different purposes and audiences including reports, letters, diaries and an interesting display of pamphlets encouraging people to visit the English Riviera. There is evidence that pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation. For example pupils in Year 2 are able to explain the use of the speech marks and to use exclamation marks. However, some pupils have a poor grasp of both spelling and punctuation. In Key Stage 2 the range of written work is very impressive with evidence of really creative and imaginative work and of writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. The stories and extracts read in the literacy hour often have considerable potential for creative work and pupils take full advantage of this, for example in writing e-mail messages between "Romeo and Juliet". Pupils with special educational needs were able to respond to this activity very well being particularly clear about the role of the nurse in the tragedy. Pupils are also able to use factual information to develop their writing. In Year 5 pupils were considering the possible impact of a new marina on different groups of people in Paignton: the highest attaining pupils were able to organise their arguments very well while those of lower ability showed a clear understanding of the conflicts of interest involved. Pupils understand the value of drafting and redrafting their work and word processing is used to help pupils improve and extend their writing. However, insufficient use of this was observed during the inspection and computers, although available, were not always used during literacy lessons.
96. Learning is well monitored by teachers and assessment used to inform planning for groups within the class. Attainment on entry to the school is a little below the national average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their ability in

English when they start school. There is a good match between the teaching strategies in use and the needs of the pupils and this helps pupils to progress well. Pupils with special educational needs are given the kind of support that enables them to make secure progress. Pupils with above average ability are identified and classes are grouped by ability for tasks within the literacy hour and in some years they are taught in sets. Pupils enjoy their work in English and behaviour in lessons is very good. They are happy to talk about the books they study and by Year 6 they can recognise and enjoy works from a variety of styles and authors. Most pupils approach tasks in English with confidence and enthusiasm. Even very young pupils understand the terms author and illustrator and they appreciate the work that goes into writing and producing books. As they progress through the school most pupils learn to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and enjoy reading both types of book. Older pupils understand how to use reference books and they are aware of the potential of computer software for accessing information although they had insufficient opportunity to do so during the inspection. Pupils all enjoy talking about their favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl and Michael Morpurgo. Individual pupils were able to explain why they found the books of C S Lewis more difficult and why they particularly enjoyed the Harry Potter series. The majority of pupils are confident in the use of the dictionary and the thesaurus. The opportunity to read and enjoy a variety of books has a major impact on their learning in English. The subject also makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils because of the quality and range of learning opportunities it provides.

97. The quality of teaching is good. In lessons observed it was always at least sound, with many lessons judged to be very good and some to be excellent. A particular strength of the teaching of literacy is the way texts and stories are used to foster skill in role-play, drama and creative writing. In lessons observed pupils' learning was greatly enhanced by studying scenes from "Romeo and Juliet" in considerable depth including a focus on the text to establish its real meaning. This helped pupils understand the depth of feeling within Juliet's speech from the balcony.
98. Class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the teaching of English and planning for the literacy hour is very effective. Teachers have high expectations of the work of their pupils and provide work that challenges and excites them. Younger pupils could really identify with the story of "Offie" and understood why he might want to escape. The story of "The Mousehole Cat" was used to explore relationships as well as to encourage creative writing. The rigorous approach and the good pace of work in most literacy lessons promote effective learning. However, in less successful lessons insufficient time was available for written work because of poor use of time and some pupils were not kept firmly on task. In the majority of lessons the quality of support helps pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in class and in "Reading Recovery" and "Additional Literacy Support" groups. In Key Stage 2 the use of overhead projectors is particularly good in focusing pupils' attention on key aspects of their work. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and individual education plans and learning support are available. Work is marked frequently and comments are helpful as well as encouraging. New assessment procedures have been effectively introduced and teachers now have a common approach and procedure to marking and target setting.
99. The subject is very well managed with regard to ensuring effective use of time and resources. The literacy hour has been implemented very well particularly in the choice of resources and the development of teaching skills. Assessment procedures are effective and the English co-ordinator is also responsible for assessment generally and is able to effectively monitor and contribute to the teaching of all aspects of English. The subject has made a noticeable improvement since the last inspection both in teaching and in the development of resources. The inspection team was

particularly impressed by the standard of reading in the sample chosen and by the challenging nature of the texts in use in Year 6.

100. The school has worked with the local authority to set appropriate targets for the pupils to attain in the next round of standardised tests.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Numeracy**

101. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategy for numeracy and this is having positive impact on pupils' numeracy skills in mathematics and across other subjects in the curriculum. Good examples were observed during the inspection of pupils using the skills of measurement and calculation in geography, history and science.

### **Mathematics**

102. In the 1999 national tests, pupils reached average standards at Key Stage 2 compared to all schools nationally. Standards were also average when compared to schools with a similar intake of pupils. At Key Stage 1, standards were well below average when compared to both groups of schools. There was also a declining trend in test results at Key Stage 1, whereas the Key Stage 2 results reflect the gradually improving national trend. There were no significant differences in test results between boys and girls.
103. The inspection found that the apparent declining trend in standards at Key Stage 1 has been reversed to bring standards up to average. Currently, standards are still average at the end of Key Stage 2, but there are signs of significant improvements, especially in the lower junior classes, where attainment is above and occasionally well above average. The weakness identified in the previous report of under-achievement by higher attaining pupils has been very successfully addressed in most classes. In Year 3, for example, the higher attaining pupils are fully stretched and have reached very high standards. They understand addition and subtraction of decimals and use and explain a range of strategies to solve problems involving large numbers. They are also confident using negative numbers in this context, which is well above expectations for their age. Very occasionally, higher attaining pupils still do not achieve their full potential in lessons, but there is a strongly improving picture across the school as a whole. The setting system in Key Stage 2 is working well. In the top set in each year group, pupils are reaching above average standards for their age. In the middle sets, standards are at least in line with expectations in each year and above expectations in Year 3. Although standards are often below average in the lower sets, they are not far below, and in some year groups they are in line with expectations. For example, in Year 5, the lower attaining pupils reach a good understanding of decimal numbers and their relationship to fractions.
104. At Key Stage 1, average attaining pupils have a secure Level 2 understanding of number. They use their knowledge of tens and units and the five or ten times table, for example, to solve problems, and explain how they arrived at their answers. Although there is a heavy emphasis on number in their work samples, they also demonstrate expected levels on knowledge and understanding of shape and measure. For example, they understand what a right angle is and use metres when measuring length to solve practical problems. They also have appropriate experience representing data in the form of bar charts and making simple observations from their results. Above average pupils reach Level 3 in all attainment targets. They set out

their method for solving problems in a clear way, showing a good understanding of hundreds, tens and units. For example, a pupil explains that 200 divided by four is 50 because it is twice 100 divided by two. They label a range of shapes correctly, understand line symmetry and solve a range of practical problems involving the use of metric units for measuring and weighing. The pupils' overall attainment reflects the provisional results of the 2000 national tests, which are broadly in line with the 1999 national averages, both at Level 2 and at Level 3, indicating improvements for higher attaining as well as average attaining pupils.

105. At Key Stage 2, average attaining pupils have a secure understanding of decimals and fractions. For example, they work out how many quarters there are in five and a half. They know how to use fractions with equivalent values in order to solve problems, for example by changing one-fifth to two-tenths, and convert fractions to decimals and vice-versa. Higher attaining pupils have a very good understanding of decimals and percentages, and use this knowledge effectively to solve practical problems such as working out the VAT on goods and percentage discounts in sales. They also demonstrate a very good understanding of formulae, for example by finding what the value of  $x$  is if  $4 + x = 9x$ . In conversation, higher attaining pupils also show that they can apply their knowledge of angular measure to solve geometrical problems, for example by working out the inside angle of a hexagon from a tiling pattern. In data-handling, average attaining pupils interpret a range of graphs and work out statistical "averages" such as the mode or the mean. Higher attaining pupils use fractions confidently to express the mathematical probability of an event happening.
106. The pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. Their responses are good or very good in most lessons. They are enthusiastic during the introductions to lessons when the teachers ask them a variety of challenging questions. From the reception class onwards, the pupils show a determination to succeed and a willingness to work hard. They persevere when tasks are difficult and derive great pleasure from getting things right. In all but a very small minority of lessons, the pupils behave well. In many classes, their behaviour is very good, especially in Key Stage 1. The pupils are particularly sensitive and supportive of those with behavioural difficulties, who sometimes demand extra attention from the teacher. This is especially noticeable in Key Stage 2, where such pupils can be very difficult to manage because of the severe emotional problems they have. Inattentive behaviour only disrupted learning in one of the twenty-one lessons seen. This was partly because the teacher does not have sufficient strategies to manage behaviour in a positive way, and partly because the pupils do not fully understand what they are asked to do. Relationships are very good generally, enabling good progress to be made in a relaxed atmosphere. The pupils co-operate well together and are very responsible in the way they organise themselves and get on with their work.
107. The standard of teaching was very good or excellent in nearly 33 per cent of the lessons seen, and is good or better in over eighty per cent of lessons. The excellent lesson that was observed in Year 3 was characterised by the teacher's exceptionally high expectations, especially for the higher attaining pupils, and exemplary planning, organisation and pupil management. The teacher's evident enthusiasm for her subject is communicated to the pupils, who strive to solve problems and explain their thinking with great skill and clarity for their age. The teacher also has an excellent grasp of the subject and understanding of how children learn best, enabling her to set appropriately challenging tasks for the whole class. In the very good lessons, the teachers give lively introductions that keep all the pupils on their toes with challenging questions for all attainment levels, supported by a range of interesting resources. In the Reception classes, the lessons are most effective when the teacher manages to give sufficiently simple questions to the younger children while still challenging the

older pupils in the class. In almost every lesson the teachers provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. Those with specific mathematical difficulties have appropriate individual educational programmes, while those who find reading difficult have good support. The teachers are also generally very skilled at handling pupils with behavioural difficulties, and implement individual educational programmes effectively when these are in place. Only very rarely are pupils with special educational needs left without sufficient support and guidance to make good progress in the lesson. The teachers usually bring their lessons to a close with a very effective recap of what has been learned. The standard of marking and day-to-day assessment is very good. Teachers use every opportunity to check the pupils' understanding and give them pointers for improvement. Occasionally, their lack of confidence in the subject prevents them from stretching the pupils as far as they can go with their questioning. However, the signs are that they are gaining the confidence to enable them to do this through the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the skilled and enthusiastic support and guidance offered by the newly appointed subject co-ordinator. The use of information technology in lessons is at an early stage of development, due to the relatively recent update of the school's equipment. Some of the programmes currently in use in classrooms are too dated to be very effective, but the newer programmes, for example one supporting data-handling, are beginning to have a positive impact. Teachers take opportunities to teach and use mathematics in other subjects, such as science, where graphs are used to represent the results of experiments.

108. The subject benefits from excellent leadership and management. The co-ordinator, with support from the headteacher, has established an excellent overview of the subject throughout the school. Through well focused monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, she has identified strengths and weaknesses that form the basis of excellent development planning. For example, current planning priorities include improving the teachers' use of the key learning objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy as targets against which to measure the pupils' progress. Assessment procedures are already good, and include testing in the year-groups between national tests as well as regular sampling of the pupils' work. The information gathered is well used to guide planning, addressing another key issue from the last inspection. For example, the pupils are placed in sets in Key Stage 2 on the basis of their assessed attainment. This has paid dividends by enabling the teachers to give more challenging work in each set, helping to raise standards overall and especially for the higher attainers. The sets are flexible, so that pupils can be moved up or down during the year if necessary. The teachers continually bear this in mind in their teaching and assessments, ensuring that all the pupils have the best chance of learning at an appropriate pace. The school provides an excellent learning environment for mathematics, with colourful, attractive displays for the pupils that invite questions, and a good programme of in-service training for the staff.

## **SCIENCE**

109. In the national tests of summer 1999 using teachers' assessments for science at Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment was broadly in line with the national average. At Level 3 and above, attainment was above the national average. Compared with similar schools, standards were broadly in line at Level 2 and above, and were above average at Level 3 and above. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' overall performance by the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. This finding is similar to that of the last inspection, showing that at Key Stage 1 standards have broadly been maintained. The pupils' attainment is high in all elements of science, including experimental and investigative work and materials and their properties, which have received increased attention recently.

110. By the age of seven, pupils have good experiences and understanding of investigating and testing. In Year 1, for example, pupils have closely examined different fabrics, setting out their findings in a methodical way; they have tested how well toy cars run down different slopes and are currently observing the growth of beans, recording their findings in a 'bean diary'. In Year 2 they have classified different materials, developing a good scientific vocabulary using terms such as transparent, opaque, flexible and rigid, and have noted what changes occur when materials are heated. They have taken and recorded pulse rates before and after exercise, and can clearly explain why it increases after exercise. They have a good understanding of sound, how it is made and how it travels and is heard, which they have used well in their own sound creating instruments.
111. In Key Stage 2 national tests for summer 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above was close to the national average. At Level 5 and above, attainment was well above the national average. When compared with schools in similar circumstances, pupils results were broadly in line at Level 4 and above, but above average for Level 5 and above. Taking the four years 1996-1999 together, performance overall falls below the national average with a significant improvement in 1999 test results. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The findings of the inspection are that overall standards, by the end of Key Stage 2, are above average, and have been well maintained since the last inspection.
112. Within Year 3, pupils demonstrate a very clear understanding of fair testing and the importance of controlling variables. When investigating the effect on plant growth of varying amounts of water they had a control plant that received no water; they made predictions, carefully measured growth, recorded their results on line graphs and drew conclusions. Pupils in Year 4 know and understand very well how animals are suited to their habitats, and that some have had to adapt to survive. Within Year 5, pupils have looked closely at plant reproduction; they can identify and name the different parts of a flower, and are well able to explain pollination and seed production. By Year 6 pupils have acquired a good range of investigative skills, and used these to good effect when measuring pulse rate, breathing rate and body temperature before and after different types of exercise. They can clearly demonstrate that plants are suited to particular habitats and climates, and that the wrong conditions are detrimental to growth.
113. The quality of teaching and learning are at least good at both key stages and has a very positive effect on standards. Lessons are very well prepared by the teachers of each year group who plan together efficiently and effectively. In both key stages, teachers' good knowledge and understanding of science is shown through clear explanations, well chosen activities and a good emphasis on basic experimental skills. Pupils gain a great deal of knowledge in lessons that is usually linked to some practical activity to aid understanding. For example, in Year 5 where pupils were considering plant reproduction, as well as learning about the parts of flowers, they were able to dissect a buttercup to identify these parts. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs, often through specially adapted tasks or worksheets, which ensure that they meet the same learning objective as other pupils. Resources are well prepared, enabling lessons to run smoothly. Year 4 pupils, following a visit to the zoo, using information which they had gathered and well prepared work sheets, were able to show how animals are suited to their habitats. Throughout both key stages, the teachers' questioning style and high levels of challenge are very effective. For example, in Year 1 pupils looked at a collection of fruits and vegetables and, following careful questioning, concluded that fruits generally contain seeds. The teachers' management of pupils is very good and fosters their positive attitudes towards science. Pupils are enthusiastic and they enjoy their lessons, maintaining interest and concentration well. They exercise considerable

independence during practical work and are able to work well in groups without disagreement. Pupils' work is well presented and carefully marked by teachers, often with useful comments to aid future learning. Teachers use perceptive on-going assessments to check on pupils' understanding. For example, in Year 2, following a topic on sound, pupils had to design and make a sound-producing instrument, showing how the sound was made.

114. With the opening of the new computer suite, pupils are quickly developing the use of information technology in science. They are able, for instance, to access information from CD Roms and the Internet and to create labelled diagrams. In Year 1, pupils could insert the names of the parts of a plant onto a diagram. Pupils are expected to use their writing skills when recording observations and very good opportunities are provided for speaking and listening in lesson introductions and whole class sessions. Subject specific vocabulary is well developed. Good use is made of numerical skills when measuring and recording the results of investigations and experiments. Other well-planned cross-curricular links also help pupils to see the relevance of science. For example, in Year 1 pupils looked closely at snails and how they move, wrote poems about them and made snail collages in the style of Matisse.
115. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the role. She carefully monitors teaching and learning by looking at teachers' planning and by sampling pupils' work and interviewing groups of pupils, to check that their learning matches the planned provision. The senior management team also observes teaching and strengths and areas for development are recorded. Results of testing are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject. A careful annual review is made of the subject and an action plan prepared to move the subject forward. For example, Key Stage 1 teachers were identified as being less confident in teaching science, and their professional development became an effective part of the action plan. The subject is well resourced.

## ART

116. The high standards reported by the last inspection have been maintained, despite less time being available for the subject, with continuing examples of excellent work at both key stages. Some of the paintings and models on display in the school would grace any art gallery. They reflect the excellent ethos that the school has established and maintained, with enthusiastic teaching and learning leading to high levels of skills and understanding in each age group.
117. In Key Stage 1, the pupils develop good skills in a wide range of techniques, from drawing and painting to collage and Batik. Imaginative teaching that links the pupils' artwork to other areas of their study inspires the work they produce. The quality of their work is further enhanced by sensitively guided observations of paintings and sculptures by famous artists. For example, as part of their studies about healthy living, Year 2 pupils looked at their body shapes and faces. They then produced a class collage of body silhouettes inspired by the work of the French painter Matisse, and face pictures modelled on drawings by Picasso. In Year 2, the pupils have used authentic Thai tools to produce excellent Batiks based on samples of African border designs. The finished products clearly reflect excellent teamwork by the pupils and very skilled guidance by the staff. The pupils have worked to a similar high standard in chalk pastels, charcoal and collage. In an excellent example of the imaginative links made with other subjects, the pupils have produced illustrations for one of their literacy hour stories using reclaimed materials, in the style of the illustrator of the book they were reading. The pupils are also beginning to use computers to extend their imagination and technical skill, for example by layering colours in the style of Jackson Pollock and changing colours to create different feelings after looking at paintings by Mondrian.
118. The standards achieved at Key Stage 2 are also well above average overall, with examples of very high attainment, both in designing and making. Of particular note is the quality of the clay-work. The underwater designs that Year 6 pupils produce to surround a clock-face reflect very good skills with clay and very confident use of the imagination in their designs. Pupils in Year 5 have made elegant drinking vessels, having looked at examples of work by Clarisse Cliff. The finished products, having been glazed and fired, look very professional. There are also examples of outstanding work in two dimensions. The stylistic paintings on display in the Year 5 area, for example, are simply stunning. The pupils have used striking colours in acrylic paints, using bold white outlines to represent objects from their own environment. The inspiration for this work was a combination of stimulating first-hand experience of a different environment, while on a residential visit, and observations of an authentic Zimbabwean painting.
119. The teachers that were observed during the inspection were not those with a flair for the subject, but nevertheless the lessons are of a consistently good quality with examples of very good teaching. Conversations with pupils and staff and observations of the wide range of high quality work on display through the school provide sufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching as very good overall. Teachers plan systematically to teach skills and develop creativity. They use a wide range of interesting resources to stimulate the pupils' imagination and provide them with good models from which to develop their own style of expression. A particular strength is the inclusion of artefacts and art from a wide range of cultures as starting points, helping the pupils to develop an awareness of their rich multicultural heritage. The teachers are particularly skilled in using the work of successful artists as tools to help the pupils develop their own individual ways of expressing themselves and interpreting their environment. They teach the basic skills of observation, choice of



medium and use of tools very effectively. For example, in a very effective lesson in Year 2, the teacher gets the pupils to use rectangular viewing frames to limit the area of a painting they are looking at and then re-create the colours and textures using paper collage. A good link is made with mathematics when the pupils are asked to consider the fraction of their picture that will be a particular colour. The way teachers link their art teaching with other subjects throughout the school is exemplary. During lessons, the teachers keep a close watch on individuals. They make very good use of praise to encourage their efforts and give pointers for improvement where appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and given any support they need to reach their potential.

120. The pupils respond to the stimulating teaching with high levels of interest and enthusiasm, and they develop excellent working habits. They sustain concentration for long periods of time on their own work, often becoming totally engrossed, and also collaborate very effectively together on larger canvasses and models. Behaviour is always very good because the pupils are so absorbed in their work and striving for success. The subject makes an excellent contribution to the pupils' personal development. It makes them more aware of the beauty and pattern in the natural world and enables them to appreciate how different peoples have reacted to it as well as developing their own powers of creative self-expression.
121. A key factor in the continuing development of art as a creative force in the school is the outstanding leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator. She communicates her vision and commitment extremely effectively to both pupils and staff, inspiring them all to give of their best. The curriculum offers an excellent range of high quality learning experiences. It is extremely well planned and organised so that all the pupils develop their skills systematically, and good records are kept of their progress. The curriculum is greatly enriched by the arts festival week, when staff and pupils work alongside visiting artists to produce high quality work, and by residential visits. The resources available for the subject are excellent, both in quantity and quality. The art studio, together with its kiln for firing clay, makes a particularly strong contribution, especially as the work undertaken there is planned and supervised by such a skilled classroom assistant who is also an excellent natural teacher. The opportunities offered by new technologies are beginning to be taken advantage of as the school improves its provision. For example, digital images are used to provide starting points for textile work and the school is creating its own art gallery web site. The volume and standard of the work produced and its contribution to the pupils' personal development ensures that the school gets excellent value for money from its investment in art.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. A key issue in the last inspection was the need to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum for the teaching of design technology were fully met. The school has developed a clear and comprehensive scheme of work and the National Curriculum requirements are now met. During the week of the inspection only one lesson in Design Technology was taking place due to the current curriculum planning which blocks work into half termly units throughout the school. Judgements take into account photographic evidence, classroom displays, scrutiny of design work and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils.

123. At Key Stage 1 attainment matches expectations for this age group of pupils. Year 1 pupils design and make a set of school uniform. They consider choice of materials and function of the clothing and suitability for purpose. When later in the year pupils measure items of clothing in mathematics, they draw upon their previously learned technological skills. Year 2 pupils design and make Easter cards with sliding mechanisms, using a range of tools and strategies to undertake and evaluate this task. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for food technology throughout the key stage, and pupils have access to a range of technological materials during focused practical tasks.
124. At Key Stage 2 attainment is in line with expectations for the age group. Pupils in Year 6 undertake an extended project in small groups, designing and making a mountain shelter to a particular size specification. They apply what they have learned through previous focused practical tasks and evaluative investigations of materials and structures. Year 3 pupils design and make pop up cards which are all very individual in design and construction.
125. No overall judgements can be made on teaching as only one lesson was observed. In the Year 6 lesson observed, teaching was good, with appropriate challenges outlined to pupils relating to the chosen design and use of materials, joints and construction. Good emphasis on the need to modify designs in the light of ongoing evaluation was made.
126. Work seen indicates that a range of tools is used effectively during lessons and that children are proud of their achievements in design technology. There is due attention to health and safety aspects with regard to the use of tools and specialist equipment, and resources for the subject are generally satisfactory and of a good quality.
127. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and understanding and maintains a useful evidence file of work undertaken throughout the school. She regularly meets with unit leaders to evaluate and monitor work undertaken and promote developments in the subject. Staff are encouraged to exploit links between design technology and other subjects in the curriculum where appropriate, for example, when constructing and designing pottery items in art or making musical instruments when exploring sound in science. However, the planned curriculum provides distinctive designated design technology projects during a particular half term unit of work, which ensure appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. Geography is only taught during the summer term, so by the week of the inspection little work had been fully completed. There were only four lessons observed during the week so inspection findings are based upon the lessons seen, scrutiny of the small amount of pupils' work, displays of work in the school and discussions with pupils and staff. At the end of both key stages attainment in geography is in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age. No judgement on standards was made at the last inspection so a comparison is impossible.
129. In Year 1 pupils can match photographs taken on a tour of the school with their correct position on a large-scale plan of the school. This quite difficult concept is achieved by good teaching that carefully and logically explains the idea of a map and landmark features of the school. The pupils are then able to investigate the need for appropriate symbols to identify places on their map. The use of well-trained and briefed classroom assistants whose tasks have been well prepared by the teacher assists learning. In Year 2 the pupils have good knowledge of a country very different from their own. Their topic on The Gambia involves a cross-curricular study that

improves their research skills and vocabulary as well as their knowledge of an African country and its culture. Good teaching and the use of photographic resources enable the pupils to make comparisons with life in Paignton. The pupils are now aware of climate, food, farming and other important differences in life styles. Year 3 pupils are studying an area of the UK that is different geographically to their local area. In comparing an area of suburban London, Godstone in Surrey they have found out about how this part of outer London grew and has changed over the last 60 years. This is compared with changes in Paignton. Good use is made of photographs as source material. Identifying types and numbers of shops and looking at the density and types of housing enhances the learning. In Year 6 the pupils can interpret temperature statistics and then draw graphs that show the differences between the weather in Innsbruck and in London. This is part of their work on what it is like to live in a mountainous area. The link between altitude and weather was soon established. Good teaching where clear achievable targets and appropriate tasks are set allied with the fact that the pupils are capable of sustained concentration means that much progress can be made.

130. The teaching of geography observed was never less than satisfactory and in three lessons was good. Good teaching occurs where the teacher sustains pace and challenge. The pupils' curiosity is aroused by the relevant and practical input from the teacher. The lessons are well prepared and learning is aided by the pupils' use of a wide range of good resources. The pupils are challenged to think, enabling them to take their work to a higher level of understanding.
131. Over the school year the current time provision for geography is adequate but not in its organisation. With almost a year between the topics continuity and progression of the skills within the subject are very difficult to achieve. The school recognises this and has made plans to improve the provision when the new curriculum comes into force in September. It is planned raise standards in geography by building in discrete geography work and skills into other parts of the curriculum. Aspects of geography teaching are being planned for in literacy, numeracy and science.
132. The school has a good geography policy and a good level of resources. The co-ordinator who has only been in post for a short while has a good subject knowledge and monitors the subject well by looking at teachers' planning and the standards achieved in the pupils' books. The issues raised at the last inspection have all been addressed with more time allocated, planning monitored and reports now focussing on the National Curriculum levels and programmes of study.

## **HISTORY**

133. No lessons were observed during the inspection but discussions with pupils and teachers and careful scrutiny of pupils' work suggest that pupils acquire a good knowledge of all aspects of the history that they have studied. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand that life has changed over time and that certain people and events have been of great significance. By the age of eleven they also understand about research methods and the difference between fact and opinion. Pupils achieve well in history because they are being given work that really interests them and which introduces them to research skills such as the use of eyewitness accounts of life in Devon in the recent past.

134. Learning is effective in that pupils can write about and talk about their studies in history with considerable fluency and some Year 6 pupils show real enthusiasm for the study of twentieth century history. Progress through the school is secure with the majority of pupils making good progress in developing an ability to put in order events and an awareness of chronology and change over time. The written work of pupils shows that they are developing a secure foundation of knowledge about the ways that life in the past was different from today. Pupils of average attainment are able to compare artefacts to find information and higher attaining pupils show the ability to undertake detailed research tasks which sometimes include the use of computers. They also learn about how archaeologists and historians find out about life and work in ancient and more modern communities. This study of communities in the past including some in the local area makes a valuable contribution to their understanding of what it means to be a good citizen. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual moral, social and cultural education of pupils. Pupils show a good level of understanding of motivation. For example pupils in Year 2 were able to give a detailed account of the Gunpowder Plot while those in Year 6 were very clear that values were different in the Greek cities of Athens and Sparta. Pupils understand that history can be found in written records but they also know that people in their community have valuable knowledge about life and events in the past. For example, pupils in Year 5 were able to talk about some aspects of life during the last war because they had questioned older people about it. The highest attaining pupils have a really good grasp of the detail of the topics studied. Although some lower attainment pupils showed a tendency to confuse key events and information they all showed an understanding of the importance of change and development over time.
135. Discussion with pupils and looking at their work shows clearly that they enjoy their work in history. Creative work, for example in art and ceramics, related to topics in history is often very good and written work is usually well presented. Pupils benefit from being given the opportunity for imaginative and extended writing in history which makes a valuable contribution to their progress in English. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the level of support available to them.
136. There is evidence that teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about history and the range of topics covered is comprehensive. Pupils are given interesting tasks and planning is effective, especially in ensuring links with other subjects such as art and English. Good support is given to pupils with special needs and the approach to the subject ensures that most pupils find the work interesting and challenging. Resources are good and the school also supplements them with a variety of visits to Exeter for studies on Roman Britain and to Morwellham Quay to find out about life in Victorian times. The school is also involved in a British Library resource based project with a focus on the use of information technology
137. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the development of all aspects of work in history and teachers share in the development of resources and new teaching strategies. There has been improvement since the last inspection in the development of new schemes of work with a focus on research skills and in the identification of assessment strategies.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Since the last inspection, the school's provision for information and communications technology has improved considerably, and the school now complies with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. An appropriate scheme of work is now in place and well planned use of the new computer suite enables all classes to acquire new skills. This recent improvement in both facilities and teaching has helped to raise the standards reached by pupils in the school. By the end of Key Stage 2 however, most pupils are still working towards the nationally expected standards as the impact of the improved facilities is still taking effect. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils reach standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. All pupils are progressing rapidly in their learning however, which reflects the high priority that the school has placed on the development of this subject.
139. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are confident in their use of computers. They know how to log on, find their individual files, print saved work and how to open and close programs. Pupils in Year 2 classes show good mouse skills as they select and use a range of tools in a painting program to make a painting in the style of the artist Mondrian. Higher attaining pupils complete this task with both precision and accuracy. All pupils are gaining confidence in the use of keyboard skills and most pupils successfully undertake such tasks as replacing words in a poem or making and re-ordering lists using the arrow and return keys. Pupils have experience of control technology and are taught how to move a floor robot that can be programmed. Teachers make good use of the large LCD screen in the computer suite to demonstrate new skills and to engage pupils in problem solving, before pupils move to working in pairs on tasks on the computer. The technical assistant plays an invaluable role here as she works in a highly effective partnership with teachers. All pupils have further opportunities to consolidate computer skills through the use of classroom computers, although these are rather outdated and do not link to the school network.
140. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are confident in the use of the computer and have developed a range of skills, such as logging on, opening and closing programmes, printing saved work and discarding unwanted items. They have created multimedia stacks using the Hyperstudio program. Pupils know how to include clip art in word processed work to display information, they use CD ROM sources to research into Ancient Egypt and search Internet sources when studying weather in geography. They undertake database searches in increasingly refined ways to investigate the classification of animals. Pupils in Year 6 compose and send e-mails between "Romeo and Juliet" during a literacy-based lesson. Although pupils in Year 6 have had some previous experience with control technology, they have not, for example, undertaken work linked to the use of sensors and more advanced control mechanisms. Insufficient use of digital cameras is also in evidence. Year 5 pupils are already displaying some similar skills to those demonstrated by pupils in year 6, which is an indication of the rapid progress which is taking place in the teaching of the subject. Multimedia examples and work undertaken on graphical representation and analysis of data on sunflower growth demonstrates this. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show skills that are developing well, for example in work undertaken by Year 3 on book jacket designs and landscape pictures, using the "Dazzle" program.

141. The way in which improvements have been brought about in standards of attainment in information and communications technology is a direct result of the very good resources now provided in the new computer suite and increased staff knowledge and understanding of the subject. Regular weekly timetabling of the suite makes effective use of the new facilities and the very good support provided by the technical assistant enhances all teaching sessions.
142. Pupils enjoy using computers, both in the new suite and in their classrooms. They respect the new equipment, collaborate well in paired tasks, each taking turns to control the mouse or use the keyboard, whilst discussing the task. During introductions and demonstrations with the LCD screen, pupils are attentive and well behaved. They ask and answer questions with confidence, and make sensible suggestions for choosing appropriate tools for a task. All pupils have an individual file on the system which provides evidence of work undertaken. When samples are retained for classroom use, useful extension work takes place.
143. The overall quality of teaching is good, with all lessons observed being at least satisfactory and often good. Where teaching is good, learning objectives are clearly outlined to pupils, pacing is brisk, and good use is made of the large LCD screen to investigate the task before practical work is undertaken. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a range of skills and extend tasks in order to challenge higher attaining pupils and make good use of the skilled technical support assistant. Pupils with special educational needs are offered the same good learning opportunities as their peers, and receive additional adult support where appropriate.
144. The subject is very well led and managed, by a highly enthusiastic co-ordinator, who has undertaken relevant high level training. She has very good knowledge and understanding of information and communications technology and has worked very hard to provide staff development training through both regular inset provision and informal advice. The new scheme of work has been carefully introduced and ensures appropriate coverage of all the aspects required. The school has prioritised the development of staff expertise as the first step in raising standards of attainment and there is evidence that staff are gaining both new skills and greater confidence in their own teaching as a result of this. The next step is to ensure that systematic information technology links are developed across the curriculum throughout the school, especially with regard to literacy and numeracy and to further support pupils with special educational needs. The use of information and communications technology now needs to permeate all aspects of the curriculum in all classes.
145. The school has started to develop assessment procedures, including pupil self assessment, but this needs to be more systematically developed across the school, together with a collection of exemplars of work for each level of the national curriculum. The school has made good use of the National Grid for Learning initiatives in promoting developments in the subject. A thriving after school club attracts a high number of girls from Key Stage 2 classes, who show great enthusiasm whilst preparing items for a children's web site for a supermarket. Some classroom computers and printers are rather outdated, especially in Key Stage 1 classrooms, but the accommodation and new resources for the subject provided both in the new networked suite and in the upper primary classes are very good.

## MUSIC

146. Overall, standards are broadly similar to those reported by the last inspection and are in line with expectations at both key stages. At seven and 11, the pupils sing enthusiastically and in tune, with a degree of expression appropriate for their age. At Key Stage 2, pupils have expected levels of attainment in understanding rhythmic notation. For example, they can correctly identify and clap in four-four rhythm. The ability of pupils in some classes in upper Key Stage 2 to play sustained pieces and to compose and perform group compositions is below expectations but pupils in the Year 3 and Year 4 lessons that were observed reached standards above expectations for their age. Year 3 pupils, for example, are able to match four well-known tunes to their correct graphical scores, while Year 4 pupils quickly learn to distinguish different forms of Indian music and play a simple “raga” with accomplishment.
147. At Key Stage 1, standards are more consistent than was reported at the last inspection, due to higher expectations and more organised teaching. Pupils understand graphical notation and can follow a simple score. For example, a class of Year 2 pupils divide into groups and “play” parts of a musical “whale picture” making different sounds with their bodies. They understand the principle of representing musical arrangements with pictures. They have a sound understanding of some musical terms such as high, low, loud and soft to describe pitch and dynamics, and know that silence is an important ingredient of a musical piece. In Year 1, pupils have a good understanding of rhythm for their age and can tap out three different four-four beats including rests.
148. The pupils enjoy making music and singing. Their rate of progress and quality of response depends very much on the skill and enthusiasm of the teacher. In lessons in which the teacher energetically introduces new ideas that challenge and interest the pupils, they respond in kind with enthusiasm and hard work and make rapid gains in their understanding and skill. During the inspection, for example, Year 4 pupils particularly enjoyed learning about the different forms used in Indian music. Year 3 pupils sang a variety of modern and traditional songs with enormous enthusiasm in response to the teacher’s lively guitar accompaniment. In Year 6, the pupils are now making rapid progress from a low base in their playing ability due to good, systematic teaching. Behaviour is generally good in lessons, and pupils handle instruments sensibly and co-operate well when using them. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and receive appropriate support in lessons.
149. The quality of teaching is good overall and was very good in half of the six lessons seen. In the most effective lessons, the teachers demonstrate confidence and skill at music and place high expectations on the pupils to listen and perform. A strength in all the lessons is the preparation and use of a variety of resources to support good planning. In a very good lesson in Year 6, for example, the pupils made good progress in identifying and playing a range of rhythms because of the very clear diagrams provided by the teacher and placed in such a way that all pupils could see them easily. Lesson planning is usually well informed by good assessments of the pupils’ existing skills. Occasionally, however, the tasks are not quite so well matched to the pupils’ ability, and they fail to learn as quickly as they could. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils are expected to play a series of rhythms that they have written themselves, but the pieces contain sequences that are too difficult for them to read. The teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils and manage them very well. This facilitates learning enormously because it allows the use of plenty of instruments and experimentation without the worry of silly behaviour. Teachers generally take lessons at a brisk pace, and use a good variety of strategies to engage the pupils’ interest, for example, by presenting a graphic score in the shape of a whale in Year 2.

On the rare occasion when too much time is taken explaining musical ideas rather than playing them, the pupils' attention wanders and their rate of learning slows.

150. The subject has been without a leader for some time since the co-ordinator moved on to another post. This has led to a lack of continuity in the curriculum that has affected some year groups more than others, depending on the availability of specialist teaching. The school has managed the situation well, adapting the organisation of teaching to suit changing requirements. Currently, for example, one teacher takes all of Year 6 in turn. This is achieving good progress because the teacher has designed a series of lessons under the guidance of the local authority music adviser that is based on the pupils' existing knowledge and skills rather than on where they should be in the syllabus. In other year groups, the teachers plan together but deliver the lessons themselves and this too contributes to good overall progress. The last report pointed out a weakness in the use of instruments from other cultures. The school has addressed this and good examples were seen during this inspection of teachers encouraging very positive attitudes towards a variety of cultural influences. Music is also used effectively to encourage reflection and generally makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development. The new co-ordinator, appointed to start in September, has a very secure base from which to build in terms of a very positive learning ethos and close co-operation and mutual support among the staff.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

151. In their physical education lessons, pupils in both key stages experience the full National Curriculum programme of study. Apart from the very youngest children, pupils throughout the school make good progress in the development of their skills in gymnastics, dance, swimming, games and athletics. Inspection evidence of the lessons and the extra-curricular activities observed indicate that the pupils' standards have been maintained since the last inspection with attainment still being above that expected for pupils of their respective age groups. Last year at the end of Key Stage 2, 100 per cent of the oldest pupils achieved the national target of being able to swim 25 metres.
152. Throughout the school the pupils are taught to practise and improve their skills and to work collaboratively with each other. They are encouraged to warm up properly and are aware of the importance of exercise and safety. Nearly all of the pupils change into the school sports kit, which is smart and adds to the overall atmosphere of the lesson; the teachers provide good role models in this respect.
153. In games at Key Stage 1 the pupils can practise and refine their ball catching and throwing skills. They are starting to appreciate the need to be accurate and are developing eye-hand co-ordination. Good teaching carefully builds up these skills by gradually making the practice tasks more challenging; consequently the pupils make good progress during the lessons. In Year 4 dance the pupils can move around the hall with increasing control, balance and poise. They are able to interpret a poem and develop a dance that is both sensitive and full of varied movement. The inclusion of some traditional Indian Kathakali stances, with appropriate facial expressions, into the sequence makes the dance very dramatic and stylish. Good teaching encourages the pupils to discuss and evaluate their work; this then leads to progress and an improved performance. In Year 5 gymnastics the pupils are developing a floor sequence of bending, curling and stretching movements. They work in pairs and are frequently asked to comment on each other's performance. This is done in a constructive manner with comments like "nice balance", "pointed feet" "included a good finishing position". This type of positive analysis leads to an improved performance. The well-planned and structured lessons, with a gradual build up of more difficult skills and



movements, enable the pupils to complete a quite complicated sequence to a high standard. In Year 6 dance literacy skills are developed as pupils explore and interpret the range of moods seen in 'Romeo and Juliet'. The pupils are asked to describe Juliet's reactions to a scene in the play. Their responses include "love sick", "upset", "confused" and "devastated".

154. Very good teaching quickly enables the pupils to achieve a series of actions and gestures that start to tell the story and express these feelings and reactions. In athletics Year 6 pupils are practising their baton changing in relay and throwing for distance and accuracy. Good clear instructions and demonstrations enable the pupils to improve their skills and performance.
155. During the inspection 6 lessons of physical education were observed. In both key stages the teaching was never less than satisfactory, in 2 lessons it was good with 2 being very good. Objectives are clear, relationships between teachers and pupils are positive, activities are progressive and resources are well used. The lessons are well prepared, encouraging the pupils to take part with enthusiasm and challenging them to think about their performance. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very positive throughout the school. They join in all activities with a clear sense of commitment and enjoyment.
156. The school has a good range of extra-curricular activities, soccer, rugby, netball, cricket, tennis, gymnastics and performing arts which are attended by many of the pupils. The parents are very supportive in helping the school with these activities and particularly with swimming during school time. The school is very successful in local inter-school tournaments, matches and competitions. They play soccer, rugby and athletics and have won many trophies.
157. The school possesses a good range of physical education resources and has good facilities.
158. The co-ordinator has written a good policy that supports the teaching of physical education and leads to the good teaching observed. The excellent packs of information and guidance written by the co-ordinator for each member of staff are appropriate for each age group. They ensure continuity and progression within the subject. The co-ordinator monitors the subject by observing the staff teach and has led in-service training by giving demonstration lessons to staff; these professional activities have helped maintain the good standards seen.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

159. From a scrutiny of pupils' past work, wall displays and lesson observations, pupils reach standards at the end of both key stages that are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This inspection shows that standards have been well maintained since the last inspection.

160. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have acquired appropriate knowledge and understanding of religion through studying topics such as festivals and celebration, special clothes and special places. Through these topics they have a sound knowledge of world faiths other than Christianity. For example, they have looked at the clothes that Jews wear when attending a synagogue such as the prayer shawl or tzitzit, and how Muslims spend the month of Ramadan and celebrate Eid-ul-fitr. They have a sound knowledge of stories from the Bible and of how Christians celebrate Baptism and major festivals such as Harvest.
161. In Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding increase well as they continue to build on the themes studied in Key Stage 1. For example, they look closely at the layout of a synagogue and the features it contains. They study the events of Holy Week and Easter and their significance to Christians. As well as finding out about sacred books and their stories and teachings, they start to learn how these were collected together and for whom they were written. Their knowledge and understanding of world religions develops significantly as they compare the teachings and stories of different religions, for example the different accounts of creation and the different symbols they use. In Year 4 pupils were finding out about Hindu gods, how they are represented in images and the symbolic meaning within these images.
162. Teachers are providing good learning opportunities for pupils in religious education. The themes suggested in the Locally Agreed Syllabus are at times quite complex, and teachers often try to link them to pupils' own experiences. At Key Stage 1 these links are very obvious, and help pupils to understand the ideas and concepts they are studying. For example, when looking at special clothes worn by religious leaders they also looked at the uniform they wear and what it signifies. When looking at special religious buildings they also write about their own special, quiet places. However, opportunities are not always taken to make these links. In Year 4 pupils learn about the 5 K's in Sikhism and how they are adopted by followers, but links between the commitment made by Sikhs joining the Khalsa to any commitments made by pupils, for example when they join a club or organisation, are not evident. Lessons are planned efficiently and effectively across year groups ensuring continuity across each year group, and careful consideration is given to the range of ability within classes, including pupils with special educational needs, when preparing activities. Lessons are introduced well, allowing time for careful questioning, discussion and reflection. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, looking at creation stories, pupils sat very quietly looking at things such as flowers, shells and fruits, considering their beauty and how they were 'made'. Artefacts and other resources are well used. For instance, a clear image of the Hindu god Shiva and work sheets based on it, helped pupils to identify and understand the symbolism contained in it. Visits are made to different churches and pupils begin to see differences between Christian denominations through their buildings and differences in worship. A visiting Catholic priest was the focus for a Year 5 lesson, where questions asked by pupils had been well prepared, helping them to understand something of Catholicism. Very good management of pupils, alongside pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, create a very good ethos for learning. Very good relationships between pupils and teachers promote productive and sensitive discussion. Good displays that show pupils' thoughts and reflections such as those on Indian religions in Year 4 and collage waterfalls in Year 1, add to the learning environment and support the learning.

163. Religious education is well led by the co-ordinator. The time allocation for the subject has been reviewed and is now in line with recommendations. There is now a clear policy and scheme of work based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject is monitored well through the use made of resources, interviewing groups of pupils and work sampling. Not all lessons in religious education involve pupils recording. In some classes the class teacher to show, for example, that a discussion has taken place enters a note into exercise books. This is very useful when monitoring the progress made by individual pupils. There are no formal assessment procedures although these are being considered alongside the introduction of materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which is responsible for developments in the National Curriculum. A subject review is produced annually, and an action plan prepared to identify areas for development in the subject. There are good resources, including sets of artefacts, for the subject.