

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HUISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Carisbrooke Gardens, Yeovil,  
Somerset, BA20 1AY

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123722

Headteacher: Mrs Vivienne Campbell

Reporting inspector: Stephanie Denovan  
17718

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 190439

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Carisbrooke Gardens  
Yeovil  
Somerset

Postcode: BA20 1AY

Telephone number: 01935 474984

Fax number: 01935 423027

Appropriate authority: Somerset

Name of chair of governors: Mr Robert Johnson

Date of previous inspection: 4 March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Stephanie Denovan	Registered inspector	Mathematics, Special Educational Needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well is the school led and managed?; What should the school do to improve further?
Tony Comer	Lay inspector	English as an additional language	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ann O'Hara	Team inspector	Equal Opportunities, English, Design and Technology, Religious Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Henry Moreton	Team inspector	History, Geography	
John Moles	Team inspector	Information Technology, Art	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Michael Benson	Team inspector	Under Fives, Science, Music, Physical Education	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

Quality Assurance Consultants  
 The Hucclecote Centre  
 Churchdown Lane  
 Hucclecote  
 Gloucester  
 GL3 3QN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6 – 10</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11 – 13</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13 – 15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15 – 17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17 – 18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>18 – 20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>22 – 25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>26 – 42</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Huish Primary is a much larger than average community school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. It has 414 pupils on roll; 217 girls and 197 boys. The school is situated in the centre of Yeovil and takes its pupils from the surrounding area of mainly privately owned houses. The socio-economic backgrounds of pupils is broadly average. Pupils' attainment on entry is average; this has remained similar over the last few years. There are 62 pupils on the register of additional educational needs, a figure lower than the national average. Two pupils have statements of additional educational needs and very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is less than 8 per cent, which is well below the national average. This figure has dropped slightly over the last few years.

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

Huish Primary is a good school. By the time pupils leave the school standards are above average. The mainly good quality of educational provision in the school, including good quality teaching is raising standards. The school is led and managed well and analyses attainment data appropriately although planning for further improvement at Key Stage 1 is not yet rigorous enough. Expenditure per pupil is average and the school makes good use of its resources to secure good value for money.

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

- By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are mainly above average because good quality teaching results in good quality learning.
- Over 65 per cent of teaching is good, particularly in Reception, Year 1 and at Key Stage 2, where high quality planning and challenging tasks inspire pupils to work hard.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and Key Stage 2 co-ordinator provide effective leadership, which is focused well on raising standards.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school; these have a positive effect on their learning.
- The quality and range of the curriculum is very good in Reception, Year 1 and throughout Key Stage 2. This results in pupils being motivated to learn. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent; they help to build strong learning partnerships between teachers and pupils.
- Links with parents are excellent.

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

- Standards and the quality of teaching at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The use of curriculum time and the opportunity for all pupils, including those with additional educational needs, to receive their full curriculum entitlement.

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

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

Since it was last inspected in May 1996 the school has generally maintained its good progress and exceeded national averages by the end of Key Stage 2; good quality teaching and learning at this key stage have been maintained. Over the last three years standards in English and mathematics have been above average. Standards in science were well above the national average from 1997 - 1998 but were average in 1999 because pupils experienced difficulties retaining the knowledge required. The school is on track to exceed whole school targets set for English and mathematics. Pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 1 has not been good enough because of weaknesses in teaching in Year 2; this has hindered attainment in mathematics particularly. Key issues identified in the last report have been met well through an action plan. Subject co-ordinators now provide good support to colleagues. Using time at the end of lessons to reflect on learning provides good opportunities for pupils to participate in self-assessment. There are some very good opportunities for self-assessment, for example in history, which record pupils' views of their own progress. The supervision of pupils at lunch times and at the end of school is now good. The headteacher, staff

and governors responded well to the previous inspection report. This school has the capacity to sustain further improvement.

## 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	B	A	A	B
mathematics	B	A	B	D
science	A	A	C	D

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

When pupils enter the school their attainment is broadly average and they make rapid progress through Reception and Year 1 and attain above average standards. However in Year 2 there is a significant amount of underachievement, particularly in mathematics, which results in overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 being average. This is mainly due to some unsatisfactory teaching. Overall standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above average; they are outstanding in art, excellent in history, well above average in English, design and technology and geography, and above average in all other subjects except religious education where they are average. Teachers work hard to raise attainment to well above average in English and above average in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. This has been a consistent pattern over the last few years. Standards in these two subjects are particularly good considering the dip in attainment pupils experience as they leave Key Stage 1. Inspection findings in these two subjects mirror National Curriculum test results in 1999. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in science between 1997 and 1998 was well above average but standards dropped to average in 1999 because it was not taught each week and pupils did not retain the knowledge covered. Inspection findings show attainment in science across Key Stage 2 is now above average. Pupils attain less well in English, mathematics and science when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals because they are not reaching high enough standards by the end of Key Stage 1. Whole school targets for English and mathematics are exceeded each year by the end of Key Stage 2 but targets at Key Stage 1 in numeracy are imprecise and do not help the school to raise standards. Pupils with additional educational needs make satisfactory progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, because the curriculum is well matched to their needs and the set attainment groups they work in for English and mathematics provide a good level of challenge.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and positive attitudes towards the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well-behaved in lessons, courteous and respect each other and property well. They are very aware of the impact of their actions on others. There have been no exclusions during the last school year and none in the recent history of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils put their energy into learning to enable teachers to put their energy into teaching. They show initiative and take their responsibilities seriously. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Good. The rate of attendance is above average and pupils enjoy attending this school. Pupils are punctual.

Pupils' attitudes are very good. Relationships are excellent and a strength of the school. Pupils work and play together contentedly. The good attendance of pupils makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	very good	satisfactory	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.*

Overall the quality of teaching is good and has a significant impact on pupils' learning. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 95 per cent of lessons, good or better in 67 percent, very good or excellent in 26 per cent and unsatisfactory or worse in 5 per cent. Very good teaching is seen consistently in Reception and at Key Stage 2. In Reception teaching is very good because learning is structured to build systematically on pupils' fast growing skills. At Key Stage 2 a significant amount of very good teaching is seen in English, mathematics, information technology, geography, art, and design and technology. A common thread to this very good teaching is very careful and precise planning and the very good subject knowledge of teachers. These enable children to learn well by acquiring new knowledge and skills rapidly and working well independently. In Year 2, there is a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching that affects standards in English, mathematics and science. This is because the activities are not always pitched at the correct levels for pupils to learn effectively. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is mainly good with some very good features in approximately twenty five per cent of lessons. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well, except in Year 2 where tasks are at times too easy or too difficult for pupils. Emphasis given to developing pupils' cross-curricular skills, such as their writing in history, is very good. Higher attaining and average pupils in set attainment groups for English and mathematics generally achieve well as the teaching makes them think hard about their learning. Although pupils with additional educational needs largely learn well, targets on individual education plans are not precise enough or regularly in the minds of teachers for these pupils to make more rapid progress. Overall most pupils learn well because tasks challenge them to think and apply their learning.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good at Reception, Year 1 and Key Stage 2 and satisfactory overall in Year 2. Excellent cross-curricular links. Implementation of the national Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is generally good.
Provision for pupils with additional educational needs	Satisfactory overall although not all targets for pupils have been identified and those highlighted are not always followed in class. Pupils do not always receive their full entitlement to the curriculum because of being withdrawn for support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The needs of these pupils are met well in the set attainment groups for English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for social and cultural development is very good. The school deserves its Health Promoting School Award. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils understand and respect the beliefs and traditions of a wide range of cultures. Provision for spiritual and moral development is good. Staff are good role models for pupils. Acts of collective worship are of good quality.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school provides strong personal support for pupils although they are not involved regularly in target setting.

The school has excellent links with parents and the impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good. Literacy and numeracy provision is generally good and links made between subjects are excellent. The school makes good use of visits to local places of interest. Satisfactory assessment practice is in place but pupils' targets are not reviewed often enough to move them through the small steps required to improve their attainment. Parents who do not adhere to the school's instructions with regard to bringing pupils to school by car create a situation hazardous to the well being of pupils attending the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and Key Stage 2 co-ordinator give a clear direction to the work of the school. The impact of leadership and management by the key Stage 1 co-ordinator is ineffective because there is a lack of focus on how to raise standards. There is good delegation to subject co-ordinators who provide a strong lead.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in key areas of the school's work. They support the school and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school analyses its performance well but does not yet effectively plan its action to improve standards at classroom level, particularly at Key Stage 1.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made good use of the funds available to improve resources. Spending decisions reflect well the school's priorities for improvement.

The school has made good progress in most areas of school improvement with the exception of

raising standards in Year 2. Arrangements for development planning are good and the school uses information and communications technology well. The match of teachers and support staff to curriculum requirements is good. Accommodation is satisfactory and used well. Learning resources are satisfactory in core subjects and good in others. The governors apply the principles of best value effectively.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards remain high and the headteacher and teachers have high expectations for all pupils.</li> <li>• Working in partnership with the school to support their children and effective communication.</li> <li>• Good school environment.</li> <li>• The strength of the Parents, Teachers, Friends Association.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework pressure on their children eased.</li> <li>• Parents blocking the exit from school at the end of the day with their cars.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings are largely consistent with views expressed by parents. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' attainment, which has enabled standards to improve further by the end of Key Stage 2. Links with parents are excellent. The physical environment of the school both inside the building and in the grounds is stimulating. The Parents, Teachers, Friends Association support the school very well and raise a substantial amount of money annually to provide classroom resources. There is no evidence to suggest the amount of homework given during inspection week was excessive; it is helping to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Cars on the congested school site do cause a hazard to pupils' safety at the start and end of the day.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Childrens' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and in their first year they make rapid gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. By the age of five standards in all areas of learning far exceed the expected outcomes of the age group and their achievement is excellent. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is very good. Baseline tests show children attain average standards. By the age of five children are well launched into the National Curriculum. They talk confidently using their growing vocabulary to express their thoughts and develop their knowledge of phonics well because of the closely focused teaching of skills. Because good attention is drawn to listening carefully children hear sounds well. Children's learning in mathematics is particularly good because teaching develops their methods to solve number problems well. In an excellent lesson seen where children were developing their understanding of odd and even numbers they applied their knowledge of pairing small toys to work out that if one child in the class of 30 was absent, 29 would be an odd number. They were so inspired by this they went on to think about whether 99 was an odd or even number. Challenging tasks enable pupils to achieve above average standards. Appropriate opportunities are available to develop imaginative play, which results in rapid gains in social skills and children learning to take turns fairly. Children's physical development is developing well through experimenting and improving their movements.

2. In the 1999, National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 7 the results in writing were well above the national average at Level 2 or above; results in reading and in mathematics were slightly below and those in science well below the national average. In 1999 when comparing attainment at seven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on average National Curriculum points, pupils' performance in writing is close to the average and in reading and mathematics well below average. This is because 33 per cent of pupils were below the average level 2B in reading, 42 per cent below 2B in writing and 40 per cent below 2B in mathematics. Standards are too low at Key Stage 1 when compared to similar schools given pupils' prior attainment and the good start they receive in Reception and at Year 1. The disparity between results in writing and other areas is too great. Over the last three years attainment in reading and writing has fluctuated from below the national average to above it. These fluctuations are due to changes of teachers and inconsistency in assessing National Curriculum levels. Attainment in mathematics over the last three years has remained either below or well below the national average. Early indications of this year's National Curriculum test results show the situation in mathematics is largely unchanged. However in writing the percentage of pupils attaining below average standards has reduced.

3. Inspection findings show attainment overall at Key Stage 1 is mainly in line with average standards. This is similar to attainment at the time of the last inspection. However there is an uneven distribution of standards across this key stage as they are mainly above average in Year 1, yet by the end of the key stage they are no better than satisfactory overall and could be higher. Standards are not as high as they could be because there are weaknesses in some of the teaching, particularly matching tasks to pupils' needs and the management of teaching methods. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 2 comparing books by the same author, the introduction was too long, pupils were unsupported in their tasks and the plenary discussion did not focus appropriately on the learning points to reinforce them. However throughout this key stage the impact of phonics teaching has

brought about improvements in reading competence. Overall by the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in most subjects is average although that in history, geography, art and physical education is above average. Performance in science is better than the National Curriculum results last year showed. Good monitoring of weaknesses revealed poor investigative skills; the teaching of these skills has brought about improvements.

4. By the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, National Curriculum test results in English were well above the national average; in mathematics they were above average and in science in line with the national average. When comparing attainment at eleven in comparison with schools in similar contexts based on average National Curriculum points, pupils' performance in English is above average and in mathematics and science it is below average. The reasons for this are that in English 41 per cent of pupils reached the higher than average Level 5. In mathematics, 27 per cent of pupils and in science 25 per cent of pupils did not reach the average Level 4. In mathematics this was because pupils lacked confidence with mental calculation work. Over the last three years improvements in English and mathematics have seen standards remain above or well above the national average. Standards in science between 1997 and 1998 were consistently well above the national average but dropped to average standards in 1999. This was because the gaps between teaching science topics were too long for pupils to retain their knowledge sufficiently well.

5. Inspection findings show attainment overall at Key Stage 2 to be above average, a similar situation to that found at the time of the last inspection. Standards in English are well above average; in mathematics, science and information and communication technology, they are above average. The effect of implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been good. The standards in science show a big improvement since the National Curriculum results last year. This is because pupils are confident with investigative work. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in history are excellent and outstanding in art. In a very high quality art lesson seen with the oldest pupils, who were studying artists' work as a stimulus to experiment with their own techniques, pupils applied great intellectual and creative effort as a result of excellent teaching. In history, pupils take great pride with presentation, which results in work of a very high standard. In geography and design and technology standards are well above average. In geography, pupils use information technology to help in handling, classifying and presenting evidence. In design and technology, pupils' designs are very detailed and they evaluate and adapt their work well. Standards are above average in music and physical education. By the end of this key stage pupils' achievements are good.

6. At both key stages pupils with additional educational needs make satisfactory progress and generally learn well. This is particularly so in Years 5 and 6 where pupils work effectively in set attainment groups for English and mathematics. Not all targets, for example those in mathematics, have been identified on individual educational plans precisely so this impedes pupils' progress in improving specific skills. Specific targets for these children are not always high profile enough when teachers and classroom assistants support them. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The Key Stage 2 co-ordinator is working hard to identify pupils who are gifted and talented to ensure their needs are met. In English and mathematics pupils work in set attainment groups and this ensures they achieve well in line with their prior attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

7. The school exceeded the whole school targets set for English and mathematics in 1999. They are well on track to do so again this year by the end of Key Stage 2. The target for English, given the consistently above average attainment over the last few years

could be raised.

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

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school, show a keen interest in lessons and enter into discussions with enthusiasm. A large number of pupils attend the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided, including sports clubs and the choir. Pupils' behaviour is good overall. There have been no exclusions during the last school year. Pupils respect each other's feelings and they are actively involved in designing and maintaining the school environment. They play together happily in the playground and move sensibly and politely around the school.

9. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are excellent. Most pupils are willing and confident to talk openly to adults about school and their work. Provision for personal, social and health education is woven into the whole curriculum and teachers take every opportunity to promote these skills. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to show initiative. This aspect of school life is exemplified by the pupils' involvement in the School Council and its discussions, which have led to a number of positive outcomes, and by the 'paired reading' between pupils in Years 4 and 5. There is a good range of educational visits and visitors that contributes to pupils' personal development.

10. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a significant contribution to effective learning. This situation has been maintained since the school was last inspected. Parents believe that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible, to work hard and to achieve their best. Pupils' attendance is good and they are punctual to school; this high level of attendance has been maintained since the last inspection.

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

11. Overall teaching and learning are good; they are very good in Reception, satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In the lessons observed 26 per cent of the teaching was very good or better, 67 per cent good or better, 95 per cent at least satisfactory and 5 per cent unsatisfactory or worse. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching in history is excellent and very good in English, design and technology, art and geography. The very best teaching is imaginative and very focussed on learning objectives. Excellent relationships at all levels mean that teachers' energy goes into teaching while pupils extend their learning. Where teaching is largely unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1 the teacher does not take full responsibility for the class because she relies on other adults in the room and as a result the pupils do not know what to do. The amount of good quality teaching in the school has increased since the last inspection. Overall teaching meets the needs of all pupils including those with English as an additional language, with one exception: targets are not always identified for those with additional needs particularly in mathematics. Teaching meets pupils' needs well in English and mathematics because by working in set attainment groups teachers can vary the pace and level of questioning appropriately. Both the needs of lower and higher attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented are met well in this way.

12. Teaching in Reception is very good because teachers have excellent knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the needs of pupils of this age. Ninety per cent of the lessons are good or better, 40 per cent are very good or better including 10 per cent that is excellent. As a result pupils rapidly acquire knowledge and understanding. No

unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers' expectations for pupils in Reception are very high, planning is thorough and the methods used are effective in helping children to learn. For example, in a music lesson focussing on rhythm involving the pupils in clapping and playing percussion instruments, pupils gain a good understanding of syllables and regular beats. Teachers' questioning skills are very good and this helps pupils to extend their thinking. It also allows teachers to make good day to day assessments of what pupils know which means that work can be designed that takes pupils' learning forward. Lessons begin with a clear statement of what is going to happen. This helps pupils concentrate right from the start and makes the best use of time in the lesson. Teachers and the classroom assistants make very good teams, both are always clear about learning objectives, and this makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

13. At Key Stage 1 teaching overall is satisfactory. It is at least satisfactory in 89 per cent of lessons of which 45 per cent is of good quality. There is unsatisfactory teaching in 11 per cent of lessons, including some poor teaching. Teaching overall is good in Year 1; the less than satisfactory teaching is in Year 2. In the best lessons seen in Key Stage 1 lessons have very clear introductions that mean that from the start pupils know what they are going to learn. They listen very carefully when the teacher talks to the whole class and this means that they know what they have to do. Work they are asked to do is carefully chosen, interests them and reflects the objectives of the lesson. In these lessons the style of questioning promotes a challenging dialogue between the teacher and the class, this means that the teachers are able to assess what the pupils know and if the work is pitched at the right level. This process intellectually challenges the pupils. In a lesson about insects a few pupils knew the scientific names of insect body parts, the teacher through good questioning allowed these pupils to share the knowledge and used this to extend knowledge with the whole class. Planning is good particularly in Year 1 where the practical activities used encourage pupils to think for themselves and encourage them to improve. Teachers use their time well and have decided beforehand which groups they will work with and why. Classroom assistants are well deployed and make a difference to the lessons they work in. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 2 because the learning objectives identified in the planning are not successfully taught. Pupils are not making as much progress as expected because tasks do not always match their needs, particularly in mathematics. Pupils are poorly managed and controlled and as a result time is wasted. In some groups pupils do not know what they are meant to be doing and so a significant minority of the pupils are not engaged in the lesson. Occasionally the teacher is over reliant on other adults and as a result, for a substantial period of the lesson, does not have oversight of pupils' learning.

14. At Key Stage 2, 96 per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory of which 73 per cent is good or better and 34 per cent is very good. Five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. In the better lessons teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught and this results in challenging questions and a brisk pace to lessons. Pupils apply their learning well because the teaching focuses on extending their understanding or making sure they have good strategies to use and apply their knowledge. For example, in a lower attaining numeracy set pupils learn how to use four number operations to solve problems. They are motivated by the task and their success brings them confidence. Relationships are very good and high achievement is encouraged and valued. Lessons have clear objectives that are translated into imaginative and interesting activities that motivate the pupils to produce the best quality work. For example work on the Victorians in history and the quality of much of the artwork is outstanding and this reflects the high expectations that teachers have of pupils. In the few unsatisfactory lessons teachers' subject knowledge is weaker and so the questioning is much less effective. Some lessons are disturbed by pupils leaving for support and returning from it;

whilst organised this way the same pupils miss the same lesson each week. For example several pupils joined and left a music lesson at a critical stage when pupils were about to perform their composition. This made it very difficult for the class teacher to maintain the momentum of the lesson. The pupils joining the lesson had little idea of what had happened so in effect could not participate. At both key stages occasionally the introduction to lessons is too long. This reduces the amount of time pupils have to complete tasks and impedes their learning. Both the national strategies for numeracy and literacy are taught well in most classes although those for numeracy are not fully in place in Year 2.

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

15. The quality and range of the curriculum and learning opportunities provided by the school are very good. The breadth and depth of the curriculum promotes good achievement and very good personal development. All statutory requirements, including the provision for religious education, are met.

16. Rich curricular provision for children in Reception ensures that by five they exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Appropriate emphasis is given to pupils' language and literacy and mathematical development, with good links into the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. A wide variety of creatively structured and stimulating activities make maximum use of learning opportunities ensuring that these pupils make excellent progress. By the time they are five, all pupils have begun work on the National Curriculum programmes of study.

17. At Key Stages 1 and 2 the school provides a broad curriculum but, within the core curriculum of English, mathematics and science, there is at times an inappropriate balance of time. As science is not always taught on a weekly basis it restricts the continuity of learning. Some additional time allocated to English, such as paired reading, is not always used well because opportunities are lost for making teaching points, and in mathematics lessons which run over time hinder learning in other areas. Most of the areas for improving the curriculum indicated at the time of the last inspection have been successfully met.

18. Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is generally good, although numeracy is not developing as rapidly as it might across all subjects in Year 2. This is limiting effective progress and restricting attainment. A particular strength of the curriculum is the very good cross-curricular links. This ensures that learning in literacy is consolidated and extended, so that standards are well above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 2, pupils' application of number skills is good in science, information technology, design and technology and geography. Time given to subjects, such as art, history and design and technology results in high quality work being produced.

19. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent. Large numbers of pupils regularly take part in a very wide range of activities at lunchtimes and after school which have a very positive effect on personal and social development. The school pays attention to encouraging both boys and girls to take part in these activities. Provision includes sporting activities such as football, tennis, cricket, cross country running and athletics, and activities across the curriculum such as music and drama. The school choir sings annually at the Wells Cathedral Carol Concert and successfully participated in the South Somerset Music Spectacular. Twenty-four pupils regularly receive music tuition from peripatetic teachers.

20. Most pupils have full access to the curriculum. However, pupils with additional educational needs and those receiving additional literacy support do not have equal access to the full curriculum. The present system of withdrawing pupils from lessons restricts full access to geography, music, information technology and mathematics. Targets on individual education plans for pupils with additional educational needs are not always central to teachers' and support assistants' work. This hinders the progress made by these pupils.

21. Provision for spiritual development is good. Acts of collective worship are very well planned, of good quality and offer ample opportunities for spiritual and moral reflection. There is good use of music and artefacts to stimulate thought and create a sense of wonder. Younger pupils are encouraged to think about colours and how these make you feel. Activities in music offer older pupils the opportunity to think about feelings created by the sounds they have heard. At both key stages, the links between religious education and aspects of personal, social, health and cultural education are good and have a positive effect on learning.

22. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. Great care is given to supporting personal development and valuing a wide range of achievements. Staff know the pupils well and very good relationships are demonstrated, for example, in the chatty comments as pupils leave at the end of the school day. Younger pupils contribute their personal feelings of success to displays such as the 'I am proud...' board, showing pride in their own ideas and efforts to work neatly. Older pupils are given a range of responsibilities around the school, such as 'Playground Buddy', ensuring no child is left feeling lonely during playtimes, and reflecting the school's expectation of caring for others. There are well structured programmes for sex and drugs education and parental involvement in drugs education has been extended, for example through a drugs awareness evening attended by over 100 parents. This has had a very positive effect on all aspects of health education and the school has received a Health Promoting School Award. There is a new and very active School Council, involving pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. The council has discussed a range of issues that are important to pupils, from feelings about the time given to the literacy hour group work, to the effect of football spreading across the playground area. Action has been agreed and followed up with staff and pupils. For example, the starting of an athletics club for Years 3 and 4 who had felt there were insufficient activities in which they could participate.

23. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Staff and others in the school community are good role models for pupils, demonstrating consideration for others in their actions. Pupils know the standards of behaviour expected of them and respect the headteacher and teachers enormously. They know the difference between right and wrong and use these principles in their treatment of each other. Certificates celebrate success in good behaviour and caring attitudes to work. Pupils are encouraged to care for their environment and are proud of the work that has been undertaken, for example in the creation of the sensory garden. They are aware of moral issues in the wider world and regularly explore the work of charities, raising a substantial amount of money to support their activities.

24. The school makes very good provision for cultural development. Staff and governors are aware that the school community does not reflect the multi-cultural communities found across the country, so every effort is made to ensure that understanding and respect for the beliefs and traditions of others is carefully nurtured. Younger pupils' work on Japanese artists gave them opportunities to think about a different culture. Older pupils, undertaking work on India and Kenya, give considerable attention to



features of these cultures and their people. At both key stages, religious education provides opportunities to study other world religions and pupils' knowledge of these cultures is developing well. The library has a small range of quality books, both fiction and non-fiction, which are very well used to support cultural awareness. The school is continuing to extend this range. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is developed through work in art and history; such as, when studying paisley patterns and the designs of William Morris.

25. Links with the local community are eagerly pursued, for example in the writing of articles for Huish Nature News, recording environmental work the pupils have undertaken, and in the construction of a large textile collage for the vicar to share at a national conference. Year 5 pupils spend time at The Mill on the Brue each February. This residential visit successfully extends their personal development. The school has constructive relationships with other schools in the area. Meetings with the feeder playgroups build good early links and ensure effective transfer of information to support pupils' learning. Older, higher attaining pupils take part in an able pupil course offered jointly by the three local secondary schools. Recently, the co-ordinator developing the use of computers across the school has begun to develop effective links with other schools in the area, acting as a trainer.

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

26. Procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good and there are effective arrangements for child protection. Since the last inspection the school has continued to provide a very caring and supportive environment for the benefit of pupils. The school provides strong personal and emotional support and guidance for pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development, attendance and behaviour, including eliminating aggressive behaviour are very good. The inspection findings reflect the parents' views of the school. Pastoral care is good and built on strong foundations of mutual respect and effective partnership with parents in most aspects of school life. Despite the best efforts of the school some parents do not adhere to the school's instructions with regard to bringing pupils to school by car. These few parents create a situation hazardous to the well being of pupils attending the school. Pupils, parents and staff are clear about the school aims and consequently responsible behaviour by pupils and excellent relationships are achieved. Good induction arrangements are in place and good links with parents and families and local secondary schools ensure continuity of provision. The personal support provided for pupils has a positive effect on raising their achievements across the school.

27. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are comprehensive. Self assessment by pupils is now in place and is used well to monitor progress and help pupils to understand their learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The use of assessment information to guide curriculum planning is satisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 1 insufficient use is made of the data collected by these assessment procedures to identify specific elements of English and mathematics that will enable the school to raise its standards. In particular individual pupil targets are not reviewed sufficiently often to move pupils through the small steps required to improve their attainment. Not all pupils with additional educational needs, for example in mathematics, have specific targets on their individual educational plans to help them move forward. Marking is not always sufficiently focused on targets to direct improvement in the next piece of pupils' work. Overall the educational support for pupils is effective in raising achievement with the exception of Year 2. The school meets statutory requirements for pupils with statements of additional educational needs although time when they are withdrawn from lessons does not

always allow for access to the whole curriculum.

28. The head teacher is the designated person for child protection and close liaison is maintained with relevant authorities concerning the well being of pupils. School staff know the pupils very well and both teachers and support staff make a significant contribution to the provision of a safe and harmonious environment to support learning in the classroom. Health and safety issues including first aid and fire inspections are dealt with effectively. There is effective, well-informed external advice and support for pupils with additional educational needs.

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

29. Overall, the school's partnership with parents is excellent. Parents are happy with what the school provides and achieves. They know their children like coming to school, that behaviour is good, that they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on, and that questions and problems are welcomed and dealt with effectively. Parents' contribution to, and involvement with, their children's learning at school and at home is very good. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and achievements. The school has maintained its excellent links with parents since it was last inspected.

30. There is effective communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, parents' meetings and annual reports. The annual reports give parents a clear indication of what pupils' know, understand and can do, as well as indicating targets and strategies for improvement. They meet all statutory requirements.

31. The school makes significant and successful efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school. This is reinforced by the home school agreement. A number of parents provide support in the classroom, and with trips and extra-curricular activities. The Parents' Teachers' and Friends' Association is committed to enhancing the social and financial aspects of the school and get good support from the local community. They also value the very good support received from all school staff.

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

32. Overall the leadership and management shown by the headteacher, governors and other key staff is good. This situation has been maintained since the school was last inspected. A clear direction is given to the school's work and staff show a strong commitment to its continued improvement. The analysis of performance data is rigorous. The school has pinpointed exactly the weaknesses it has although producing a fast track improvement plan sharply focused on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is not yet in place. This prevents high standards from being achieved by the end of Key Stage 1, particularly in mathematics, which also prevents standards by the end of Key Stage 2 becoming even higher. The impact of leadership and management by the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator is ineffective, because there is a lack of focus on how to raise standards. Subject co-ordinators, headteacher, deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator all help to promote effective teaching and learning through the well-established programme of monitoring. A subject that is the focus of school development in one year will be monitored extensively in the next. This has been particularly effective in science and physical education in raising standards. Classroom observations, looking at teachers' planning and the quality of pupils' work all form part of the monitoring programme. Whilst an additional teacher has worked at Key Stage 1 due to the initiative to reduce class sizes to 30, these measures have had little impact on improving the standards in Year 2. The school is not yet disseminating its best practice in

the quality of teaching and learning effectively throughout the key stages.

33. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They are very committed to the success of the school and are involved fully in data analysis. This enables them to keep focused on its strengths and weaknesses. They receive monitoring reports and presentations from subject co-ordinators showing good quality teachers' planning and pupils' work. In this way they keep up to date with the performance and improvement of the school and find out for themselves how things are going. Governors attend training regularly to remain informed and both challenge and support appropriately by asking the right questions. The governors are well established in their roles and the balance of their skills and competencies is used well to support the school. Whole-school performance targets set by governors for the end of Key Stage 2 have been met over the last two years.

34. The school development plan is detailed for the current year with outline developments for the next five years. In this respect the plan is attempting appropriately to look towards building capacity for longer-term improvements. Priorities for development are broadly the right ones to pursue in relation to Key Stage 2 where, for example, the whole school target for numeracy is measurable but the plan is not sufficiently focused on raising standards at Key Stage 1. At this key stage the targets for numeracy are vague and not easy to measure effectively. The development plan reflects the school's stated aims and promotes above average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The quality and care of the environment, the pride in this school shown by staff, governors, children and parents ensures all are valued. Everyone strives to achieve the aims of the school, which are met well.

35. The school makes good strategic use of its resources by tailoring the budget to improvements. This works particularly well where subject co-ordinators provide a detailed breakdown of allocated funds in their annual curriculum resource planners. Specific grants and funding such as that for pupils with additional educational needs, is supplemented by the school and used appropriately. The additional staffing at Key Stage 1 has not been monitored or evaluated fully throughout this year and the impact on raising standards has been slight. A recent auditor's report has clearly documented improvements needed in financial control. The school does not have a clearly written scheme of delegation, recording the expenditure limits, for signing cheques and it does not yet formally minute all finance working party meetings. The headteacher has taken immediate steps to rectify all the recommendations made and recorded these actions formally. The school is making effective use of information and communications technology in teaching the curriculum and plans to use it further for recording assessments of pupils. There is satisfactory application of best value principles to the school's use of resources. Major spending decisions are consulted upon and competitive quotes sought although not yet recorded.

36. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to curriculum requirements, good accommodation and, overall, a satisfactory level of resources in the core subjects and a good level in other subjects. Staff job descriptions are clear and regular review interviews for all staff inform their roles and responsibilities well. Together with a good level of delegation to teachers these measures have ensured subject co-ordinators support colleagues well. This has improved since the last inspection where their roles required further clarification. Support for newly qualified teachers is excellent, particularly through the mentoring programme. This has ensured they have all developed as good teachers. Staff working with pupils with additional educational needs are well experienced in the role. Support staff both in classrooms and elsewhere in the school, such as kitchen, lunchtime and cleaning staff work hard to provide care and support for pupils in a pleasant environment. The contribution made by all staff to the ethos of the

school, and the standards of pupils' achievements, remain as effective as it was at the time of the last inspection. The buildings and grounds provide an exciting environment for pupils to learn. Classroom displays are stimulating and document the wide range and good quality of work achieved and shows good attention to high standards of presentation. The landscaped grounds with mature trees, orchard, wildlife area and sensory garden provide a rich source of learning opportunities, which are used well.

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

37. In order to improve standards so that they match those of similar schools, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1. Raise standards further at the end of Key Stage 1 by:
  - improving the quality of teaching, particularly the methods used to enable all pupils to learn effectively;
  - producing an improvement plan focused on changes at classroom level;
  - tracking the progress of underachieving pupils more systematically;
  - setting individual targets for pupils regularly and monitoring their progress in achieving them;
  - matching the curriculum to pupils' needs in mathematics.

(Paragraphs: 2, 3, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 27, 32, 34, 48, 50, 54, 56, 59, 61, 64, 69, 100)

2. Ensure curriculum time is used efficiently and enables all pupils to receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum by:
  - evaluating the best use of curriculum time throughout the day;
  - improving the balance of time given to subjects;
  - ensuring pupils receiving extra support do not miss the same subjects weekly;
  - ensuring lesson introductions are not over long as this reduces pupils' time to complete tasks.

(Paragraphs: 3, 4, 14, 17, 27, 48, 51, 55, 60, 62, 69, 81, 88 93)

### **Other issues which should be considered by the school:**

Ensure targets for pupils with additional educational needs in individual educational plans are all identified, specific, and reviewed regularly by teachers and assistants.

(Paragraphs: 6, 11, 20, 52, 58, 60)

Improve safety at the start and end of the school day by ensuring parents follow the school's guidance on bringing children to school and collecting them by car.

(Paragraph: 26)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	93
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	20	41	28	4	1	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)		414
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		62

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
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 (1998)	33 (34)	30 (29)	63 (63)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25 (26)	31 (25)	31 (23)
	Girls	26 (24)	29 ((25)	22 (22)
	Total	51 (50)	60 (50)	53 (45)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (79)	95 (79)	84 (71)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26 (25)	30 (26)	26 (25)
	Girls	25 (25)	22 (25)	20 (24)
	Total	51 (51)	52 (51)	46 (49)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (81)	83 (81)	73 (78)
	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 (1998)	22 (31)	39 (26)	61 (57)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18 (27)	16 (24)	15 (28)
	Girls	37 (25)	28 (18)	30 (21)
	Total	55 (52)	44 (42)	45 (49)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (90)	72 (74)	74 (86)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17 (24)	15 (23)	16 (24)
	Girls	36 (24)	28 (20)	32 (22)
	Total	53 (48)	43 (43)	48 (46)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (83)	70 (75)	79 (79)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	352
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	29.6

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	177

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	98-99
----------------	-------

	£
Total income	694,670
Total expenditure	716,822
Expenditure per pupil	1,638
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,922
Balance carried forward to next year	20,770



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 47%

Number of questionnaires sent out	464
Number of questionnaires returned	218

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	31	6	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	60	35	4	1	
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	44	3		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	45	13	3	
The teaching is good.	67	31	1		
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	38	9		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	22	2	2	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	28			
The school works closely with parents.	50	37	11		1
The school is well led and managed.	72	26	2		
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	3		2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	45	8	1	8

### Other issues raised by parents

Standards remain high and the headteacher and teachers have high expectations for all pupils.  
 Parents enjoy working in partnership with the school to support their children and there is effective communication between home and school.  
 The school environment is good.  
 There is a strong Parents, Teachers and Friends Association.  
 At times homework pressure on their children is too great.  
 Parents who block the exit from school at the end of the day with their cars cause a hazard.

## **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**

38. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly average. This is confirmed by the careful assessment of children using the baseline assessment scheme. All children enter school in the Autumn Term. They achieve exceptionally well in Reception and make excellent progress. This is because they are taught very well. The quality and range of learning opportunities offered, and childrens' attitudes to school, are very good. The large majority of them exceed the expected outcomes for their age in the six areas of learning and they are very well prepared for the start of the National Curriculum programmes of study.

39. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is very good. The teaching of skills and the areas of learning is undertaken enthusiastically and based on a thorough knowledge of the children. This means that activities are well matched to their needs and are intellectually very challenging. The methods and organisation used are very effective, and enable children to understand more readily what they are taught. Work is carefully planned over time and this results in children building on previous learning. Perceptive day-to-day assessment of the progress children make means that teachers plan the next activities to take their learning further. Relationships with children are excellent and children feel very safe. Classroom assistants make a very good contribution to childrens' learning and attainment. They work very closely with the class teacher and because they are always clear about the learning objectives of the lesson they are in a very good position to support pupils fully.

#### **Personal and social education.**

40. The personal and social development of children is very good and standards are well above those expected for their age. Children are co-operative in class and get on well with each other. They share, take turns and collaborate when required. Children work well independently when asked. They are respectful to each other and the adults they work with and, as a result work well in groups. This means they learn well from each other as well as from their teachers. Children carry out quite complex tasks because they listen carefully to what is said. They are energetic and enthusiastic in their outlook and enjoy what they do. Children have plenty of ideas and use their initiative appropriately. They readily make suggestions, respond to questions and can express preferences clearly. They are sensitive to others and show sympathy to friends. For example a child who did not have a partner was readily accepted by another pair to complete an activity. Children have a very good sense of what is right and wrong and behave well as a result. The quality of teaching in this area is good. The attitudes and values that the staff communicate in this area in particular, support the aims of the school and create a very safe but appropriately intellectually challenging setting in which children learn very well.

#### **Language and literacy.**

41. Childrens' language and literacy development is very good and standards are well above the expectation for this age. Children listen attentively to teachers' instructions and to stories; they talk about their experiences confidently and articulately. They are confident in both small and large groups and follow instruction well. This means that when asked to start their work they do so quickly and waste no time at all. They respond readily to questions and communicate their ideas well. Their speech is clear and easily understood

by children and adults alike. They enjoy books. They say which stories and books are their favourites and enjoy predicting what is coming next in a story especially when they are familiar with the text. In play situations they readily take on the roles of others and improvise using equipment, for example making a boat out of large foam blocks. Children recognise familiar words, are developing knowledge of the alphabet and can associate sounds with letters. Most childrens' early writing is developing well as a result of good quality teaching in this area.

## **Mathematics**

42. Attainment in mathematics is good and children reach standards that are above those expected for this age. This is because the quality of teaching is very good. Most pupils can count at least to twenty and are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives. They understand the difference between odd and even numbers and count on and back in twos with the assistance of a number square. Children have a good awareness of number operations and can use them appropriately, for example, in deciding how many pencils they need for each table or how many more cups are needed. They know several number rhymes and very much enjoy counting games. They are familiar with and use appropriate mathematical language to describe simple shapes and make simple comparisons. They can order objects by size and follow directions well.

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

43. Attainment in this area of learning exceeds that expected. Childrens' achievement is good because the quality of teaching is precise. They have a good understanding of the passage of time; nearly all are confident in the use of, today, tomorrow and yesterday and can say what they have achieved throughout the year in their work. They are very interested in living things and can discuss their work on growing seeds well. They know what is needed for seeds to grow and their observations are perceptive as they describe the changes that have taken place since they germinated. Children are beginning to describe similarities and differences and can sort objects carefully using their own criteria and explain why. They know the difference between living and non-living things. Children use computers appropriately to support their learning.

### **Physical development.**

44. Attainment in physical development exceeds that expected for their age. The quality of teaching is good. Children move confidently in sessions in the hall and work hard to improve the quality of what they are doing. In gymnastic sessions they have a good awareness of their body position and where other pupils are and they are adventurous in the ways in which they use small apparatus to make short sequences. Children are becoming increasingly adept at controlling balls although the youngest still experience difficulty. Their fine motor control is well developed, and is reflected in the quality of the artwork they produce.

### **Creative development.**

45. Childrens' achievements in this area are well above the expectation for their age. Using different media they produce some individual and very creative artwork and have clear ideas about what they are trying to create. The quality of teaching in this area is good. They make patterns and rhythms using non pitched percussion instruments and can clap simple rhythms following very simple notation. They participate with enthusiasm in singing songs and number rhymes and can reflect on why they like a piece of music and can say how they feel having listened to it.

## **ENGLISH**

46. National Curriculum test results in 1999 in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 were broadly in line with the national average and those for writing were above. In comparison with similar schools, reading results were well below average but results for writing were in line with the average. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results were well above the national average and in comparison with similar schools were above average. Inspection findings show standards of attainment are average at Key Stage 1 and well above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Speaking and listening skills are very good with pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 listening thoughtfully and talking confidently in a wide range of formal and informal situations. Attainment in reading is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Writing is above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above by the end of Key Stage 2. Over time pupils' attainment in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 has fluctuated from above average to below it. Improvements at this key stage are not yet consistent enough to raise and maintain standards. Over time pupils' attainment in English at Key Stage 2 has always been above or well above average standards.

47. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills very well in a wide range of lessons and extra-curricular activities. In Year 1, pupils express opinions about the information they have found and most by Year 2 confidently contribute to a range of discussions. Higher attaining pupils debate the feelings created by 'African' words in a story and all pupils listened carefully. At Key Stage 2, pupils listen with increasing care to the contributions of others and build on what they have heard as discussions develop. Younger pupils build constructively on each other's ideas when discussing a character's feelings. Older pupils communicate detailed information clearly and confidently to an audience and discuss the meaning and application of words thoughtfully.

48. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils can read fluently and use sound and picture clues to help them to read unfamiliar words. Good achievement in developing reading skills at Year 1 slows in Year 2 because of weak teaching. There are weaknesses in pupils' knowledge of the library and in teacher guidance for the development of reading skills. This results in variations in consistent progress and limits achievements by the end of the key stage. Pupils develop a very positive attitude to reading from an early age. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average. Pupils enjoy research using books, CD Roms and the Internet and this enthusiasm has a positive effect on the practice and development of reading skills. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils have a good grasp of library skills, a clear understanding of index and contents pages, and can collate information from a range of research sources. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 confidently use alphabetical order to find a book by a particular author or to locate information using an index. Older pupils describe characters by referring to what they have read, picking out actions taken by the character as a reason for their description. However, reading diaries are inconsistently completed with little guidance for the development of pupils' reading skills. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading with parents who come in to help. Paired reading is used across the school to reinforce the enjoyment of books. However, learning opportunities are not always built in and the time allocated does not fully support learning. Where paired reading works most successfully the pupils have a clear focus to discuss, using description and questioning, raising both self-esteem and knowledge.

49. Standards in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Pupils in Year 1 spell simple words accurately and show consistent shape and size in their handwriting. Although there is some evidence of pupils' writing in Year 2 being less developed in content and the sequencing of ideas than elsewhere at this key stage, most pupils are able to write in a joined up style and understand the use of language features such as synonyms. This

is above the expectation for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are well above average. Pupils in Year 3 use the style of an author such as Ted Hughes to produce descriptions with feeling and atmosphere. Year 4 pupils writing prayers to God show the ability to use a variety of styles, from 'chatty' to formal. Others develop sustained ideas, for example when writing about moving to a different country. In Year 5, higher attaining pupils develop sustained arguments clearly and logically. Lower attaining pupils write correctly punctuated sequenced instructions. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils write non-fiction book reviews in which they analyse layout and structure and consider the usefulness of the content. Lower attaining pupils use a characterisation grid to explore how an author uses key words to create an impression. The presentation of all written work across the curriculum is of a very high standard demonstrating reflection and care.

50. The last inspection called for a greater emphasis on literature, which has been effectively achieved through the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. The school has also responded well to the need for assessment to inform future planning. There is a wide range of assessment in place, which includes optional National Curriculum tests, and periodically, unaided writing tasks are used to inform termly planning. Guided reading records and literacy ladders have also been introduced. However, although there is a wealth of information not all of it effectively informs the pupil of their individual learning targets. There is a huge disparity between the teacher assessments for writing and the test results at Key Stage 1 in 1999. Inaccurate assessments at this key stage are the result of a lack of monitoring by the Key Stage 1 Co-ordinator.

51. Pupils' achievement is very good overall. Work is challenging and well matched to the needs of pupils. Action taken to improve pupil knowledge of phonics, following an analysis of standards last year, has had a positive effect on standards within Key Stage 1. Use of Additional Literacy Support within Key Stage 2 has continued this year, with those involved gaining in self-esteem, confidence and knowledge of phonics. However, as these pupils are withdrawn for this work, there is evidence of a lack of equal opportunity to a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils miss aspects of design and technology, music, geography and information technology, limiting their learning in these areas.

52. Pupils with additional educational needs and those who are gifted and talented make satisfactory progress within Key Stage 1 and very good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall. This is because throughout the school, tasks are adapted to support their learning needs. Good use is made of support staff to ensure help is at hand to guide learning. Where this help is most effective, the teacher has ready access to individual educational plans for those with additional educational needs and the classroom assistant is given written guidance of the learning intentions. However individual educational plans are not always used sufficiently for pupils' learning to be supported fully. There are high expectations across Key Stage 2 of lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language. This has a positive effect on their self-esteem and learning. Pupils at Key Stage 2 with English as an additional language show high standards in their work.

53. Pupils have a good attitude towards all aspects of English. They are keen to contribute to whole class discussions and show sustained concentration in written tasks. There is clear enjoyment when reading and when working on the computer. Within Key Stage 2, pride is evident in the presentation of written work. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good.

54. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. In general there is a creative

approach to tasks set which ensures pupils develop enjoyment towards all aspects of English. Where teaching is most successful there is an effective balance between quiet and active tasks to maximise concentration on learning. Where teaching is less successful, for example in Year 2, there is insecure knowledge of spelling conventions and a lack of effective questioning to establish knowledge and enhance learning. Samples of written work show that marking is carried out regularly and includes evaluative comments, but no targets for learning. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good. Teachers model good learning through their teaching methods, such as when using intonation, expression and pace in reading. Very good questioning focuses learning intentions, consolidates previous knowledge, and ensures accurate progression of skills. Samples of written work show that marking is carried out regularly and comments direct pupils to their next learning step.

55. The school recognises that the quantity of resources, particularly for guided reading, has been limited but is continuing to extend them. The quality of literacy resources is satisfactory throughout the school. The existing limited number of good quality multi-cultural books are well used to encourage pupils to value and respect beliefs and societies different from their own. The library contains an extensive range of fiction alphabetically organised and good use is made of corridor space to extend the non-fiction section. Colour code and number systems currently support pupils' access to non-fiction. The use of computers and Internet access has been effectively used to support the development of research and writing skills across the school and this has a positive effect on raising standards. Books and other resources are carefully chosen to avoid stereotyping by race, gender or culture. The co-ordinators have worked hard to ensure the effective introduction and development of the National Literacy Strategy. Cross-curricular links are a strength. Overall pupils' competence in literacy is good. Opportunities to develop styles of writing, for example in history, are good. Much time has been given to the analysis of results, and the development of strategies for the teaching of phonics. These have been largely successful. A wide range of observations has taken place to monitor teaching and inform training needs. Additionally, the school is still exploring the most effective use of time and resources associated with the Additional Literacy Support to ensure effective learning with equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

56. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment overall is broadly in line with the national average although this masks mainly above average standards in Year 1 and significant underachievement in Year 2. Almost forty per cent of pupils at Year 2 underachieve because:

- the curriculum is not well matched to their needs. Sometimes tasks are too difficult and at other times are too easy;
- all teachers do not use the teaching methods of the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, such as in asking pupils to explain how they arrive at an answer and seeking alternative methods of calculation;
- unsatisfactory teaching results in pupils not being fully supported in their learning.

57. National Curriculum test results in 1999 at Key Stage 1 were below the national average. When comparing attainment at seven in comparison with similar schools based on National Curriculum average points scores, pupils' performance is well below average. This is because forty per cent of pupils achieved below the expected 2B level, and the number attaining at the higher Level 3 was below average. This level of underachievement has been evident over the last few years. Early indications of this year's National Curriculum test results show a similar result. Pupils' progress over time is not yet good enough. Given pupils' largely average attainment on entry to the school and their good

rate of learning in Reception and Year 1 this underachievement represents an obstacle to more rapid progress on entry to Key Stage 2. Standards at Key Stage 1 have remained the same since the school was last inspected.

58. By the end of Key Stage 1 lower attaining pupils struggle with mental calculation work because the expectations of their attainment are unrealistic. Average attaining pupils need more time to grasp new work and higher attainers need less consolidation and more experience of new work. This situation has arisen because children have recently been regrouped and teachers are unsure of their levels of attainment. Lower attaining pupils do not have their needs identified sufficiently in individual education plans. This weakness impedes their learning. Achievement in Year 1 is good. In an effective lesson seen on understanding place value the tasks made pupils think about the mathematics needed to work out the answer and resulted in very good quality learning. High quality planning, well-prepared resources and effective strategies to calm the group extended the time for learning.

59. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average. Standards have risen since the last inspection in May 1996 where they were found to be average and the good progress recorded then has been maintained. This is because of good quality teaching and the positive impact of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards are average in Year 3 and above average in Years 4 to 6. Average attainment in Year 3 is the result of pupils not achieving as high as they could at the end of Key Stage 1 because there are gaps in their knowledge and a lack of confidence with numeracy. Inspection findings are in line with the National Curriculum test result in 1999 where the school's performance was above the national average. When comparing attainment at eleven in comparison with similar schools based on National Curriculum average points scores, pupils' performance is below average. This is because 27 per cent of pupils achieved Level 3 or below and this is lower than the expected average Level 4. The school is working very hard to raise attainment across Key Stage 2. This can be seen best amongst Year 6 lower attaining pupils. Booster classes increased the confidence of these pupils with mental calculation work. In an excellent lesson seen with a lower attaining set where pupils converted decimals to fractions, high quality teaching resulted in rapid learning. Questioning challenges and inspires pupils who apply much creative effort to their work. The brisk pace, challenging tasks and closely focused teaching to small groups brings better than expected achievement for these pupils.

60. The rate of achievement for lower attaining pupils in Year 3 although satisfactory overall, is hampered when pupils miss the mental calculation work and introduction to the lesson at the beginning because they are withdrawn to receive support. Not all pupils throughout Key Stage 2 who need individual education plans have them; for those who do, these plans do not always clearly identify their needs fully. Where they are in place they are not used on a regular basis to measure the rate of pupils' progress. Higher attaining pupils throughout Key Stage 2 make good progress as they are challenged by tasks, such as in Year 3 when completing an investigation on measuring and drawing to scale; pupils discuss their work well to find ways to overcome problems. In Year 4, pupils in the higher attaining set know the language associated with angles and because they have very good attitudes and behave well their learning develops at a fast rate. Higher attaining pupils in Year 5 use answers they know to calculate those they don't such as, working out 1 per cent and 10 per cent to calculate 36 per cent of a number successfully. They exceed standards expected for their age. At Key Stage 2 gifted and talented pupils make good progress when choosing the size of the axes for constructing graphs. Achievement for pupils with English as an additional language is largely good. Often these pupils at Key Stage 2 are in the higher attainment sets.

61. In Year 1 the quality of teaching and learning is good and this has a positive impact on attainment and the rate of pupils' progress. Pupils are productive because they are gathered together at appropriate points in lessons to reinforce the learning intentions. Activities are imaginative and capture pupils' attention; this leads to increased understanding of number. In Year 2 the quality of teaching is largely sound although there is some unsatisfactory teaching which hinders pupils' learning. In Year 2, too much time is spent consolidating previous work and knowledge pupils are already secure in at the expense of introducing new work, and where the curriculum is not matched well to needs. Where the teacher fails to take full responsibility for a class and relies on other adults to guide pupils, and where learning is not carefully structured to build on previously acquired knowledge and understanding pupils' progress slows. As pupils' learning is not carefully structured and supported, it suffers.

62. At Key Stage 2, because the quality of teaching and learning is good this is raising attainment and helping pupils to exceed achievement expected, particularly for lower attaining pupils. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. Most teachers at Key Stage 2 have good subject knowledge and use their understanding of the methods of the National Numeracy Strategy well to support pupils' learning. An effective strategy in use is explaining the learning intention at the start of the lesson and evaluating it during the plenary discussion. The best lessons have clear objectives for different sections of the lesson and are well tailored to pupils' needs even when working in attainment related sets. An example of this is in Year 4 working on doubling and halving numbers up to 5000 and then using the eight points of a compass, angles and distance to describe journeys. At Key Stage 2, teachers' planning is rigorous and meets pupils' needs well. Generally there is a good understanding and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, and a brisk pace to learning, although a minority of teachers lack subject confidence to fully extend the higher attainers. Throughout the school some introductions to lessons are too long; this impedes the time for pupils to complete tasks. Occasionally time is wasted between lessons waiting for a partner class to change over and this gives lessons which are too long and hinders other subjects, such as personal and social education which have reduced time.

63. Pupils' competence in numeracy at Key Stage 1 is not developing as rapidly as it might across all subjects. There are limited opportunities to develop this and no planned programme to ensure numeracy links are exploited. At Key Stage 2 pupils' application of number skills is good, particularly in science, geography, information technology and design and technology. No computer programs were seen in use to develop pupils' skills with number. At Year 1 suitable television programmes are used effectively to develop number problem solving. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good overall and this helps the depth and rate of their learning. In turn this has a positive effect on attainment. Pupils generally try hard and want to do well and this attitude helps them to succeed.

64. The co-ordinators have worked hard to introduce and implement the National Numeracy Strategy which is successfully in place throughout the school except in Year 2. The level of underachievement at Key Stage 1 in mathematics has not been tracked effectively over the last few years in terms of what needs to be carried out differently at classroom level. Additional staffing was provided for Year 2 and although numeracy lessons have been monitored throughout the school the impact of this on raising standards has been slight.

## **SCIENCE**



65. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments was well below the national average and in comparison with similar schools was very low, and in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. This year's teacher assessments indicate a substantial improvement in pupils' performance. Inspection findings show attainment is broadly average and achievement satisfactory overall. This is because work undertaken in the school has been successful in improving pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of the subject and in particular the way in which they carry out investigations. This is a similar situation to that found at the time of the last inspection. At Key Stage 1 pupils studying insects gain a very good understanding of their characteristics and can apply these to other creatures to see if they belong to that group. Pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language achieve well, and those with additional educational needs make satisfactory progress overall.

66. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in the 1999 National Curriculum tests was broadly in line with the national average and in comparison with similar schools was below average. Inspection findings show standards are now above the national average and that achievement is good. This is mainly because pupils are now confident with investigative skills and understand the significance of fair tests. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection. A detailed scrutiny of work indicates that pupils cover the full range of statutory requirements for the subject studying life processes and living things, materials and physical processes. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of how to control simple variables and apply this understanding well to their investigations. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection and has resulted from a monitoring exercise that highlighted the specific weaknesses that needed to be improved. Pupils at both key stages are skilled at conducting investigations; those at the end of Key Stage 2 are confident in making sure tests they carry out are fair.

67. The quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Some of the teaching at Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory and pupils do not learn what is planned because the lesson introduction is weak and there is an over reliance on other adults to teach the key objectives. This method of teaching is ineffective and does not challenge pupils to learn. Pupils gain new knowledge, skills and understanding rapidly where the teaching is good. This is because of very good quality planning that is closely related to the relevant programmes of study. All pupils are taught to use a very useful writing framework to document and record their work. This enables them to organise their thoughts and the whole process of writing helps them to evaluate their own learning. Teachers use effective methods to present work in interesting ways. As a result the pupils are engaged in tasks, feel able to ask any questions and have a strong sense that their teachers will help them understand the work. Tasks are pitched at the right level and this challenges pupils to use what they already know to make a hypothesis or to make a prediction. For example pupils in Year 1, having been taught the key characteristics of insects, were able to use and apply those criteria to decide whether other minibeasts are insects or not.

68. Pupils' attitudes to science are mainly very good. They are very interested and fascinated with the subject. Discussions with Year 6 pupils revealed how interested they had been in the work on plants. They are curious about many things; this helps them with their investigations. Pupils understand the importance of accuracy in measurement and this is reflected in their work. They make good use of information and communication technology to record their work and make graphs where applicable. Their investigative work is good because pupils are willing to use their initiative and are encouraged to do this by their teachers.

69. A very good scheme of work helps to ensure that the programmes of study are taught systematically. Overall however insufficient time is allocated to the subject and in some weeks science is not taught at all. This means that pupils do not have sufficient time to plan and carry out investigations in the time available that week or that there is too long between lessons so that the skills and understanding that pupils have becomes blunted. The management of science is good and the Co-ordinator is making a very positive contribution to improving standards in the school. A thorough knowledge of the subject and good ideas for effective teaching of investigative science is helping to raise standards. Appropriate monitoring has been carried out that focussed very heavily on teaching and learning. This has revealed accurately the strengths and weaknesses and these to a great extent have been addressed. This is why standards are starting to rise. The issues that are revealed by this monitoring are not yet supported by a careful action plan, nor is it clear how the effectiveness of the changes at classroom level will be evaluated.

## **ART**

70. Standards in art are very high. At Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is above that expected for the pupils' age. By the age of 11 pupils' attainment is outstanding. Younger pupils make accurate drawings and carefully paint pictures of plants and leaves from direct observation. They study well known artists and begin to build up portfolios of work demonstrating the different styles used by those artists. They learn good clay techniques making well structured and securely moulded models. For example, in their science work on small creatures they make caterpillars and wood lice and mould these carefully onto leaf shape tiles that are successfully fired and glazed. Older pupils make critical studies of a wide range of artists. They look at and write dissertations on the way artists have represented particular natural features, for example water. They make test samples in various styles drawing on these studies prior to starting work on their own pieces. Final exhibitions of work show all these elements drawn together well. The study of work of artists and craft workers from many cultures is used to devise wall hangings using, for example, batik and woven tapestries, as well as drawing on their studies to influence borders and covers for their project books. For example geometric ethnic patterns in natural colours for their study of Kenya. The school has maintained its very high standards since the last inspection. All pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with additional educational needs including talented pupils make very good progress as they move through the school.

71. Throughout the school, pupils learn and apply new skills successfully. Teaching overall is very good with some that is excellent. Class teachers plan lessons with clear objectives. They identify the skill to be taught and set out an appropriate structure to enable pupils to build on each element sequentially. They frequently link the art work to a subject being studied. For example a study of the print work of William Morris in a history project on the Victorians. In one lesson the teacher set the pupils homework to study the manner in which Monet represented flowers and vegetation. She then requires the pupils to devise their own impressionist style through a series of test pieces, prior to producing studies of the school's sensory garden. Fieldwork within the school grounds, town and further afield forms a significant part of the provision throughout the school. It is this attention to preparation and the processes of working up to a final piece that is the strength of the teaching. This coupled with very good attitudes to work, in particular the pupils' willingness to apply creative energy and persevere, often over many weeks, to create a final piece of work produces outstanding work of high quality and imagination. The link across subjects is wide and has a significant impact on learning in other subjects. For example the study of Islamic art and the production of high quality tiles in the style of those used in mosques and other Muslim buildings significantly aids pupils understanding of the use and reasons for geometric pattern in the study of Islam in religious education.

72. There is a keen, very enthusiastic and highly experienced Co-ordinator who makes a significant impact on the provision of the subject throughout the school. Displays are of very high quality and enable pupils to understand the manner in which many elements are drawn together in successful art work. In addition, displays celebrate the way art permeates all aspects of school life. They make a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultural influences on art and the high quality experience enriches pupils' spiritual development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

73. The provision for design and technology has been greatly improved since the last inspection, resulting in pupils attaining standards in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve satisfactorily. They have an inquisitive approach to experimenting with materials. Designs by pupils in Year 1 show their knowledge has progressed into an understanding of simple systems. For example, designs for cars show a selection of materials and the identification of a simple steering system. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils show knowledge of the properties of materials, for example, using a card tube to protect string used in a model.

74. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils, including those with additional educational needs, achieve very well. In Year 3, pupils identify what works well and what is different from their original design. Higher attaining pupils gather information using a questionnaire, and apply this knowledge, showing skills above expectations for their age. In Year 4, designs are diagrammatical, explaining material and tool selection, the systems involved and reasons for these choices. Egyptian jewellery making demonstrates knowledge of a range of materials and techniques. Pupils in Year 5 make good use of computer work to record market research on pizza shape or toppings. Designs now include very detailed, step by step sequencing for the making process and standards are above those expected for their age. By Year 6, pupils carry out product analysis, evaluating styles and techniques, and use this information to inform their designs. Throughout Key Stage 2 there is good evidence of progression and development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The portfolios of work presented by pupils show excellent design and presentation skills and a very clear understanding of the making process and well above expectations for their age.

75. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Well prepared planning ensures good attention to the design and making processes. Work is well sequenced ensuring skills are taught through specifically focused activities. However, evidence from work seen shows that marking does not reinforce and develop this knowledge. This limits progress and affects learning. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good and enhances learning for pupils. Very secure teacher knowledge ensures that questioning is used very effectively to consolidate and extend learning. Evidence from work seen shows that marking focuses clearly on the continued development of subject knowledge, for example ensuring pupils use what they have found out to inform their designs, or asking how ingredients could be altered to obtain the desired effect.

76. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to the subject. Younger pupils enjoy talking about models they have made with construction equipment. Older pupils pay close attention to the teachers' comments and respond appropriately, consolidating their learning. For example, when asked which patterns the Egyptians liked, a Year 4 pupil provided four specific features. These were later used in her jewellery design. Year 6 pupils are

extremely proud of their portfolios and talk with knowledge and understanding about the problems designers face.

77. Design and technology work makes a positive contribution to work across the curriculum. Skills in computer work are effectively used to carry out product analysis or research. Writing skills are reinforced and extended in report writing and the sequenced steps needed in the making process. The ability to measure accurately is employed and reinforced through a range of design and make activities. Knowledge learnt in science, for example about electrical circuits, or in art, for example about the properties of clay, is effectively employed to create successful products in design and technology work.

78. The Co-ordinator is very well informed, has great enthusiasm for her subject and provides clear educational direction. She monitors work termly and uses this information to inform medium term planning across the school. For example, early work on gears in the Reception classes, will be consolidated and developed through Year 3 science work on toys before returning to more complex gears later at Key Stage 2. The subject is well resourced, with materials and artefacts organised to provide easy access and support for teachers. The curriculum framework ensures attention to product analysis and disassembling. Focused practical tasks are now clearly placed as preparation for identified design and make tasks. Evidence from pupil evaluations, for example of their mirrors for special people, show that knowledge and skills from such tasks have been usefully employed when making the end product.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

79. At Key Stage 1 standards are above those expected for pupils' age. When pupils leave the school standards are well above those expected for their age. High standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils' achievements in gaining knowledge and understanding of places and themes and associated geographical vocabulary are very good. Pupils with additional educational needs generally make good progress. Pupils have good opportunities to describe and interpret their surroundings using appropriate vocabulary, and to carry out fieldwork, which includes the use of measuring instruments. Younger pupils find out about where they live by walking the 'Nine Springs'. Older pupils are clear about the nature of both physical and human geography. They use aerial evidence to explain the characteristics of different settlements, comparing places in France with the United Kingdom. Pupils use information technology to help in handling, classifying and presenting evidence and to provide access to additional information sources. For example, older pupils use computers to find out where most people shop in Yeovil to build up a profile of a 'typical' resident's lifestyle choices. Pupils are given good opportunities to observe and ask questions about geographical issues, to collect and record evidence to answer them, and to analyse evidence and communicate their conclusions. For example, older pupils know how to use climate graphs to find out about temperature and rainfall in both Bangalore and London, and to use them to make comparisons and contrasts. They write reports that are informative and helpful to the reader. Learning carefully builds on what has gone before.

80. Teaching is good overall. Often it is very good. Features of good teaching include good subject knowledge, imaginative presentation of geographical material to instil interest, and good questioning to develop geographical understanding through investigations and research. Teachers organise pupils and resources effectively which promotes learning and contributes to progress, especially when they plan their lessons for a suitable length of time. Some lessons have weaknesses where the work is not well matched to the prior attainment of all pupils, especially the lower attaining pupils, for example, when pupils are

given a selection of sources to use for research and they do not quite know where to begin.

81. Very good use is made of artefacts, and pupils' own art and design and technology work, to enthuse them about studying other countries, including India and Africa. This contributes well to their awareness of other cultures. Good links with literacy are made through, for example, the writing of an acrostic poem about the rainforests. Pupils' scientific awareness is developed through their work about recycling. Numeracy skills are developing well through work such as climate graphs in Year 6. The standard of their drawing, sketching and illustrations is good, contributing well to pupils' achievements in art. The strong interest and commitment shown by staff and pupils alike is well founded since the subject is making a very significant contribution to the development of pupils' cross-curricular skills. Younger pupils use their artistic skills to produce a collage following their walk along the river Yeo. Older pupils use computers to interrogate a database they set up from their own questionnaires, and use an Internet site to compare weather in a number of places in India with Britain.

82. Attitudes to geography are good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. Younger pupils benefit from their visit to re-cycling banks and to a local nature reserve. Older pupils visit East Coker, Hinckley Point power station and Coldharbour. Older pupils' personal development is enhanced when they are selected to lead their groups through various exercises in connection with researching settlements in France. They respond to this challenge well. Some pupils do not have full access to geography because they are withdrawn for additional literacy support, and this slows their progress. Pupils' assessment of their own work is well done and is now a strong feature of geography.

## **HISTORY**

83. At Key Stage 1 standards are above those expected for pupils' age. When pupils leave the school standards are well above those expected for their age. Pupils make very good progress in gaining historical knowledge and skills during their time at school. Pupils with additional educational needs make good progress.

84. Pupils have a good knowledge of historical events such as the Roman Invasion and the Spanish Armada. They acquire a good level of factual information about the daily lives of people in the past such as the rich and poor in Victorian England. They find out about daily life, such as, living conditions in Yeovil in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Older pupils investigate the Celts, using a range of information, including documents and artefacts. They consider what they tell us about the past, selecting and combining information from different sources, including photographs, as in their work on the railways. Younger pupils have a clear idea about how things have changed over time, and write about 'old fashioned' shops, such as, butchers and greengrocers. They carry out research and write imaginatively, for example, about 'daily gossip' in Victorian times. They understand that it is possible to get different descriptions of the same person or event when looking at famous people such as Elizabeth Fry and working conditions in the mills during the Industrial Revolution. They use information technology very well. For example, older pupils set out a contents page for their project work, using different fonts and layouts, as well as graphics.

85. Pupils enjoy history. They make very good use of opportunities to look at pictures and places and to examine old objects, photographs and documents to obtain information. Pupils present their work exceptionally well, using skills acquired in art and design and technology. The quality of their finished project work is greatly enhanced by learning about William Morris and designing covers for their projects to reflect his designs. Visitors to the school, and visits by pupils, also add interest and breadth to their work. For example, in

their writing on the Roman invasion, older pupils are stimulated by a visit to a local field centre. Younger pupils enjoy their walk around Huish and to the local churches. The older pupils also benefit from visits from local historians.

86. Although few lessons were observed during the inspection, evidence from looking at pupils' work throughout the school shows that teaching is good. Lesson activities are well planned to help pupils make progress in the various aspects of the subject, especially in looking at evidence, and posing the appropriate questions. The quality of visual materials and displays stimulates pupils' interest. A very good feature of the subject is the way in which teachers make effective links with other subjects of the National Curriculum, especially art, to enliven their work. When studying the Egyptians older pupils looked at a range of artefacts from the 'lost trunk' to find clues and evidence which says something about the person who owned it. Displays and examination of pupils' work show that over time effective teaching enables them to produce work of a very good standard. Pupils are taught to look for the underlying causes of major events, patterns and trends. This gives them a very good foundation for further work in the subject. A simple, but effective system of self-assessment by older pupils is a strong feature of the subject, an improvement since the last inspection. Few worksheets are used, but where they are, they are of good quality and appropriate for the needs of pupils. Humour is used well, for instance, in the case of Henry VIII's 'Good Wife Guide'!

87. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The subject is making a very significant contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills, as in their extended report writing on Tutankhamun and their interview with Queen Elizabeth 1.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

88. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is in line with that expected for pupils aged 5 to 7. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is above that expected for pupils aged 7 to 11. Pupils at Key Stage 1 can enter text with confidence, they change font size and colour considering the effect they wish to create. They take into consideration their audience when producing posters. For example, one class drew on their work in English where they had been studying a book called 'Mamba and the Crocodile Bird', to devise a poster advertising to other pupils an imaginary film of the book. Younger pupils, as part of their work on butterflies in science, use a symmetry program to draw and pattern the wings of butterflies. They are confident and accurate at changing brush sizes and using different colours via the correct icons arranged around the screen. Pupils at Key Stage 2, retrieve information they have entered on a data base previously, from a survey they constructed and carried out amongst the people of Yeovil. They then produce graphs of their findings and analyse these and produce display sheets to show their findings. They compare the initial manual technique with the electronic analysis and make pertinent comments about the ease of use or otherwise of both systems. Pupils confidently use an appropriately controlled Internet access both in class groups and individually at lunch times to check the weather forecast for Bombay, Calcutta and New Delhi for their geography work. The recent installation of a computer suite has made a significant improvement to standards and learning even in the short time it has been in operation. The school has raised its standards further since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with additional educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. However progress suffers where pupils are withdrawn for additional literacy support. Good use is made of information technology to support pupils with additional needs, for example through using small hand held computers to write poetry, with which they can easily amend and change words on the screen. The use of technology to support work in other subjects is generally good.

89. The quality of teaching is good. Throughout the school learning is good, and for many older pupils very good. Teachers identify many opportunities to link the use of computer programs to work in hand. For example a teacher used electrically operated robots to successfully teach angle and distance in a mathematics lesson. In such a lesson pupils' intellect is challenged at a high level and they have to think through strategies carefully making notes and then entering correct commands into the robots. Pupils' attitudes are very good, they are interested in using information and communication technology to support their work. They behave well and are sensible and see the value of using computers to support their work in class. Such attitudes greatly aids pupils' learning of many aspects of information and communication technology, which pupils of this age should experience and use.

90. The provision fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The Governor responsible for the subject has carried out a monitoring visit of the suite and provision for the subject throughout the school and provided a well-written report to the Governing Body. There is a very well qualified, experienced and enthusiastic Co-ordinator who has driven the use of information and communications technology forward in the school at a rapid pace. He has kept the staff up to date with the tremendous advances in information and communication technology and has significantly improved the provision of resources and range of the subject, since the last inspection.

## **MUSIC**

91. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attain average standards and by the end of Key Stage 2 above average standards. Since the last inspection the provision for music and standards attained by pupils have been maintained. At Key Stage 1 pupils make short compositions and use simple notation in response to hearing music. They work well together, listen to each other's ideas and rehearse their music to improve the quality of what they are aiming to produce. They sing well in unison. They respond quickly to their teacher and enjoy the performance. Pupils have very good recall, which aids their singing. At Key Stage 2 they develop their skills and knowledge well. Their compositions become more complex and last longer and they record them more carefully so that they can be replayed using the notation they have created. They are gaining an appreciation of other cultures and widening their knowledge about the structure of music. For example, in a lesson with Year 6, pupils studied the characteristics of music from different cultures and identified types of chant and their structure. Activities in music offer pupils the opportunities to think about colours and how they make you feel. Evidence seen from recent video recordings of public performances illustrates that these reach a high standard and make a very good contribution to the cultural development of pupils and the life of the school.

92. Planning at both key stages is good and this means that pupils have a broad experience of work that covers performing and composing as well as listening and appraising. Pupils acquire new skills and understanding in music throughout the school and find the work that they cover in composing and performing very interesting. For example, they become increasingly skilled at deciding how to record their performances in a written way so that they can faithfully reproduce them at another time. This is because the teachers use methods that are challenging and motivate the pupils to do well. In a Year 1 class the teacher played music that immediately interests the pupils and prompted a creative response; the musical instruments are very well organised and as a result the pupils get on with their work at once. Good working relationships means that all of the time is spent on music, as pupil management is unobtrusive and very effective, the pupils' behaviour is very good.

93. The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and largely good at Key Stage 2. There is a good scheme of work based on a commercial programme and this helps to ensure that there is a wide range of work undertaken that fully covers the statutory curriculum. This scheme and the supporting materials provided by the co-ordinators effectively support teachers' planning, especially where subject knowledge is weaker. Pupils are often withdrawn from music lessons on a regular basis to receive further help in core subjects. Whilst this work is worthwhile it means that pupils always miss part of their music lesson and in this respect their access to the curriculum is hampered.

94. The quality of the two Co-ordinators' shared leadership is good. They are effective in promoting music in the school and supporting teachers. They provide a clear educational direction and have good understanding of the present standards in the school. Whilst they monitor provision through informal contact there are not at present any systematic arrangements to monitor standards or to assess the impact that teaching has on pupils' attainment. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils not only through their class work but also through the very extensive programme of performances for parents and in the wider community. The school makes good use of the peripatetic instrumental music service. Pupils using this scheme make a good contribution to the musical life of the school especially in the public performances to the community.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

95. Pupils' standards of attainment are above average at both key stages and they generally achieve well. This is an improvement since the last inspection where pupils achieved average standards. At Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are capable of building sequences of movement in gymnastics on low-level apparatus that have style and poise. They listen very carefully to the feedback that teachers give them and learn quickly how to improve the quality and range of their movements. They move with control and co-ordination and have good spatial awareness. When watching other pupils perform they can quickly incorporate ideas into their own sequences to improve their own performances. At Key Stage 2 pupils think carefully about what they want to achieve and execute the tasks well. Good examples of this can be seen where pupils improve their technique in discus throwing, their strokes in tennis and the quality and tension of dance sequences. In all these instances the improvement took place because the pupils listen carefully to what they are being told, either by their peers or by their teachers and as a consequence can modify their performance. Pupils are skilled at evaluating their own work.

96. Teaching is good overall although it is stronger at Key Stage 2. Staff are competent across all areas of activity. At Key Stage 2 teachers' subject knowledge is stronger and this makes a difference when giving feedback to pupils about their work. All teachers are very positive in the praise and encouragement they give to pupils and as a result they work very hard in lessons and make the best use of time. This ensures they achieve well. When detailed, perceptive feedback about specific aspects of the skill the pupil is trying to develop is added to the praise the result is that pupils improve more rapidly because they know exactly what they have to do. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. This is because teachers' planning is good. It identifies clear objectives and week on week builds progressively on what pupils have already completed. Good use is made of the time available so that pupils have sufficient time to practice and improve their movements. The management of pupils is good and very good attention is paid to making sure that lessons are safe.



97. Pupils' attitudes to physical education throughout the school are good. They are eager to participate in lessons and behave well. They co-operate well, sharing space and equipment. They get on with each other and their teachers and as a result their considerable energy is directed at improving their skills and vigorous physical activity. This makes a very good contribution to their attainment and achievement and to the depth of their learning.

98. There is an excellent broad and balanced curriculum that offers a very good range of learning opportunities. It makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development. All the areas of learning are covered well and pupils benefit from the breadth of activities particularly in games where several sports are taught. Very good use is made of local coaches to help set appropriate standards in a sport. For example, a tennis coach helps teach at the start of a unit of tennis. This is a very effective strategy to raise standards and to give pupils opportunities to learn from professional players. The provision for extra-curricular physical education is excellent and the take-up is very good. The school actively and successfully participates in local competitive events and benefits from working in the wider community.

99. The leadership and management of the subject is good. This is because the co-ordinator is clear about the strengths and weakness and has sound strategies for securing continued improvement. Most staff have a good understanding of the subject. The findings of a recent major evaluation are being incorporated into every-day provision. Further plans to maintain the improvement has yet to be constructed. This will detail what changes at classroom level need to be maintained or introduced to continue to improve standards. Resources are good; the Co-ordinator has gathered good equipment through commercial schemes. There is an excellent out of school sporting programme that runs at most lunchtimes and after school. These activities are very valuable, good quality and involve a substantial number of pupils. They make a very good contribution to standards in physical education and a significant contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Several staff make a considerable commitment to making this worthwhile programme work well.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

100. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. In Year 1, pupils can identify key features in a Christian Church and think deeply about special places. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reflect on their own actions and have an understanding of the lives of Christians such as Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling. However, there is no evidence of work set to match the differing needs of pupils.

101. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and although pupils' achievement is generally satisfactory a significant minority do not always make the progress expected. This occurs where tasks are not fully matched to the needs of pupils. Higher attaining pupils are not always given sufficiently challenging tasks and pupils with additional educational needs are not fully supported in their learning. Year 3 pupils completing work on Divali show they can describe the key features of a Hindu year. Higher attaining pupils show excellent understanding of barriers and bridges between religions. In Year 4, there are appropriate opportunities for individual development. Pupils' writing about special journeys shows detailed and thoughtful personal reflection, showing learning from human experience and spiritual awareness of what is 'special'. In Year 5 Haiku poems show a good understanding of beauty in the natural world. However, work from average and lower attaining pupils shows less secure development of understanding and less care in presentation. By the end of Key Stage 2,

pupils understand the feelings of others and put forward a reasoned moral argument, for example in letters written about conditions in prisons. However, there is also evidence of copying out a story, for example when studying Mohammed, with no opportunity to demonstrate extended learning.

102. The last inspection required the school to increase teacher subject knowledge to enable pupils' understanding of key concepts to be developed. It also required the school to provide a more detailed pupil assessment structure. These issues partly remain. Although the new framework for the locally agreed syllabus provides guidance for non-specialist teachers, understanding of key concepts is still limited by a lack of understanding of the subject in reference to learning about other religions. This affects Key Stage 2 particularly. Marking does not always fully support the development of understanding within this subject. The creative use of music and resources establish a sense of reflection and spiritual awareness within the school. Pupils have very good attitudes, listen carefully and contribute thoughtfully when asked. Acts of collective worship contribute very effectively to pupils' moral and spiritual development and there is clear enjoyment of story telling.

103. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and planning shows systematic attention to knowledge and understanding within the locally agreed syllabus, although tasks are not always matched to the needs of pupils. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Many teachers show very thoughtful preparation of a range of resources for the task to be undertaken. Where teaching is best, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and use skilful questioning to establish existing knowledge and extend understanding. When teaching is less satisfactory, teachers have less secure knowledge.

104. The Co-ordinators have worked hard to develop the new framework and are successful in ensuring that the subject meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. They have provided guidance for the non-specialist teacher, which includes an appropriate glossary of subject specific vocabulary for each aspect covered. Teachers make good use of the resources. Additional resource needs are met by borrowing from the range held by the Diocese. Religious education makes a positive contribution to the consolidation and development of literacy skills across the school. Research work has recently been extended to the use of the Internet.