

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST'S RC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Dartmouth

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113461

Headteacher: Mrs H Brown

Reporting inspector: R E G Cross
15917

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 June 2001

Inspection number: 192176

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Voluntary Aided

School category: Infant and junior

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Milton Lane
Dartmouth
Devon

Postcode: TQ6 9HW

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Freeman

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15915	R E G Cross	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Geography History Physical education Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8691	J Vincent	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30695	G Dinan	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art Music	
20240	V Jones	Team inspector	English Foundation Stage Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John the Baptist's Roman Catholic Primary school educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 96 pupils on roll, which is smaller than most other schools of its type. There are 19 pupils who are in the same class in the Foundation Stage. The school has 27 pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is also above the national average. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties are the largest group within the school's pupils with special educational needs. The school has broadly the same number of boys and girls on roll. None of the pupils speak English as an additional language or are from a minority ethnic background, which is lower than in most schools. Around four per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. During the last school year, 13 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 17 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is a high rate of mobility. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of attainment but, overall, standards are below average on entry.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Its very good leadership and management promote teaching that is consistently good. These factors provide the pupils with a very good all round quality of education. The pupils make good progress and reach at least average standards in all subjects by the time that they leave the school. Their behaviour and personal development are excellent. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school's links with parents are excellent and greatly assist the children's learning.
- The excellence of the pupils' behaviour and their very good attitudes to school are major factors in the progress that they make in all aspects of their development.
- The very good quality of the leadership and management of the headteacher and governors, who are very well supported by all staff, makes the school very effective in promoting the pupils' all round development.
- The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and creates a very positive ethos which fully reflects its Catholic values.
- The consistently good quality of the teaching promotes good progress and the pupils reach good standards which reflect their individual potential very well.
- The staff know the pupils very well, take great care of them and form excellent relationships with them. This creates a very secure and happy learning environment.

What could be improved

- The role of co-ordinators which is not fully developed for example, in monitoring the quality of the work carried out in some subjects.
- Procedures for judging how effectively money has been spent on major projects. These procedures are currently informal.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997 and, since then, it has made a good improvement. The key issues for action arising from that inspection have been fully addressed. In addition, the very good quality of the leadership and management and the consistently good quality of teaching have been maintained. Although standards in some areas are not as high as they were in 1997, the pupils make equally good progress now compared with the previous inspection. The difference in standards is due to differences in the attainment of the intake and the suspension of parts of the National Curriculum. Improvements made in other areas include communication with parents, assessment procedures, information and communication technology and attendance. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have also been well implemented. The school has a very good capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	B	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	C	C	D	
science	A	C	C	C	

The table shows that in 2000, standards compared with all schools were average and that, compared with similar schools based on the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they were below average in mathematics and average in science. Compared with schools where pupils entered Key Stage 2 at similar levels of attainment, standards were well above average (A) in English and science and above average in mathematics. Since 1997, the school's results have shown an improving trend in line with the national rate of improvement. The school's targets for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in 2000 were exceeded and targets have been suitably increased for 2001. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in science, design and technology, history, art and physical education and average standards in all other subjects including literacy and numeracy.

The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, the pupils reach above average standards in mathematics, including numeracy, science and information and communication technology and average standards in all other subjects including literacy.

The pupils' overall achievement at Key Stages 1 and 2 is good because of the consistently good quality of the teaching and learning.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well because of the consistently good teaching they receive and they are on course to reach average levels in all areas of learning by the time that they enter Key Stage 1.

Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements of special educational need, make good progress and achieve well relative to their previous levels of attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. There is a culture of quiet, constructive collaboration between both pupils and adults, which is built on mutual respect.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is excellent. Children are thoughtful, courteous and polite both to one another and adults. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions during the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is excellent. Opportunities for personal development have been extended by enabling each pupil to agree personal targets, evaluate their progress and, if necessary, adjust personal objectives.

	targets, evaluate their progress and, if necessary, adjust agreed objectives in conjunction with their teacher. Routine tasks are carried out with quiet efficiency and self-discipline and contribute well to the smooth running of the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is excellent and very high compared with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence continues to be well below the national average.

All of the above features make very significant contributions to the progress made by the pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During this inspection, 26 per cent of the teaching seen was very good, 70 per cent was good and four per cent was satisfactory. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is good. This consistently good teaching and learning promotes good progress for the pupils. The most important factors are the very good quality and use of on-going assessment and the way in which teachers and teaching assistants work together. These factors ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and of different ages in the same class, are well met. There are no significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching. However, some lessons lack sufficient pace in parts, teaching assistants are not always closely monitored by teachers and training needs exist for some staff in music, information and communication technology and art.

Throughout the school, the most important strengths in the quality of learning are the amount of effort that the pupils put into their work and the way they sustain interest and concentration. The pupils are keen to learn; they have a good understanding of how they can improve and make every effort to be successful. These factors promote the good quality of the learning in the school and the good progress made by pupils. There are no significant weaknesses in the quality of learning although the attention of some pupils occasionally wanders when the pace of the teaching slows down.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All subjects of the National Curriculum fully meet requirements and curricular provision is well balanced in terms of the time allocated to different subjects. Planning ensures that pupils in mixed age groups do not repeat work they have previously covered unnecessarily or at the same level of challenge. Provision for personal and social education and the school's range of extra-curricular activities are very good. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and meets recommendations but there is no fenced area outside the class in which these children play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school's use of teaching assistants and its very good assessment procedures, mean that these pupils receive well-targeted work and support in almost all lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to plan this work. The teaching assistants make a major contribution to the progress that pupils with special educational needs make. They provide support in most subjects, which means that progress for these pupils is consistent across the curriculum.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. These aspects of the school are promoted in all areas of its life. The daily gathering makes a major contribution to the school's provision but it is apparent in all aspects of the curriculum and in the ethos of the school. Staff provide the pupils with excellent role models. There is a relative weakness in provision for the pupils' cultural development in that the concept of Britain as a multicultural community is underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after its pupils very well. The caring culture promoted by all staff ensures the pupils' well being. This, together with the family atmosphere of the school, creates a secure environment where learning can flourish. Teachers know their pupils very well and are familiar with their background and circumstances. Support and guidance for pupils are very good.

The school's partnership with parents is excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of the leadership and management of the school is very good. This makes it very effective in providing a good all round education for its pupils. This is shown by the consistently good quality of teaching and learning, which lead to good progress, and the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. The very good leadership and management of the school also generate a strong team spirit, first-rate support from the parents and a very effective commitment to further improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They have a very good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their role in its development is excellent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Assessment data is carefully analysed and well used to raise standards. Literacy and numeracy have been effectively monitored and advisors from the local education authority have been involved in assessing the work of the school. However, the monitoring role of some subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources in this school are organised to support the pupils' learning. Budget planning is securely linked to the school's good school development plan and financial control is rigorous. Care is taken to ensure that value for money is obtained when purchases are made. The school clearly understands the need to judge cost effectiveness in terms of the standards reached by the pupils but procedures to do this are informal.

The school's provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources supports the pupils' learning well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of the leadership and management of the school.• The quality of the pupils' behaviour.• The way in which the school helps children to become mature and responsible.• The good progress that their children make.• The fact that the school works closely with them.• The high expectations that the school has.• The quality of the teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework provided for their children.

The findings of the inspection support the positive views of the parents and, in addition, judge that the school's provision of homework supports the progress made by the pupils very well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school at the start of the Foundation Stage with wide ranging levels of attainment but, overall, standards on entry to the school are below average. The children make good progress and achieve well because of the consistently good teaching they receive and are on course to reach average levels in all areas of learning by the time that they enter Key Stage 1. The children work and play together and co-operate well with each other and with adults. They understand the format of a book and can describe where the title is, where the author's name appears and know that print conveys meaning. The children recognise numbers up to ten and can count forwards and backwards to ten. They plant seeds and predict how a variety of conditions will affect their growth. The children are mostly able to dress and undress themselves independently. They are given opportunities for imaginative play by the Fantasy Island theme in the role-play corner which is also linked well to the book corner.
2. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, standards were well below average compared with all schools in reading and writing and they were in the lowest five per cent in the country in mathematics. Compared with similar schools in 2000, standards were well below average in writing and in the lowest five per cent in the country in reading and mathematics. The teachers' assessments of the pupils' standards in science in 2000 were well below average. Over the past three years, the data show that girls have performed less well than boys in reading, writing and particularly mathematics, but there was no evidence of this during the inspection.
3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, the pupils reach above average standards in mathematics, including numeracy, science and information and communication technology and average standards in all other subjects including literacy. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection, standards have improved in information and communication technology but they have fallen in English and history. The last inspection did not make a judgement about standards in design and technology. The improvement in standards in information and communication technology is, to some extent, due to better resources in the subject. Lower standards in English are due to the lower average levels of attainment the pupils now have on entry to the school. In history, the difference is also because the full requirements of the National Curriculum have not been required to be taught in history for a considerable period of the time since the school's last inspection. The pupils' overall achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs, at this key stage is good because of the consistently good quality of the teaching and learning. Their rate of progress is just as good as it was at the time of the school's last inspection.
4. In Year 2, in English, pupils enjoy listening to and talking about, stories, rhymes and poems. Average pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding and employ a number of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words although some less able pupils do not always do this automatically. Pupils in Year 2 can suggest missing words in a story and use commas to make a list. Most pupils can write short sentences with capital letters and full stops. In mathematics in Year 2, pupils confidently calculate numbers from 1–100 using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They apply mathematical knowledge to practical situations; for example, when they estimate and measure. Pupils make good links in their learning by using computers effectively to produce graphs when sorting and ordering data. In Year 2, investigative work is particularly strong and is applied in all other aspects of the subject. In their work on life processes, the pupils

considered the use of energy by running around the playground and recording how they felt afterwards. In their work on bridges, they predicted which structure would be the most rigid. The pupils also tested changes in materials; for example, by cooking eggs. At this key stage, the application of numeracy skills in science is a relative weakness in the pupils' learning.

5. In Year 2, in art, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials for drawing and painting including graphite pencils, charcoal, pastels and paints, but sketchbooks are not sufficiently well used. In Year 2, in design and technology, the analysis of work showed that pupils, for example, suitably create designs and copy them onto plastic canvas using cross stitch and running stitch. However, the analysis of work at this key stage indicated limited use of the development of accuracy in measuring, marking and cutting. In Year 2, in geography, the pupils show satisfactory knowledge of aspects of life in cities and fishing ports and in selected areas of the world such as Australia and Morocco. However, throughout the key stage, map work is not sufficiently systematically developed. Simple weather recording of a suitable standard has also been carried out. In Year 2, in history, the pupils have satisfactory knowledge of the Fire of London and Robin Hood but other aspects of the subject, for example, the use of a range of sources, are underdeveloped. In Year 2, in information and communication technology, pupils have acquired competent keyboard skills, which enables them to produce well-written texts on screen to support work in English and religious education. At Key Stage 1, in music, the standard of pupils' singing in other lessons was appropriate for their ages. In a well-planned Year 2 physical education lesson, the pupils practised throwing for distance and showed sound control in spite of very windy weather conditions. The effects of exercise on the body were not considered as part of the lesson.
6. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, standards compared with all schools were average. Compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they were below average in mathematics and English and average in science. Compared with schools where pupils entered Key Stage 2 at similar levels of attainment, standards were well above average (A) in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Since 1997, the school's results have shown an improving trend in line with the national rate of improvement. Over the past three years, girls have performed less well than boys in English and science and particularly in mathematics. The school's targets for pupils achieving Level 4 or above in 2000 were exceeded and have been suitably increased for the year 2001.
7. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, pupils reach above average standards in science, design and technology, history, art and physical education and average standards in all other subjects including literacy and numeracy. Compared with the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection, standards are comparable in all subjects except English, mathematics and geography where they are now lower. The relative decline in standards is due to the lower average levels of attainment the pupils now have on entry to the school. In geography, the difference is also because the full requirements of the National Curriculum have been suspended for some of the time since the school's last inspection. The pupils' overall achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs, at this key stage is good because of the consistently good quality of the teaching and learning. This is the same judgement as was made by the school's 1997 inspection. No judgement was made of standards in design and technology by that inspection.
8. In Year 6 in English, pupils are active and responsive listeners and talkers and, for example, develop spoken arguments for and against an issue. They read with fluency

and accuracy and evaluate the texts that they read with growing competence. Pupils write in an appropriate range of forms including newspaper reports, diaries, poetry, reviews and stories. However, there is a lack of sustained imaginative writing from the oldest and most able pupils and this is connected with a lack of sufficient emphasis on pupils' planning, drafting, editing and refining their written work. In Year 6, in mathematics, pupils undertake real life problem solving. They worked in pairs; for example, to book a holiday for a family of four in France on a given budget, between certain dates. Pupils are able to convert units of length using metres and centimetres and construct and interpret simple line graphs. In Year 6, the pupils measure their pulse rates, weight and height accurately as a baseline to check for changes after taking exercise. In work on materials, they predict how long dissolving will take. Their work on sound include testing the way in which different objects vibrate and how this affects the sounds produced. The analysis of work shows that, although investigative work is strong, there is a comparative weakness in the pupils' abilities to design their own experiments to answer scientific questions.

9. In Year 6, in art, pupils have refined and developed skills in representational work. They extend their skills and understanding by making more detailed comparisons with artists such as the French Impressionists. However, teachers do not always provide opportunities for pupils to use a wide enough range of material and techniques. In Year 6, in design and technology, the pupils have undertaken a wide range of varied work with textiles; for example, quilting using Ancient Greek designs. However, the analysis of work at Key Stage 2 indicates that the pupils have few opportunities to investigate and evaluate familiar products by disassembling them. In Year 6, in geography, the analysis of work shows that the pupils have a suitable understanding of Dartmouth and other settlements but there is too little evidence of fieldwork. In Year 6, in history, the pupils show a good understanding of aspects of the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs but the analysis of work shows that their research skills are not always fully developed. In Year 6, in information and communication technology, pupils confidently use CD-ROMs which enable them to search for and retrieve information but only a few have had the opportunity to use digitally produced imagery. The use of electronic mail was not seen during the inspection. In Key Stage 2, in music, pupils develop listening skills and enjoy making new sounds for each other. They discuss differences in timing and tonal values, playing faster or slower, louder and more softly as a prelude to composition work based on train journeys, later in the lesson. In the games lesson seen at Key Stage 2, the pupils show average levels of ball and racket control. There is some evaluation of each other's performance by the pupils but this aspect of their development is not frequent enough or in sufficient depth.
10. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous levels of attainment. The school's thorough procedures for assessing and addressing the needs of these pupils mean that, in most cases, they are given work that extends them but which they can complete. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to plan this work. The teaching assistants make a major contribution to the progress that pupils with special educational needs make. They provide support in most subjects, which means that progress for these pupils is consistent across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning, including those of pupils with special educational needs, are very good throughout the school and have been maintained and improved since the last inspection. The safe, warm and welcoming atmosphere provided by the school ensures that there is an environment in which pupils want to do their best. Pupils are eager to come to school. There is a culture of quiet, constructive collaboration between both pupils and adults, which is built on mutual respect. During the inspection, there were several examples of pupils acknowledging the success of their peers without prompting. Children in the Foundation Stage respond very positively to the stimulating environment, caring atmosphere, high expectations of good behaviour and well thought out curriculum.
12. Behaviour in and around the school is excellent and is a strength of the school. Pupils are thoughtful, courteous and polite both to one another and adults. An example of thoughtful initiative was noted during a whole-school gathering. A pupil near the door noticed that the carpet prevented the door closing. Without fuss he quietly adjusted the carpet, closed the door and returned to his place. There were many other instances of proactive, thoughtful behaviour by pupils observed during the inspection. An aura of quiet contentment permeates the whole school and voices are only raised when it becomes a necessary part of the lesson. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and have built still further on the high level reported at the last inspection. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions during the last year.
13. Pupils' personal development is excellent and has also improved since the last inspection. Opportunities for personal development have been extended by the introduction of the focus card scheme. This enables each pupil to agree personal targets, evaluate his or her progress and, if necessary, adjust agreed objectives in conjunction with the teacher. This system is separate from, and in addition to, the recording of pupils' academic progress. Routine tasks are carried out with quiet efficiency and self-discipline and contribute well to the smooth running of the school. There is a 'buddy system' where children about to join the Foundation Stage are contacted by a Year 1 pupil who becomes their friend and mentor in school. This is another example of how the school fosters personal development for all age groups.
14. Attendance is excellent and very high compared with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence continues to be well below the national average. Attendance registers are completed correctly and comply with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. During this inspection, 26 per cent of the teaching seen was very good, 70 per cent was good and four per cent was satisfactory. This consistently good teaching and learning promotes good progress for the pupils. Strengths of the teaching include the way in which teachers plan lessons, manage and control the pupils and the high expectations that they have of the pupils. However, the most important factors are the very good quality and use of on-going assessment and the way in which teachers and teaching assistants work together. These factors ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment receive work that is challenging but attainable at all times and thus maximises their progress. They also mean that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those of different ages in the same

class, are well met. The outstanding nature of the contribution made to the quality of teaching by teaching assistants and other adults in addition to teachers, was also found by the school's 1997 inspection. There are no significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching. However, some lessons lack sufficient pace in parts, teaching assistants are not always closely supervised by teachers and further training needs exist for some staff in information and communication technology and art.

16. Throughout the school, the most important strengths in the quality of learning are the amount of effort that the pupils put into their work and the way they sustain interest and concentration. The pupils are keen to learn, they have a good understanding of how they can improve and make every effort to be successful. These factors help to promote the good quality of the learning in the school and the good progress made by the pupils. There are no significant weaknesses in the quality of learning although the attention of some pupils occasionally wanders when the pace of the teaching slows down.
17. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and in all areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. No judgement of the quality of teaching for children aged under five was made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. During the inspection, seven observations of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage were made; one was very good, five good and one satisfactory. The teacher's planning is a strength, with clear learning and achievement objectives in all areas of learning. Close observation of how the children are learning ensures that good progress is made. The good quality of the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage illustrated in a lesson where the children make swings. The lesson plan showed that their earlier work on this topic was discussed with them in some depth at the start of the lesson. As a result of this discussion the children made decisions; for example, about changing some of the material they planned to use. The children show well-developed co-operative skills as they share resources and ideas suitably with each other. The children are well supported by the teacher and the learning support assistants. They show independence in selecting for themselves materials from those provided by the teacher. The teacher's good understanding of children of this age is shown by the way in which they were encouraged to work both co-operatively and independently. The children show a good understanding of the routines of the class when they help to clear away at the end of the lesson in which they have made good progress in making their models.
18. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning is good. No clear judgement about the quality of teaching at this key stage was made by the school's 1997 inspection although the indications are that the judgements of both inspections are similar. During the inspection, nine observations were made; three were very good and six were good. At this key stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in all subjects except design and technology, geography and history where it is satisfactory.
19. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. As at Key Stage 1, no clear judgement about the quality of teaching at this key stage was made by the school's 1997 inspection although the indications are that the judgements of both inspections are similar. In this inspection eleven lessons were observed at Key Stage 2; three were very good and eight were good. At this key stage the quality of teaching and learning is very good in physical education and good in all other subjects except geography where it is satisfactory.

20. A lesson in Year 2/3 exemplifies the strengths of the teaching throughout the school and also the school's good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The teacher gives very clear explanations of the work the pupils are required to do and, because of this, they fully understand the tasks and respond well. The pupils show clearly that they are able to recall and mentally use addition and subtraction facts to 20 and the two, five and ten times tables. The lesson is very well organised especially the group work. Each of the four groups has different but related tasks which, through the first rate use of assessment information, gives the pupils work which is challenging but attainable. Three of the groups are well supported by adults whilst the most able pupils work independently. This works very well. Those pupils, including those with special educational needs, who require additional help with their tasks benefit from the help given to them. The more able pupils are able to forge ahead and use their initiative well. They fully understand what they have to do and find the work enjoyable but challenging. They can, for example, explain varied ways in which ten pounds can be spent on souvenirs during a trip to Legoland. The explanations include the fact that the only way to spend it all and have no money left is to buy ten key rings! The quality of the teaching and learning in this lesson means that all pupils make good progress.
21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school's use of teaching assistants and its very good assessment procedures mean that these pupils receive well targeted work and support in almost all lessons. These factors are illustrated in a literacy lesson, which also exemplifies the school's good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, by an observation of a group taught by a teaching assistant. The objective of the lesson is for the pupils to write a letter and the lesson began with revision of earlier work about non-fiction writing. Well-directed questions ensure that the pupils are able to identify and explain; for example, writing instructions, information and historical facts. There is also an interesting discussion of how writers can be biased in their approach to a subject. The teaching assistant has a very calm approach which generates confidence in the pupils who behave very well and concentrated fully. Their interest is maintained when they are given a newspaper article reporting that a local park is to be made into a car park and are asked to talk about their reactions to this proposal. They are stimulated to produce a good list of reasons to support their general view that this is 'bad news'. The teaching assistant leads an animated discussion very well and develops the pupils' ideas very carefully. The pupils are encouraged to consider the other point of view and offer several good ideas about why, in fact, a new car park is needed. They show a good awareness of how cars affect the environment. Good use of drafting books is made to marshal their ideas in preparation for writing their letters of protest. Good progress is made in this lesson because of the quality of the teaching and learning.

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

22. The school provides a good range of relevant and worthwhile learning opportunities that promote its aims effectively. It covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Statutory requirements are fully met. All subjects of the National Curriculum were covered even when it was an option to the school to suspend aspects of subjects. All pupils receive good equality of opportunity although some who have specialist music tuition sometimes miss parts of other lessons. Total weekly teaching time is appropriate to meet the needs of the curriculum and time allocated to each subject is adequate. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were judged to have access to a broadly based, well-balanced and relevant curriculum and this inspection confirms the earlier findings.
23. The school places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and teachers are confident when managing it. Additional time has been allocated for extra reading throughout the school and the relative weakness in the development of pupils' writing skills has been targeted as a priority for improvement. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and is having a good effect on the standards achieved by pupils in mathematics. Literacy and numeracy skills are applied well across the curriculum. There are policies for all subjects and the school has appropriate schemes of work. The previous inspection noted the very good planning by teachers and this continues to make a positive contribution to raising standards.
24. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The planning documents are full and detailed and take full account of the recommended areas of learning. Planning for pupil's progression from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1 is particularly good and ensures that the pupils have appropriate access to the national strategies by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils' access to a broad range of learning opportunities is enhanced by the willing volunteers who are keen to support them by helping in class along with the staff. The facilities and resources have been significantly improved to support the curriculum and there is good space for all activities but pupils lack a secure outside area.
25. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual targets for pupils with special educational needs include goals for literacy, numeracy and behaviour and are regularly reviewed within the school's focus groups. The needs of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are met well and annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. Early identification of pupils with special educational needs allows the school to devise clear targets for pupils. The support they receive in classes and in small groups is very good and pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. The school has good arrangements for liaising with the local secondary school and other local schools through the Academic Council. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Teaching assistants are skilled and experienced and take an unusually high degree of responsibility for curriculum delivery to small groups of pupils. This is supportive to the pupils and effective as they make good progress.
26. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities including netball, football, cricket, computers, cookery and drama. Teaching assistants not only support pupils with special educational needs during the school day, but enhance the curriculum effectively

by running a number of extra-curricular clubs including dance and art. The curriculum is also enhanced by music tuition from a visiting specialist.

27. The aims of the school show a commitment to 'the welfare and development of each child' and the inspection found that meeting a diversity of learning needs within three mixed-age classes is a strength. Planning to meet individual needs within mixed-age classes is a particular strength throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils of a wide range of ability and differing ages are well challenged. They make a virtue of the mixed-age settings to enable; for example, brighter, younger pupils to reach their potential within groups of older pupils in the class. The work of all pupils is valued and equality of opportunity and access is treated as a priority.
28. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. A good emphasis is given to the teaching of health issues, including sex education, which are treated sensitively and taught appropriately according to the age of the pupils. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, which found that policies relating to pupils' welfare were not fully implemented.
29. There are good links with the local community that make a positive contribution to pupils' experience and learning and local visitors, such as the police and fire brigade, are welcomed into the school and to assemblies. Naturally there are strong links with St John's Church and parish but local links also include the Britannia Naval College and Torquay United. Pupils play an eager part in a variety of events and festivals in the area and across Devon, such as Sing 2000 and Rotary Youth Speaks, and a variety of sporting events such as tag rugby competitions.
30. Pupils' very good behaviour and their positive attitudes towards their work are founded on the school's very good provision overall for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Acts of worship in the school are an integral part of pupils' spiritual development. Statutory requirements are met. The sensitive leadership of assemblies ensures a quiet, reverent atmosphere to which pupils respond well. Pupils have the chance to experience calm, silence, reflection, prayer and music. Their singing of 'God is Love', is used effectively to develop their spiritual awareness and response.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. There are clear expectations of high standards of behaviour which are promoted effectively through the school's well-implemented policies. The school's environment is calm and good behaviour and attitudes are acknowledged positively and given a high profile. Throughout the inspection, pupils remained calm and considerate at all times, whether in classes or outside lesson times. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong at levels appropriate to their age. Staff provide very good models for pupils and the consistent and caring way in which issues are dealt with promotes pupils' appreciation of tolerance and fair play very effectively. Moral aspects are taught very well and pupils show a keen awareness of their responsibility towards property and the environment.
33. There is very good provision for pupils' social development and parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The school has a warm, welcoming ethos, relationships are very good and all adults in the school provide an open and friendly atmosphere, which encourages the development of pupils' social skills very effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated very well into

a happy and caring community and all activities offered by the school. Appropriate opportunities are taken in class for pupils to work collaboratively and share resources and equipment. They are also given responsibility for tasks suitable for their age and development both within the classroom and in the school community. Pupils are encouraged to use initiative and to develop their awareness and commitment to the poor and disadvantaged by involvement with charities such as UNICEF. Other charities that pupils have supported include Red Nose Day, National Children's Home and the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development.

34. Cultural provision for pupils is good. Western culture is promoted appropriately through subjects such as literacy, history, art and music. Pupils are made aware of the contributions of ancient civilisations like the Aztecs to Western culture and of the impact of the Victorians on their own heritage. Where possible, there are good cross-curricular links such as imaginative writing based on extracts from Dickens, to illustrate the Victorians theme in history. Posters, displays and books acknowledge racial diversity and pupils have satisfactory opportunities to study religions other than their own. The youngest pupils can answer the register and give short greetings in French or German. In music, pupils sing songs from other countries and there is a range of ethnic instruments. Inspectors felt that the one weakness in the school's provision for pupils' cultural development was a lack of emphasis given to preparing them to take part in a racially diverse society. The examples seen in school of work reflecting other cultures concentrated on historic (Aztecs) or far away (African masks) whereas lives led in a large and racially diverse city nearby were not reflected in the work seen.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school continues to look after its pupils very well. The caring culture promoted by every staff member ensures the well-being of the pupils. This, together with the family atmosphere of the school, creates a secure environment where learning can flourish. Teachers know their pupils very well and are familiar with their backgrounds and circumstances. Support and guidance for pupils are very good. The school has successfully addressed the key issue raised in the last report regarding the full implementation of particular welfare policies.
36. Children in the Foundation Stage are well cared for, secure and at ease in their surroundings. The well-planned induction procedures are an important factor of this positive situation. The children work happily in their classroom and show confidence in the playground. Staff are on hand to deal with any mishaps. Children display their feeling of security by the way they move around the classroom. On entry to the school the children's' attainment is assessed using a procedure designed specifically for this age range. This process provides valuable information for planning the early activities so that they meet the children's individual needs.
37. Care and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and learning support assistants know pupils and their needs very well. Learning support assistants make a very strong contribution to pupil progress. The school ethos is well reflected in the way staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs have opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued highly and achievements are well recognised. This positive attitude and the very good relationships between staff and pupils ensure that these pupils make good progress in a caring and secure environment. There are adequate procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' needs are quickly identified when they enter the school and appropriate arrangements are made for the regular review of their

progress. There is good liaison with outside agencies, which provide support. Good records are kept of pupils' progress in relation to their targets.

38. Procedures for monitoring attendance are very good and their effectiveness is reflected in the high attendance rate. The school has a suitable child protection policy that is to be published shortly. All teachers have received appropriate training in child protection matters with the headteacher as the nominated child protection officer. However, this information does not appear in the school prospectus or staff handbook. Two teachers have suitable first aid qualifications.
39. Pupils, teachers, ancillary staff and parents formulated the school behaviour policy together. This, coupled with the examples set by staff, ensures that pupils meet the high standards of behaviour expected from them.
40. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy supported by a governor with specific responsibility for health and safety matters. In addition, the class teachers have responsibilities for their own areas. There is an annual, formal risk assessment with informal appraisals on a day-to-day basis.
41. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are very good. Similarly, the monitoring of pupils' personal development is also very good through the implementation of the focus card system. This system allows the identification of areas that individual pupils need to focus on, provides the basis to set targets to improve in these areas and furnishes evidence of development. Once each half term, every pupil, as part of a group, is the focus for assessment by the teacher for a week. During this week, the pupils in the focus group complete all their work in a focus book or folder. This work is then marked by the teacher in greater detail than usual. The teacher and individual pupils then talk about the progress that has been made towards their existing targets and a new focus is set. Each child has a focus card containing current areas for development. Pupils are encouraged to take part in the evaluation of their progress and to be aware of their particular focus for improvement in their work at all times. The information gained from the focus process is used by the teacher to plan work that meets the pupils' needs. The effectiveness of the procedure was clearly evident in the lessons observed.
42. Information from the focus system is also used to set targets for attainment in the national, end of key stage tests and assessments. Parents are invited to talk to staff about their children's progress and are made aware of the focus for the next academic year so that they are able to support the children in their learning. The pupils' targets largely centre on English and mathematics. If appropriate, any subject or aspect of a pupil's personal and social education or behaviour may be deemed suitable as a target for development. In addition, pupils are encouraged to evaluate and improve their own work; for example, in design and technology. Overall, procedures for assessing pupil's progress and ensuring their welfare are very good. The school values its pupils and looks after them very well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school places considerable importance on working in partnership with parents, including those of pupils with special educational needs, and successfully works very closely with them. This message is stressed in the school prospectus and applied practically by the genuine 'open door' policy adopted by the school. During the inspection it was noticeable how members of staff made themselves available to parents and carers at the start and close of the school day. Parents take full advantage of this policy. Many parents, and notably the chair of governors, spend much time in school helping with various tasks and in doing so release valuable teaching time. The Friends of St John's are very active and give support in many ways including raising considerable amounts of money for use by the school in its many refurbishment projects. The majority of parents say that the school works closely with them. One school initiative is to have a 'buddy system' for parents of new Foundation Stage entrants, in addition to the same system for their children. This entails a staff member liaising with the parents while they adjust to the change in their lifestyle. This idea typifies the caring ethos of the school and is part of the very good induction procedures for these children.
44. Communication between home and school continues to be very good. There are fortnightly newsletters, formal meetings twice a year and a curricular meeting when the following year's curricular programme is discussed. The annual reports on the progress made by pupils are very detailed with each subject heading prefaced with the particular curricular needs for that subject. This enables parents to evaluate their children's progress correctly and is a good example of the thorough way the school approaches its reporting responsibilities. Parents of children with special educational needs are fully informed about the progress made by their children. The school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are informative and fulfil all statutory requirements. There is a home/school reading record book that is appreciated and well used by parents. The home/school agreement is in place and has had 100 per cent acceptance by parents.
45. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting overwhelmingly supported almost all aspects of the school and the findings of the inspection support these views. Some parents felt that they would like to see the provision of homework improved, although the findings of the inspection are that homework supports the pupils' learning well. Parents feel that the school is a 'model for others' and parental support for the school is very strong. In their view, the school is excellent. This very strong parental support and involvement, combined with the efforts of the Friends of the school, greatly enhance the pupil's learning opportunities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The quality of the leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher, staff with management responsibilities and the governing body is very good. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. The result of leadership and management of this quality is that it makes the school very effective in providing a good, all round education for the pupils. This is shown by the consistently good quality of teaching and learning which generates good progress and the development of the pupils' very good attitudes to learning. The very good leadership and management of the school also creates a strong team spirit, first-rate support from the parents and a very effective commitment to continued improvement. Furthermore, the school's aims are very well implemented and its ethos fully reflects its Catholic values. The effectiveness of the leadership and management is

also illustrated by the good improvement that the school has made since it was last inspected.

47. The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. Each governor makes at least one planned formal visit to the school each year. The purpose of the visit is decided and agreed in advance and is often linked to an aspect of the school development plan. Visiting governors observe classes, meet with and feed back to co-ordinators and produce a written report for the governing body. This gives the governors a very good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors' role in the school's development is excellent. For example, they make a major contribution to the school's school development plan, which is a very effective management tool. Each of the governing body's committees reviews the aspect of the school development plan for which it has responsibility annually and presents these reviews to the headteacher and the Chair of Governors. A draft plan – which includes similar input from the staff – is then produced for discussion. The headteacher and the Chair of Governors work together very closely and effectively.
48. The school evaluates its performance well. Assessment data is carefully analysed and the information obtained is well used to raise standards. Literacy and numeracy have been effectively monitored and advisors from the local education authority have been involved in assessing the work of the school. The school development plan is carefully and thoroughly reviewed. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning by some subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed. The governors are well aware of this and have allocated funding to develop this role in the coming year.
49. The school's use of its resources is good. Budget planning is securely linked to the school's good school development plan so that educational priorities are fully supported by careful financial management. Control and monitoring of expenditure are rigorous. Care is taken to ensure that value for money is obtained when purchases are made and that resources are organised to support the pupils' learning. Procedures for judging how well money has been spent, in terms of the effect on the standards reached by the pupils, are fully understood by the school but are not sufficiently formalised. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to support the learning and administration of the school. Funding provided for training for staff is used appropriately although there are training needs for some staff in art and information and communication technology.
50. All pupils receive good equality of opportunity although some who have specialist music tuition sometimes miss parts of other lessons. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and these pupils make good progress. Assessment procedures ensure that they are identified and supported quickly and that they receive work that enables them to improve. The funding provided specifically for these pupils is very well spent, largely on teaching assistants who make a major contribution to their progress. Special educational needs provision is a strength of the school. Governors and the headteacher prioritise the provision of an exceptional level of support for pupils whose needs are identified and targeted from the beginning of their time in school. The headteacher is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs. She carries out her responsibilities effectively and efficiently and has co-ordinated the special educational needs system well with the school's overall assessment system. There is a designated governor, who works well with the school.

51. The school has a suitable number of appropriately qualified teachers who have a varied range of experience. This enables the curriculum to be taught effectively and for management roles, including the Foundation Stage, to be covered appropriately. The school's good number of well-trained, well-qualified and experienced teaching assistants work very closely with the teachers and give very good support to the pupils' education. The school has a suitable number of support and ancillary staff who carry out their roles very well, which assists the implementation of the curriculum. Arrangements for the induction of staff are good. The school's effective implementation of the requirements of performance management have fully addressed the key issue of improving arrangements for the appraisal of teachers that arose from its last inspection. The school provides very good provision for the initial training of teachers.
52. The school's accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught very successfully. This is a major improvement on the findings of the school's last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then, considerable effective effort has been put into improving it. In particular, a new classroom has been built, which has enabled the school hall to be fully used; for example, for physical education. The school grounds have suitable areas of field and hard-surfaced play areas. However, there is no fenced area for children in the Foundation Stage.
53. As at the time of the school's last inspection, learning resources are judged to be good and to support the pupils' progress well. Since the last inspection, there has been a particular improvement in resources for information and communication technology with the introduction of the information and communication technology suite. Resources are well organised and labelled and easily accessible to staff and pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to improve further the quality of education offered to the pupils, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(1) further develop the role of co-ordinators by:

- implementing the planned programme to provide non-teaching time to allow co-ordinators to monitor and develop the quality of the work carried out in those subjects where monitoring does not take place;
- providing training in subjects such as art and information and communication technology to help these subjects to improve at the same speed as other aspects of the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 15,48, 94, 99, 103, 107, 111, 115, 122)

(2) formalise procedures for judging how effectively money has been spent on major projects by refining, recording and evaluating the informal methods currently in use.

(Paragraph 49)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Improving provision to develop the pupils' understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society. (Paragraph 34)
- Providing a fenced play area for children in the Foundation Stage as detailed in the school development plan. (Paragraphs 52, 67)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	26	70	4	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	27
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.01
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	*	*	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	*	*	*
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (83)	75 (83)	67 (67)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	8	9	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (83)	75 (83)	75 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	*	*	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (73)	79 (82)	100 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments – not available		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total			
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School			
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

*Information omitted as fewer than 10 pupils involved.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
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)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	200529
Total expenditure	198332
Expenditure per pupil	2156
Balance brought forward from previous year	6680
Balance carried forward to next year	8907

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	70
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	85	15	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	39	21	3	2
The teaching is good.	65	29	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	37	8	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	16	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	16	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	32	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	79	21	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	21	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	24	3	2	0

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

55. The children are admitted to Reception at the start of the each term and attend for half days at first. Many of the children have already attended other local pre-school provision. Assessment made of the children on their entry to the school shows a tendency for attainment to vary greatly within one year group and from year to year. However, overall, attainment on entry is below average.
56. There was no report on children aged under five by the last inspection as there were none at the school, which has only accommodated these children for the past two years. The judgement of this inspection is that the provision made for the Foundation Stage is good in all areas. The headteacher has been particularly supportive in allocating training, staffing and resources to develop the provision and the quality of teaching and learning has benefited greatly. The class teacher has worked very hard to dovetail the planning for the Foundation Stage with her planning for Year 1 children. She is aided by teaching assistants who are trained in the early years and there is a high adult-pupil ratio that creates a secure and sensitive learning environment for the youngest children.
57. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is good in all areas of learning. The quality of the teaching promotes good progress and the children are on course to reach at least average standards by the end of the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. Planning is a strength, with clear learning and achievement objectives in all areas of learning. Close observation of how the children are learning ensures that good progress is made. Children respond very positively to the stimulating environment, caring atmosphere, high expectations of good behaviour and well thought out curriculum. They achieve a good start to their school lives, which parents fully appreciate.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. The children make good progress in their personal and social development. Their behaviour in and around the school is very good indeed. They work and play together and co-operate well with each other and adults. This area of development is given a high priority and has a positive impact on learning. Classroom routines are well established and the teacher's expectations are clear. The children choose activities in a sensible, structured way and apply themselves to tasks with enthusiasm. Most of the children are able to dress and undress themselves without too much help and they move around the school in a quiet and ordered manner. They listen carefully and take turns sensibly.
59. The teacher has created a calm, secure environment in which children know that they are valued as individuals in accordance with the school's aims. The relationship between the teacher, other adults and the children is one of trust and respect; qualities that set the tone for this foundation year and entry into statutory schooling. The children concentrate and persevere in their activities, seeking help when needed, and are eager to explore new learning, initiate ideas and solve simple, practical problems. In addition to work, there are many moments for fun and reflection, which strengthen the developing bond within the group.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Children make good progress in this area of learning. On entry to the school, there is a wide variation in children's speaking skills but they make good progress with the very good modelling of speech, praise and encouragement given by the adults who support them. Teaching assistants were seen to praise good manners in speech and talking in complete sentences. This gives the children confidence to offer answers and suggestions. Children talk freely about their homes, friends and about things that interest them. They are attentive throughout storytime and are beginning to predict rhyme and story possibilities. They know about nursery rhyme characters and are able to guess some characteristics of; for example, a Troll.
61. They understand the format of a book and can describe where the title is, where the author's name appears and know that print conveys meaning. They have made good progress in learning some initial sounds of words in the text. The more able children are beginning to see patterns of letters. All the children are developing pencil control through practising writing patterns and letter formation. Reading books are introduced at the appropriate time and the children are keen to share them with visiting adults. They can follow the text with their finger as they read. There is good liaison between the teacher and the parents who support their children very well indeed.
62. Learning support assistants are used effectively in small groups when direct teaching is involved. They are well briefed and assist the teacher in maintaining ongoing assessments of individuals' progress. The programme is well structured to meet the Early Learning Goals and linked to the National Literacy Strategy framework for young children. Classroom displays are rich in language clues intended to reinforce learning and a strong emphasis on language development is evident throughout the whole programme of work; for example, class books are made of children's work on themes such as 'How Do I Feel?' and 'We are Special' and are enjoyed by the children in a comfortable book corner.

Mathematical development

63. The teacher's good awareness of how to develop this area through a structured programme of practical experiences enables children to make good progress. They recognise numbers up to ten and can count forwards and backwards to ten. These skills are practised regularly when singing nursery rhymes such as 'Five Little Ducks' and playing simple board games such as 'Snakes and Ladders'. They can begin to sort coins into different values and use them in role play – pretend shopping. They are beginning to use evaluative language such as 'bigger than', 'smaller than' and some understand the concepts of 'odd' and 'even'.
64. The teacher uses every opportunity to reinforce basic skills through practical experience. She is very enthusiastic and passes on her enthusiasm to the children. Correct mathematical vocabulary is used from the outset and all activities build upon the child's understanding at that time. Assessment techniques are carefully implemented to enable the teacher and the assistant to monitor the progress of each child and structure the work accordingly. The work is well planned and the tasks are appropriate and in line with the recommendations in the National Numeracy Strategy.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. During the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress by learning about their immediate environment and are well prepared for the Programme of Study in the National Curriculum, which commences in Key Stage 1. The children can plant seeds and predict how a variety of conditions will affect their growth. Adults use questions such as 'What do you think will happen when...?' particularly well to draw out children's knowledge and understanding; humorous questions such as, 'Do you think thirsty plants like Coke?' help less confident children to reach an answer. Children have access to a wide range of activities indoors and out with plenty of opportunities to explore and play. At times, children are so well supported by adults that their independence might be limited, but very good management by the teacher ensures that this does not happen. A good range of planned activities, which always start from what they know at the moment, enables the children to expand their experience and knowledge of the world.
66. In information and communication technology, children explore and control switches and link what they are learning in school with their home experience of toys that operate by electricity and also its use in the home. Displays of work also show the work they have been doing on 'Ourselves', which is reflected in the books they have made and knowledge they have gained about how their bodies work.

Physical development

67. Children are making good progress in developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills, both indoors and out. They have access to a sufficient range of large play equipment but lack a fenced play space outside, which inhibits them from independently choosing outdoor activities. The children are mostly able to dress and undress themselves independently. They make good use of the space in the hall when throwing and catching to a partner with balls of varying sizes. Children's eye-to-hand co-ordination is developing well. Their throwing is becoming more controlled and they know where to position their hands to make a catch. Within the classroom, children develop increasing hand control through cutting and gluing and practising their writing patterns and drawing. The teacher has effective control and instructions are clear. Children spontaneously applaud the success of others. They are used to watching good examples of children's work during physical education lessons.

Creative development

68. Good use is made of opportunities to encourage and develop creative skills. Children are stimulated by the attractive use of displays and colour in the classroom and, within the planning, the teacher has devised imaginative ways to broaden their experience. A range of fruit is brought in. Children describe this orally and smell it, then choose which aspects to record. It is drawn using a pencil and then coloured. Observational skills are heightened and the finished products display good development of skills. This is related to work by established artists such as Archimboldo. They are given opportunities for imaginative play by the Fantasy Island theme in the role-play corner, which is also linked well to the book corner. They very much enjoy their time playing and learning in these areas. They have made junk models to accompany the 'Fantasy Island' theme.

ENGLISH

69. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, standards were well below average compared with all schools in reading and writing. Compared with similar schools in 2000, standards were well below average in writing and in the lowest five per cent in the country in reading. Over the past three years, girls have performed less well than boys in reading and writing.
70. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, standards compared with all schools were average. Compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they were below average in English. Compared with schools where pupils entered Key Stage 2 at similar levels of attainment, standards were well above average (A) in English. Since 1997, the school's results have shown an improving trend in line with the national rate of improvement. Over the past three years, girls have performed less well than boys in English. The school's targets for pupils achieving Level 4 or above in 2000 were exceeded and have been suitably increased for 2001.
71. Overall, the findings of the inspection are that standards in English are typical for seven and 11 year olds. This appears to represent a decline in the standards reported at the last inspection in 1997 when all aspects of English were judged to be above average at the end of each key stage. However, the findings of this inspection are that small numbers in year groups, the variety of pupils' attainment and the number of pupils with identified special educational needs make a great difference to the overall percentages achieved. Inspectors agreed with the school's finding that the attainment on entry to the school has dropped over the last four years. Observations showed that a significant number of young pupils have below average communication skills when they enter school. The test results do not, therefore, show a decline in teaching and learning but indicate that these comparisons are not reliable. The school has already identified aspects of pupils' writing as an area of weakness and has made this a priority for development.
72. All pupils achieve well in English as they move through the school and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards compared with their previous attainment and they receive well-targeted support in class and in the Literacy Support Centre. More able pupils also achieve to the best of their ability.
73. In both key stages, standards in speaking and listening are average although many pupils enter the school with low levels of confidence and poor spoken language. This indicates that good progress is made once they are in school. Pupils enjoy listening to and talking about, stories, rhymes and poems as was evident when Class 2 pupils provided missing words for 'Mr. Gumpy's Motor Car'. All pupils listened very attentively and were aware of the importance of taking turns and valuing the contributions of others.
74. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to be active and responsive listeners and talkers. In class, they listen thoughtfully and show good respect for the views of others. More able pupils express their ideas confidently and fluently, responding precisely to the point being made and using a well-developed vocabulary and complex sentences. The opening and plenary part of the literacy lessons give all pupils very good opportunities to answer questions and elaborate on their ideas to the whole class. During the inspection; for example, spoken arguments for and against an issue were developed, in this case, around a newspaper report of a local park being made into a car park.

75. Standards in reading are average at both key stages. Pupils' obvious enjoyment of books is a strength of their learning. At all ages, they like reading the shared text in the literacy hour and read aloud with clear and expressive voices. In Key Stage 1, pupils handle books confidently and take them home regularly to practise their skills. Average pupils read simple texts accurately and with understanding and employ a number of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words although some less able pupils do not always do this automatically. The more able read confidently and with good expression and have strong views about their likes and dislikes in reading.
76. Pupils' interest in and enthusiasm for books develop well through Key Stage 2. In Year 6, they read with fluency and accuracy and evaluate the texts that they read with growing competence. Many give a concise summary of events and discuss characters in some detail. They are all aware of their literacy targets through their focus groups and can explain what they are aiming for in their reading. Research and referencing skills are satisfactorily developed across the key stage and pupils have adequate access to dictionaries and thesauruses.
77. Standards in writing are average at both key stages. Pupils in Year 2 can use sentence grammar to suggest missing words in a story and use commas to make a list. Most pupils can write short sentences with capital letters and full stops. Because they are in a class with Key Stage 2 pupils, more able pupils are able to reach objectives for older age groups; for example, in refining their handwriting and using a broad vocabulary.
78. Pupils in Key Stage 2 show increasing competence across a range of types of writing. By Year 6, pupils write in an appropriate range of forms including newspaper reports, diaries, poetry, reviews and stories. The best writing shows a good command of style and expression. Most pupils organise their writing in a logical sequence and generally show a sound understanding of grammatical structure. There is a lack of sustained imaginative writing from the oldest and most able pupils and this is connected with a lack of sufficient emphasis on pupils' planning, drafting, editing and refining their written work. Pupils do have drafting books but those seen did not show evidence of organising ideas and restructuring but showed a rough copy that had spellings corrected by the teacher. Handwriting and presentation are good.
79. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. In subjects like history, geography and science there is good use of supportive writing frameworks and differentiated recording, which ensure that pupils are applying their skills. Literacy objectives are on display in all classes and are referred to explicitly by teachers during lessons. There is a lack of sustained, imaginative writing, particularly from the more able pupils at the top end of Key Stage 2. This was not seen in English or in other subjects.
80. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good at both key stages. All teachers have supportive relationships with their pupils that create a positive climate for learning and enable pupils to enjoy their work within clear guidelines. Language has a high profile in the school and teachers reinforce this well in class by emphasising precise terms so that pupils become familiar with and understand words such as synonyms, syllables, images and alliteration from an early age. Classrooms are good literacy learning environments where interactive displays and literacy prompts are evident. A particularly good feature of English teaching is the challenge that is provided to pupils of differing ages and abilities within the mixed-age classes; for example, in Class 3, in the opening part of a lesson all pupils are able to discuss the characteristics of sorcerers and recall sorcerers in texts. When they move on to how atmosphere is created by individual writers, younger or less able pupils are quietly supported by the teaching assistant but

are not sufficiently confident to join in. Later in the lesson, during the word work, these pupils are given opportunities to show what they know and are very keen to do so. Good subject knowledge is evident in teachers' clear and lively presentations and confident management of the literacy hour, which ensures an energetic pace and effectively secures pupils' interest and attention. Group work is well planned and differentiated and meeting individual needs with a good level of challenge is another strength of the teaching.

81. The curriculum in English is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well. The policy supports teaching and learning well and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment procedures are good. Pupils have individual targets in literacy to motivate them and give them responsibility for their own learning. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and learning in English and work on display shows that it is used for word-processing and word work (Starspell).
82. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, is experienced and committed and has a realistic view of issues facing the subject and of how to address them. She has used outside consultants to assist in the development of the subject. The school has identified additional time for reading and spelling for older pupils in order to address identified weaknesses. Curricular planning is a strength in English. Individual lesson planning challenges pupils whilst meeting individual needs and ensures that teaching assistants are well managed and focused. Because there is shared teaching of classes 2 and 3, each teacher takes particular strands of the National Literacy Strategy for their lessons. In practice, this works very well and the pupils experience consistently good teaching because the individual teachers are so well organised and briefed. English is systematically and thoroughly planned and taught. The headteacher monitors planning and teaching and is tracking samples of pupils' work. Teaching assistants give good support in group work. Resources in English are satisfactory and the library and classrooms have an appropriate range of books to support research and study skills and to enable pupils of all ages to enjoy their reading.

MATHEMATICS

83. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, compared with all schools and with similar schools, standards were in the lowest five per cent in the country in mathematics. The findings of the inspection are that standards are above average in Year 2, which is similar to the findings of the school's last inspection. The difference is due to the fact that a different group of pupils is involved and that not all aspects of mathematics are tested at the end of the key stage. In addition, the school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive impact on the development of pupils' skills in mathematics throughout the school. The data shows that, over the past three years, girls have performed significantly less well than boys in mathematics.

84. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 2000, standards compared with all schools were average. The findings of the inspection also judge standards to be average. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be above average. The difference is explained by the fact that pupils now enter the school at below average rather than average standards. Compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, standards in the 2000 tests were below average in mathematics. Compared with schools where pupils entered Key Stage 2 at similar levels of attainment, standards were above average in mathematics. Since 1997, the school's results have shown an improving trend in line with the national rate of improvement. Over the past three years, girls have performed significantly less well than boys in mathematics. The school's targets for pupils achieving Level 4 or above in 2000 were exceeded and have been suitably increased for 2001.
85. The findings of the inspection indicate an improving trend in overall attainment in mathematics throughout the school, with no significant difference in attainment between girls and boys. Pupils achieve well from a below average starting point. Pupils with special educational needs, make good progress towards their clearly identified learning targets. This is because of the consistently good teaching, which motivates pupils well.
86. In Year 2, pupils confidently recognise, name and calculate numbers from one to 100 using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils in Year 1 use correct language with which to discuss mathematical activities. They tell the time accurately using the 12 and 24 hour clock, sort two and three-dimensional shapes by their properties and solve simple number problems with increasing confidence. They do this orally during mental work sessions as well as in written form in their workbooks. Pupils in Year 2 develop these skills and work confidently with numbers up to 100. They accurately divide two-dimensional shapes into halves, quarters and eighths. They begin to apply mathematical knowledge to practical situations, when they estimate, measure and check the dimensions of classroom furniture and other large objects in school. Pupils make good links in their learning by using computers effectively to produce graphs when sorting and ordering data.
87. In Year 6, pupils ably extend their previous knowledge and skills to undertake real life problem solving. They work in pairs to fulfil a given brief; for example, booking a holiday for a family of four, in France, departing from a local ferry terminal. The duration is to be two weeks, on a given budget, between certain dates. Pupils of all abilities tackle the problems in a logical manner. They confidently use research skills learned in English to cross-refer between brochures and timetables. They devise efficient systems in order to divide the work into manageable units and amicably delegate tasks to each other to speed up the process, before reporting back to the whole group. Pupils recognise that in order to tackle mathematical problems of this kind, they need to be able to read selectively and skilfully. They scrutinise the small print and disclaimers. This lesson presented a good level of challenge to all groups as the teacher had selected a wide range of holiday destinations and different budgets to challenge the creative problem solving capabilities of pupils of all abilities. One group of higher attainers recognise that there are too many variables to keep in their heads, so decide to take notes whilst checking out alternative solutions. All pupils enjoy the tasks and arrive at suitable solutions to the different briefs. The scrutiny of work shows that pupils are able to convert units of length using metres and centimetres and to construct and interpret simple line graphs.

88. Pupils throughout the school show very positive attitudes to mathematics. Relationships between pupils and teachers, as well as with each other, are exemplary. Pupils are very enthusiastic during mental maths sessions at the start of each lesson. They concentrate well and delight in finding solutions to the brisk questioning.
89. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is consistently good with some very good teaching being observed in Year 1. All teachers have high expectations of their pupils, set appropriate learning tasks to match their individual needs and have good mathematical knowledge and expertise. This helps the pupils to work hard and improve skills within the challenges set. Teachers pace the National Numeracy Strategy lessons well and this keeps pupils focused and extends concentration. Links with homework are well made during lessons, enabling pupils to consolidate their learning and take some responsibility for their own progress. Resources are of good quality and well used and teachers devise their own and use commercially available games to introduce an element of fun, especially in the early stages of Key Stage 1. This gives additional support to those pupils who are still at the pre-reading and early stages of reading development by helping them to understand that numerals, as well as pictures and letters, contain information and convey meaning. The teaching assistants attached to each class make a very positive contribution to the learning needs of all pupils. They are well briefed by class teachers and appropriately used. They are valued highly by the school. Pupils show respect and respond positively to their guidance and direction. Teachers give very good levels of feedback to pupils; they indicate what needs to be done to improve and encourage by praising effort as well as attainment. Assessment is very good. Pupils receive regular informal feedback in lessons as well as more detailed written assessments. The focus scheme and target setting are well implemented and understood by all and this gives pupils tangible goals to achieve and keeps motivation high. The subject co-ordinator has good levels of personal expertise and enthusiasm and has realistic ideas for the further development of standards. Parents are informed in advance of new topics and are well placed to support their children in new developments and homework projects.

SCIENCE

90. In 2000, the teachers' end of Key Stage 1 assessments of the pupils' standards in science were well below average. The findings of this inspection are that standards are above average in Year 2, which is the same finding as that made by the school's 1997 inspection. The difference between the test results and the findings of the inspection is explained by the facts that a different group of pupils is involved and that a very small number of pupils are involved, which means that standards in the end of key stage assessments must be treated very cautiously. At this key stage, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
91. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, standards compared with all schools were average. Compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, they were also average in science. Compared with schools where pupils entered Key Stage 2 at similar levels of attainment, standards were well above average (A) in science. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards are above average. The difference between this finding and last year's end of key stage tests is explained by the fact that the tests do not include investigative science in which the pupils are very strong. The school's last inspection in 1997 also found standards to be above average in Key Stage 2. Since 1997, the school's results have shown an improving trend in line with the national rate of improvement. Over the past

three years, girls have performed less well than boys in science, although no evidence of this was seen during the inspection. All pupils achieve very well at this key stage.

92. The quality of teaching and learning at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. In Year 2, the analysis of work shows that a particular strength in the teaching and learning in science is the way in which all aspects of the subject are taught through investigative work. For example, in their work on life processes, the pupils consider the use of energy by running around the playground and recording how they feel afterwards – "I felt hot and tired!" The teaching was clearly seen to have made good provision for pupils to develop their understanding of scientific processes and their technical vocabulary in work on testing bridge structures. They predict which structure will be the most rigid and show early understanding of the concept of isolating variables by moving the supports under the bridges closer together to give greater strength. The pupils also test changes in materials; for example, by cooking eggs and show early understanding of concepts such as density and solutions. At this key stage, the application of numeracy skills is a relative weakness in the pupils' learning.
93. In a Key Stage 2 lesson investigating the effects of exercise on the body, the progress made from similar work at Key Stage 1 was clearly apparent in the much greater depth and accuracy in which the work was undertaken. The lesson also demonstrated the very valuable contribution the school's teaching assistants make to the progress made by the pupils and the way in which they are organised by the teachers to ensure that pupils of all abilities are given appropriate work. In this lesson, the pupils are clearly shown how to locate and measure their pulse and, as a result, they do this successfully. 'I've found mine! It's bumping like my heart! I've lost it now!' There is then a good discussion of how exercise influences the body. The effective use of questions draws comments such as 'exercise causes you to lose weight' from the pupils. The pupils understand that their pulse rate will increase with exercise. The careful use of questions leads them to extend this understanding to the fact that this is caused by an increased heartbeat. The pupils are then asked to measure their pulse rates, weight and height accurately as a baseline to check for changes after taking exercise. They find this work very stimulating and work hard and with enjoyment. After taking exercise, the results are discussed as a group and also with a partner who has similar characteristics. Good progress is made in this lesson. The analysis of work shows that, although investigative work is strong, there is a comparative weakness in the pupils' abilities to design their own experiments to answer a scientific question.
94. The subject is well managed and has made a good improvement since the school's last OFSTED inspection. There is a good scheme of work, which ensures that pupils do not repeat work at the same level and helps them to make good progress. Good links with other subjects; for example, design and technology, are made. Assessment procedures are strong as the subject is included in the school's 'focus' procedures if necessary and the subject is well resourced. These factors make a significant contribution to the progress made by the pupils. The subject makes a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; for example, through the study of the life cycle. However, the monitoring role of the co-ordinator is not sufficiently developed to provide adequate support to teachers and teaching assistants.

ART AND DESIGN

95. Standards in pupils' work at Key Stage 1 are average and at Key Stage 2 they are above average. Standards have been maintained at Key Stage 1 since the last inspection and at Key Stage 2 they have improved. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
96. In Year 2, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials for drawing and painting including graphite pencils, charcoal, pastels and paints. They also acquire sound modelling and construction techniques for three-dimensional work, using clay, card and papier-mâché as well as simple printmaking techniques. Pupils in Year 1 make close observational drawings of themselves and friends as part of a topic on 'Ourselves'. They carefully consider how to portray and render tonal variations and cast shadows. They begin to link mathematical notions of proportion and accurate measurement to make their work look more representational and less schematic. They also learn about the work of other artists, often from different times and cultures. They consider the work of Archimboldo and try to replicate some of his humorous and ambiguous portraits using fruit and vegetables in place of facial features. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 make well-observed drawings of seashells to support topic work about the seaside. Before drawing from first-hand sources, they carefully note shape, pattern, colour and texture, discussing what they see. They use correct subject language and make visual notes in sketchbooks to practise the best pencil marks for the task. Pupils make thumbnail sketches of their observations and use different kinds of shading techniques to produce tonal effects and textural differences. A few older pupils use hatching and cross-hatching and know the terms. Other pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 work carefully, under the direction of a classroom assistant, to design and make clay plaques, using a tile base. They cut out shapes using seaside motifs, from smaller pieces of clay, representing boats, land, trees and sky. They handle clay with care, roll, cut out and apply their shapes carefully, building into low relief, and apply using appropriate joining techniques. Pupils' achievement as this key stage is satisfactory.
97. In Year 6, pupils have refined and developed skills in representational work. They extend their skills and understanding by making more detailed comparisons with artists such as the French Impressionists. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 focus on the work of Claude Monet, Paul Gauguin and Vincent Van Gogh. They use complicated techniques of scraffito, which artists use to scratch through the surface layer of pigments to reveal other coloured layers underneath. They also use smudging techniques, blending oil pastels to replicate the subtle colour variations in Gauguin's south sea island works. Pupils use short lines and dots of colour to understand better how Van Gogh built up his painting of a starry night-time sky. They make useful comparisons between their own work and that of the artist in order to improve. Pupils demonstrate sensitivity to colour and mood and enjoy learning how to use effects that capture reflections in still water. They do this by working in the style of Monet, using details from his garden paintings of water lilies and the Japanese Bridge. Pupils achieve well at this key stage.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's last inspection at Key Stage 2, but it is an improvement at Key Stage 1. This is because of teachers' good planning, which often forges meaningful links in pupils' learning with other times and cultures. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 made highly decorative masks out of papier-mâché, in the style of the Aztecs. They used feathers, mosaics and 'jewels' such as sequins to lend authenticity. Pupils in Year 5 make cameo paintings of life in Victorian England to show girls selling flowers and boys working as chimney sweeps. Pupils' sketchbooks are not sufficiently used.

Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use materials other than pencils or paste in collections of interesting materials or samples such as postcards, fabric swatches and other useful objects to enrich and inform larger, finished works. Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning. Teachers use a good range of resources and exemplars to support pupils' work but there is little evidence of pupils learning about the rich contribution that women artists have made from all cultures down the centuries.

99. The co-ordinator has sound ideas for improvement in the subject. The policy has been reviewed and new schemes of work have been produced in line with National Curriculum requirements. These have not yet been fully implemented in the school. Little in-service training has been allocated to support teachers' professional development. Resources are in good supply, well maintained and support pupils' learning. The school participates and does well in local art competitions and exhibitions.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. During the inspection, the teaching of design and technology was only observed in one lesson in the Foundation Stage/Year 1 class and during one lesson at Key Stage 2. Judgements in this section of the report are based on the lesson at Key Stage 2, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and the school's planning and records. The evidence indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and reach average standards at Key Stage 1 and above average standards at Key Stage 2. No judgements in this subject were made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
101. Based on the limited evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning at this key stage is satisfactory. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching in this subject by the school's last inspection. In Year 2, the analysis of work showed that pupils suitably create designs and copy them onto plastic canvas using cross-stitch and running stitch. They have also made a model snowman using a single pivot lever. In work related to other subjects, which was a strength at the time of the school's last inspection and remains so now – the pupils have designed a fish tank and included a simple electrical circuit. In work related to religious education, they have designed and made Joseph's multicoloured coat. This work was carefully evaluated by the pupils. In Year 1, pupils weave patterns using wool and different types of threads and ribbon to an appropriate standard and have also made a pop-up toy using a simple hinge mechanism. The analysis of work at this key stage indicated limited use of the development of accuracy in measuring, marking and cutting.

102. The evidence available indicated that the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good. No overall judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 was made by the school's last inspection. In the Year 3 lesson observed during this inspection, the pupils made models using a simple lever mechanism. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject was illustrated by the careful preparation of suitable resources and the way specific skills were taught. Additionally, technical vocabulary; for example, 'pivot', 'lever' and 'linkage' was carefully introduced. Pupils were required to design/draw their models and then to measure, cut, assemble, finish and evaluate them. This was challenging for them and showed the teacher's high expectations of them. The pupils rose to this challenge well. The teacher used a commercial model well to indicate to the pupils the type of object that could be produced. There was a pleasant, relaxed working atmosphere in this lesson. The pupils, who were well supported by the teacher, used their tools and equipment suitably to cut and shape material and to assemble their models. The pupils and the teacher clearly enjoyed their work. The pupils produced good ideas for their models and made good progress in the lesson. The analysis of work at Key Stage 2 indicates that the pupils have undertaken a wide range of varied work with textiles; for example, quilting using Ancient Greek designs. However, they have few opportunities to investigate and evaluate familiar products by disassembling them.
103. The subject is well managed by a committed and knowledgeable co-ordinator. It has made a good improvement since the last inspection. A good scheme of work that ensures sound progression in the pupils' learning, has been in place for the past two years. The subject is well resourced. Design and technology makes a sound contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they learn to appreciate the effects of technology on societies. However, the co-ordinator's role is underdeveloped in terms of monitoring and supporting the work of other teachers and the teaching assistants. Standards are evaluated from photographic evidence and the pupils' own assessment of their work. However, there are no formal whole-school assessment procedures in design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

104. During the inspection, the teaching of geography was only observed in one lesson, which was in the Key Stage 1/Key Stage 2 class. Judgements are based on this lesson, the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and the school's planning and records. The evidence indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and reach average standards at both key stages. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last OFSTED inspection which stated that 'attainment at both key stages is at least sound ... Good progress is made throughout the school.' The 1997 report also drew attention to some above average attainment at Key Stage 2, which is also a finding of this inspection. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
105. Based on the evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning at this key stage is satisfactory. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching in this subject by the school's last inspection. In Year 2, the pupils show satisfactory knowledge of aspects of life in cities, fishing ports and selected areas of the world, such as Australia and Morocco. The written work on cities and fishing ports is identical, which does not sufficiently apply the pupils' literacy skills although there is some individually produced writing on other topics. In Year 1, the pupils have undertaken early map work; for example, of their journey to school and a map of a wood. This work is of an average

standard and shows that the pupils are starting to understand the use of symbols on maps. However, throughout the key stage, map work is not sufficiently systematically developed. Simple weather recording of a suitable standard has also been carried out. Curricular provision has been extended by visits; for example, to a farm.

106. The evidence available indicated that the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. No overall judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 was made by the school's last inspection although teaching was judged to be good in the one lesson seen, which was the same as during this inspection. In the Year 2/3 lesson observed during this inspection, teaching and learning were good. This lesson was an introductory one as the pupils had been taught history for the previous half term. The teacher carefully explored the differences between the subjects with the pupils so that they fully understood them. Their interest is maintained as the class compiles a list of places they have visited. This list is then well used by the teacher to extend the pupils' geographical knowledge as they sort the places into coastal, town and countryside locations. These terms had been previously defined in ways relevant to the pupils and the teacher had suitably extended their geographical vocabulary by introducing words such as 'urban'. Good coloured photographs of the environments discussed were well used to make sure that the pupils understood what they were being taught. The teacher had a quiet and confident manner, which transmitted itself to the pupils so that a purposeful atmosphere in which they worked hard and behaved well existed. Work in groups was well suited to the needs of pupils of all abilities. This helped them to make good progress as did the support of the teacher and the teaching assistants who were particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs. At this key stage, the analysis of work showed that the pupils have a suitable understanding of Dartmouth; however, it also showed too little evidence of fieldwork.
107. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. In view of the suspension of the full National Curriculum requirements in this subject for much of the period since the school was last inspected, it has made a good improvement since that inspection. The co-ordinator has implemented a scheme of work that ensures that pupils do not repeat work in mixed-age group classes and this provides for sound progression in the pupils' learning. Assessment procedures are good as the pupils' progress is assessed during the weeks when it is their turn to be the teacher's focus for assessment. Assessment information is well used to provide work that matches the needs of all pupils. The subject makes a sound contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development as they learn about other areas and societies. However, the co-ordinator's role is underdeveloped in terms of monitoring and supporting the work of other teachers and the teaching assistants. This is illustrated, for example, by the fact that marking consists largely of ticks and praise and is insufficiently developmental. Additionally, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are not sufficiently applied in the subject and it does not make a sufficiently strong contribution to the pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society.

HISTORY

108. During the inspection, the teaching of history was only observed in one lesson, which was at Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on this lesson and on the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and the school's planning and records. The evidence indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and reach average standards at Key Stage 1 and above average standards at Key Stage 2. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last OFSTED inspection at Key Stage 2, but are not as high as the judgements made by the 1997 report at Key Stage 1. This difference is because the full requirements of the National Curriculum have not been statutory in history for a considerable period of the time since the school's last inspection. It is also because the pupils now enter the school at lower levels of attainment. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
109. No lessons in history were observed at Key Stage 1. Based on the analysis of work and other evidence, the quality of teaching and learning at this key stage is satisfactory. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1997 inspection. In Year 2, the pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the aspects of history that they have studied. This includes the Fire of London and Robin Hood. Much of the work on the Fire of London was identical and some pupils with special educational needs had not been able to complete it because it was too difficult. However, other aspects of work on the Fire of London were well matched with pupils' needs. Written work about Robin Hood was individual and showed good application of literacy skills. There was also evidence of a developing understanding of chronology but other aspects of the subject; for example, the use of a range of sources, were underdeveloped. In Year 1, some good work on comparing old with new involving toys, bears and household objects had been carried out. Work on chronology included sequencing events such as cooking and studying family trees.
110. The evidence available indicated that the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. In the Year 4/5 lesson observed, teaching and learning were very good. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last inspection. This lesson dealt with the consequences of the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs. It was very well planned as it allowed the pupils to make progress in most aspects of the subject. Additionally, the work was well matched with the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, which allowed them to make very good progress. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils was shown in a very valuable discussion of the differing ways in which a Spanish and an Aztec artist had represented a meeting between Cortes and Montezuma. This gave the pupils a very clear insight into how and why historical events are given varied interpretations. The teacher's skilful use of questioning developed fully the pupils' understanding of the perceptions of other possible eyewitnesses to this event and other aspects of the Spanish Conquest. The teacher displayed a good grasp of the subject by developing the pupils' understanding of Cortes and Montezuma as leaders and the important part that differences in the weapons available to the Spanish and the Aztecs had played in the conquest. The pupils enjoyed this lesson, were very well motivated and behaved because of the teacher's control and presentation and made very good progress. The analysis of work shows some application of numeracy skills to the subject; for example, block graphs indicating the age of death. However, it also shows that the pupils' research skills are not always fully developed at Key Stage 2.

111. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. In view of the fact that the full National Curriculum requirements in this subject were not statutory for much of the period since the school was last inspected, it has made a good improvement since that inspection. The scheme of work ensures that pupils do not repeat work in mixed-age group classes and provides a very broadly based curriculum and a sound basis for progression in the pupils' learning. Curricular provision is enhanced by visitors to school who have; for example, organised a Victorian Day during which all the children wore the costume of that period. Assessment procedures are good and include those that apply during the school's 'focus' procedures and self-evaluation seen in the pupils' books. Assessment information is well used to provide work that matches the needs of all pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development as they learn; for example, about Ancient Egypt and Victorian Britain. The co-ordinator's role is, however, underdeveloped in terms of monitoring and supporting the work of other teachers and the teaching assistants. This is shown as the marking of the pupils' work is not developmental enough and information and communication technology skills are not sufficiently applied in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. In Year 2, pupils attain above average standards, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have acquired competent keyboard skills that enable them to produce well-written texts on screen to support work in English and religious education. They also generate graphic symbols and patterns for mathematics and use an art program to produce and modify their own images for art. Pupils use the mouse function well; they point, click on and drag items across the screen. They print out work, in progress or completed, into hard copy and save their work to file for the next lesson. Pupils can program a floor robot to respond to simple commands to make it follow a route along the floor to destinations of their own choice.
113. In Year 6, standards are average, which is the same finding as the previous inspection. Pupils confidently use CD-ROM, which enables them to search for and retrieve information. They use pull down menus and select bar and pie chart formats to illustrate mathematical data. Evidence found in samples of pupils' work shows ability to reduce and include illustrations within their own written texts about Victorian England. Some pupils have used a sensor to produce graphs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 program the computer to control accurately a set of traffic lights in the correct sequence. Pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about household items that use microwave and microchip technology in the home and workplace and say how it can make life easier. They use the scanner to relay maps and other images to the computer screen to enable them to modify these to suit their task. So far, only a few have had the opportunity to use digitally produced imagery. The use of electronic mail was not seen during the inspection. The school has the facility for this but it is carefully regulated by teachers and used only under close supervision.
114. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, which is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1997 inspection. This enables pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress and ensures that there are no differences in the standards reached by boys and girls. Teaching sessions are reduced to manageable units of four to six pupils; this allows all pupils to see demonstrations clearly and to know what is expected of them. This organisation also enables pupils to practise individually and develop capability and independence in a secure setting. Lesson planning is detailed and systematically structured to ensure that pupils feel confident with newly-gained skills before progressing

to the next level of competence. Where possible, pupils are encouraged to record achievement by printing out their work. This develops into a body of work showing progress and comes under review in focus week. The contribution made by the very able classroom assistants has a positive impact on pupils' learning development.

115. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard and successfully in order to manage the changes that have taken place and has a clear vision for the further development of the subject. All teachers have benefited from the technical training provided by the computer suppliers but they have not received sufficient in-service training to enhance fully their professional and educational development in the subject. The school's facilities for information and communication technology have improved considerably since the last inspection and the school now complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The purchase of resources needed to fulfil the school's statutory requirements is almost completed. The school's sensible management of small groups of pupils during lesson time ensures that all pupils gain a fair and appropriate share of hands-on experience. In addition, each Thursday, one class in turn has the sole use of the computer suite to enable teachers to make optimum use of allocated time and ensure that good progress is made in pupils' learning.

MUSIC

116. Due to timetabling constraints, only one lesson was seen. Throughout the school, the standard of pupils' singing was average for their ages. In assemblies, pupils, including those with special educational needs in other subject areas, sang hymns with great reverence, modulating their voices well to express clear understanding of the lyrics. Pupils were tuneful, kept good time, demonstrated good levels of rhythm and pitched their voices well. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 enjoy singing rhymes and songs, which teachers choose especially to develop pupils' understanding of number values. They sing such favourites as 'Five Currant Buns in the Baker's Shop' and 'Ten Little Speckled Frogs' delighting in the diminishing numbers as the song progresses. They sing with expression and understanding. This helps them to sustain concentration and not make mistakes. They eagerly await the loud crescendo in response to the teacher's expressions and gestures.
117. In Key Stages 1 and 2 in the lesson seen, pupils attained average standards. The limited evidence base indicates that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve satisfactory standards for their age. They recognise, name and play a variety of percussion instruments, such as the tambourine and drums, when playing a game of 'hot potato'. This enables all pupils to take a turn as performer as well as audience member. All pupils demonstrate well-developed listening skills and enjoy making new sounds for each other. They discuss differences in timing and tonal values, playing faster or slower, louder and more softly as a prelude to composition work based on train journeys, later in the lesson. Pupils perform a spoken poem in the form of a round, using different rhythms very effectively to express 'From a Railway Carriage' by Robert Louis Stevenson. This has been chosen as a favourite from their literacy lesson. Pupils clearly enjoy the rhythms created by the 'ch, ch' sound chanted by one group, whilst the remaining pupils speak the words, using carefully chosen rhythmic metre, becoming louder, softer, faster, slower as the train progresses through the poetic landscape. Pupils listen in hushed concentration to a piece of recorded music, 'The Little Train of Caipira'. Many identify the sound of the wind and whistle, whilst others recognise that the music grows faster as the train gathers speed going downhill. Pupils happily co-operate in producing their own visual, graphic notation in the form of a long picture

showing the train passing through an imaginary landscape. They devise a variety of natural and built features such as the tracks, a bridge and station as well as woodland and animals in order to add colour and texture to their musical composition.

118. The quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is good, which is the same judgement as that made by the school's last inspection. Imaginative ways are devised to focus pupils' attention. They provide practical opportunities for all pupils to participate in performing their own music. A good balance is made between this level of performance and pupils' abilities to analyse critically, recorded music. This helps pupils to develop sound levels of musical vocabulary to aid understanding. Visiting instrumental teachers augment the school's own expertise and this enables those pupils who wish, to learn to play a stringed, wind or keyboard instrument. Teachers take pupils to local performances. A mixed-age group attended the theatre to see 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' whilst pupils in Years 5 and 6 visited a local naval training establishment to hear the band of The Royal Marines, which they enjoyed very much. The school has developed a strong tradition for pupils to sing in the local community. Pupils sing carols and play hand chimes in the local hospital and residential homes. They perform nativity and pantomime productions at Christmas time. Apart from gaining wider musical experience, this enables pupils to develop very good social skills and improve self-confidence with a wider audience.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. During the inspection, one games lesson was observed in each class. Judgements are based on this lesson, discussions with pupils and teachers and the school's planning and records. The evidence indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and reach average standards in games at Key Stage 1 and above average standards at Key Stage 2. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. The school's records indicate that most pupils swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided by the time that they leave the school. There are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
120. In the lessons seen at Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning was good, which is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1997 inspection. A well-planned Year 2 lesson began with suitable warm up activities that the pupils enjoyed. They then practised throwing for distance and showed sound control in spite of very windy weather conditions. The pupils followed the teacher's instructions very carefully. The lesson moved on to extend the pupils' accuracy in throwing as they aimed beanbags at hoops with suitable success. The teacher encouraged the pupils to acknowledge each other's successes and to applaud them, which made a good contribution to their social development. The class was well managed, the pupils worked hard and were well behaved. The lesson ended with a combined running and throwing team game that the pupils took part in with enthusiasm. There was then a suitable period of cooling down, although the effects of exercise on the body were not considered, before the pupils returned to the class in a very orderly manner.
121. In the games lesson seen at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching and learning was very good, which is an improvement on the judgement made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. The lesson began with a good warm up session involving stretching and increasing the pace of activities. This was well conducted by the teacher and enjoyed by the pupils. The purpose of warming up and how this affected the body were well discussed. The teaching of skills was fully detailed in the lesson plan; for example, hitting the ball at the top of the bounce, getting feet into the right position and swinging

the bat properly. A very good example of this planning being put into effect was seen when the teacher carefully explained and demonstrated the need to 'keep your eye on the ball when catching'. The very good use of the plentiful resources ensured that all pupils were able to take part in practising tennis skills with a partner. The pupils showed average levels of ball and racket control but made very good progress. The teacher picked up individual teaching points to help pupils to improve and developed their technical vocabulary for example, 'rally', very well. There was also some evaluation of each other's performance by the pupils but this aspect of their development was not frequent enough or in sufficient depth. The teacher had relaxed and effective control, which caused the pupils to listen carefully, behave very well and to work hard.

122. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Standards have been maintained since the school was last inspected and several initiatives in implementing Top Sport activities have been undertaken. A good and broad scheme of work is in place and the policy for the subject is well established. The subject is well resourced. As at the time of the school's last inspection, there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are organised by staff and parents. The school takes part in a range of competitive activities with other schools; for example, in athletics and Kwik Cricket. Physical education has made a good improvement since the school's 1997 inspection. The co-ordinator's role is, however, underdeveloped in terms of monitoring and supporting the work of other teachers and the teaching assistants.