

INSPECTION REPORT

BOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crediton

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113060

Acting Headteacher: Colin Searle

Reporting inspector: Anne Currie
25429

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th January 2001

Inspection number: 192286

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
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Devon

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: John Dinsdale

Date of previous inspection: 11th March 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bow Community School is a smaller than average primary school for boys and girls aged from four to eleven years old. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been absent through illness for six months. The deputy was the acting headteacher. The school is currently under-subscribed with 133 children on roll. New children join the reception class in either September or January prior to their fifth birthday.

The school is situated in the village of Bow in rural mid-Devon. Most children come from the village or the surrounding area. There is a shortage of larger housing in the area, so families often have to move to find suitable accommodation. Last year five children left the school during the school year. Thirteen per cent of children are eligible for free school meals; this is broadly in line with the national average. Children enter school with a wide spread of ability. It changes from intake to intake. Overall it is average, but about 30 per cent of the children have limited vocabularies. The school assesses 25 children as having special educational needs. The proportion is similar to the national average. The main needs are related to a variety of learning difficulties and hearing and visual impairment. No children have a statement of special educational needs. All children are of white ethnic origin.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with clear strengths. There is a purposeful, happy atmosphere and relationships are very good. Children work enthusiastically and they are making steady and often good gains in learning. By the time they leave the school, children achieve very good standards in English and good standards in mathematics. The quality of teaching is good overall. All staff work together very well as a team. The acting headteacher and the governors are providing good leadership. Their actions are clearly focused on raising standards in teaching and learning. The school has a deficit budget caused partly by the long-term illness of the headteacher and also a fall in pupil numbers. It gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- English and mathematics are taught well from Years 2 to 6; consequently children achieve standards at the end of Year 6 which are above average in mathematics and well above average in English.
- The governing body and the acting headteacher are working well together to introduce improvements that are firmly focused on raising standards.
- Staff create a very good environment for learning. They manage children well and as a result relationships in the school and arrangements for extending children's social, moral and personal development are very good. Children develop enthusiastic attitudes to learning and they behave well.
- The school effectively extends the learning opportunities provided by using resources in the community, especially the talents of parents, and by developing links with local organisations.

What could be improved

- Achievement in information and communication technology across the school, as standards are not as high as they should be.
- Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall for the youngest children, there are weaknesses in the quality and range of learning activities provided.

These areas for improvement have already been recognised by the school and appropriate action is already being taken.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has maintained its good features and made satisfactory improvements in most of the areas for action identified in the previous report. Many of the improvements have been initiated recently. The improvement in the results obtained in national tests at the end of Year 6 has been above the national trend over the last three years. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work to ensure that children's learning is steadily developed. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and they are having a positive impact on standards. Teaching is monitored and teachers' planning and the overall quality of teaching have improved. There is an increased awareness of the need to raise standards in writing, especially for boys, and appropriate strategies have been introduced. Recent improvements have been made in the provision for teaching information and communication technology. There is now an outside area for the youngest children and a variety of wheeled toys provided to extend their physical development. The books provided by the school, for example in the library, have been reviewed and challenging texts are used in literacy sessions to extend the learning of more able children. There has been insufficient progress in providing a curriculum for the youngest children that meets their learning needs. With the current governing body and the acting headteacher the school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			#similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	C	C	A	A
Mathematics	C	C	B	B
Science	E	C	C	C

Key

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

Similar schools selected on the basis of the percentage of children entitled to free school meals.

In 2000, Year 6 children attained standards in English which were well above average compared to similar schools. Results have improved steadily since 1998. The school has set realistic targets for each year group, taking into account children's prior attainment.

Work seen during the inspection indicates that Year 6 children are achieving average standards. Past test results show that this is a weaker cohort than last year. In 2000, Year 2 children attained standards in reading that were below those expected nationally, although the results were an improvement over those for 1999 and 1998. Results in writing and mathematics were average. Inspection evidence indicates an improvement in reading and standards in writing and mathematics are being maintained. This is the first year of the new curriculum for children in reception classes and most children are likely to reach the standards expected by the time they are in Year 1. Children are making good gains in learning in literacy and numeracy in Years 2 to 6.

There is a good level of support for children identified by the school as needing additional help, and they are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Children are achieving well in information and communication technology lessons. They are not reaching the standards expected because of weaknesses in the past. There were inadequacies in the

coverage of the subject, in teachers' subject knowledge and the availability of appropriate equipment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children have good attitudes to school and enjoy learning. They are keen to join in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Children are lively in the playground, but they show care for each other and play together happily. They co-operate well with each other when working in groups in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Children readily take responsibility and work independently. They willingly carry out duties in class and around school. Children respect each other and adults.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average. Children are keen to come to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. During the inspection, 69 per cent of the teaching was good and 25 per cent was satisfactory. Six per cent of teaching (1 lesson out of 16) was unsatisfactory. This was in the reception and Year 1 class where the work was not well matched to children's learning needs. There was, however, a good supportive atmosphere, which helped children, some of whom were very new to school, to settle well. Teaching is consistently good in Years 2 and 6. Teachers have high expectations of children and lessons are stimulating and extend all children's learning well.

Teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in Years 2 to 6. There is a good focus on developing children's spelling. Teachers are giving children a good range of opportunities to write, with an emphasis on activities to stimulate boys' interest.

In numeracy, teachers develop children's mental mathematics skills well and children show competence and confidence in handling numbers. Staff give good additional support to children identified as having difficulties. The morning class arrangements, where children are taught literacy, numeracy and science in year groups, are working well. The classes are small and work is well matched to the learning needs of individuals and groups of children.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of	Satisfactory for reception and Year 1 children with some

the curriculum	shortcomings in the planning for appropriate activities. The curriculum is good in Years 2 to 6. Very good use is made of expertise in the local area to give children a wide range of experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. All children are fully included in the life of the school. Individual education plans are clear and focus on individual learning needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social development is very good. Children clearly understand what is right and what is wrong. The school successfully promotes children's confidence and self-esteem and children are given good opportunities to express their ideas and opinions.
How well the school cares for its children	This is a very caring school. Health and safety and welfare arrangements are good. All adults have a very consistent approach to behaviour management and they help children gain a very clear understanding of what is expected.

The school is very much part of the village. Parents are supportive and many help in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher and senior staff have provided effective leadership and management over the last few months. All staff work together well as a team and support each other. They have willingly taken on extra work to cover for the absence of the headteacher. They have a clear sense of purpose to do their best for the children.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their role well. They have played a significant strategic role in ensuring the smooth running of the school during the absence of the headteacher. Governors are well informed. Many have children in the school and they regularly help in classes.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. In recent months the school has analysed children's achievements and introduced initiatives to bring about improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of the resources allocated to it. Staff are well deployed. The school has a deficit budget and has to look very carefully at any spending decisions. The school is beginning to look at spending decisions and evaluate their effectiveness.

The school has been well managed in the absence of the headteacher. Outside expertise has been obtained to raise staff subject knowledge and confidence in information and communication technology as the absent headteacher is also the subject's co-ordinator. An adviser from the local education authority is also supporting the teacher in the reception and Year 1 class.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school expects their children to work hard. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel that they are not kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • Some parents are critical of the range of activities outside lessons. • Arrangements made for Year 3 children.

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. The weekly open morning gives parents a good opportunity to see what their children are doing and to talk to staff. If this time is not convenient for parents an alternative arrangement is made. There is a range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school, which the inspection team found to be appropriate for the time of year and for a school of this size, although they were mainly aimed at children in Years 3 to 6. The school is aware of parental concerns about the range of activities provided.

Some parents raised concerns about the absence of the headteacher. They were mainly concerned about the impact it was having on the acting headteacher's class, Year 3. Last term the class had several supply teachers. The scrutiny of work from the class indicated that there were shortcomings in the quality of teaching. Some worksheets lacked challenge and some of the work was not sufficiently well matched to the individual learning needs of children, with the same work set for the whole class. However, children made generally satisfactory progress over the term. This term the acting headteacher is taking this class in the morning when he does not have other commitments and the class has the same teacher in the afternoon. Some disruption was inevitable, given the school's limited budget and the fact that the school did not know how long the headteacher was going to be absent. The arrangements the school made were satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

English and mathematics are taught well from Years 2 to 6, consequently children achieve standards at the end of Year 6 which are above average in mathematics and well above average in English.

1. There is good teaching of English and mathematics and this has a positive impact on children's learning. Children make at least good gains in learning as they progress through Years 2 to 6. Children's results in English, at age eleven, are well above average compared to similar schools. In mathematics children achieve results that are above average. Similar schools are selected on the basis of the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals.
2. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being successfully implemented. They result in the steady development of skills, with new work building on what children already know. The co-ordinators and local education authority's advisers have observed teaching and helped teachers gain confidence and refine their approaches.
3. In Years 2 to 6 teaching is good overall in English and mathematics. The consistent strengths include:
 - good lesson planning which clearly shows what children are to learn. Teachers are confident in their use of the national strategies;
 - the year group teaching each morning is effectively helping teachers focus clearly on the learning needs of all children in the smaller classes. The work is well matched to children's needs and there is a good level of interaction between the class teacher and individual children and groups of children, so that they are making good gains in learning in lessons;
 - support staff work well alongside class teachers. Good additional support is given to children recognised as having special educational needs; it is clearly focused on the targets identified in their individual educational plans. Support staff help children make good progress in lessons, by helping children concentrate and giving additional explanations when required. For example, in Year 3 the classroom assistant worked with a group of pupils helping them spell words that contain the 'igh' sound spelt 'igh'. The Additional Literacy Strategy is effectively implemented and it has been extended to support selected children in Years 2 and 5;
 - lessons proceed at a good pace so that children cover a substantial amount of work;
 - teachers develop very good relationships with children and manage them well. As a result children are keen to please and they work hard – their attitude contributes well to their progress;
 - teachers plan an interesting range of work to extend children's skills. This is especially noticeable in the opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. For example, children write letters and publish their views on the school's website on environmental issues. Children use their mathematical skills when they make measurements of weight and length in science and record their findings in graph form;
 - teachers use questions well to assess what children know and to help them express their ideas. They help children clarify their thoughts and deepen their understanding;
 - teachers give clear explanations of what is expected. Children know what they have to do and no time is wasted;
 - group targets are set and clear records are kept to show children's progress and what they have to do next to improve. Teachers are only beginning to share targets with children on a regular basis.
4. About a quarter of the children start school with limited vocabularies. Staff engage children in conversation and respect their ideas. They help them to express their ideas clearly and model correct sentence structures. The youngest children have good opportunities to develop their listening skills when they listen to well-read stories,

but they are sometimes asked to sit still for too long with the Year 1 children. All staff provide good learning opportunities across the curriculum for children to extend their language skills. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and staff steadily introduce and reinforce new vocabulary. For example, in Year 6 in personal, social and health education, the teacher used, and ensured that children understood, terms such as 'controversial' and 'replicate' during their discussion about global warming. Year 3 children learn the words 'translucent', 'transparent' and 'opaque' when they are investigating whether or not certain materials allow light to pass through them. By the time they leave the school, children's speaking and listening skills are good. They confidently express their ideas to visiting adults. Children listen attentively in lessons and as a result their learning is enhanced and no time is wasted. They are given good opportunities to express their opinions and ask questions, which they take well. They listen to each other's views with respect. This was illustrated well in a Year 5 lesson when children confidently discussed plans for a new playground with the developer.

5. By age seven children have a range of strategies to work out words they do not immediately recognise. They have a good understanding of the sounds letters and groups of letters make. Most children in the current Year 2 are reaching Level 2, the standard expected for their age. They still have time to extend their skills before they take the national tests. Last year, although the majority reached Level 2, there was a large proportion who only just achieved it. Fewer children than the national average reached the higher level, Level 3. Children are making good gains in learning in lessons. In a literacy session concentrating on poetry, children learned that poems can have verses and rhymes. They used clues from the poem and the pictures to read unfamiliar words and they knew when they had read the words incorrectly. They also began to express opinions about the poems. Reading skills are effectively extended as children move up the school. Parents give a good level of support at home and also help by hearing reading in school regularly. The range of books available in school has improved since the last inspection. Children choose books from the well-stocked library and they also have a text selected by the class teacher. The texts used in literacy sessions are challenging and offer good opportunities to develop the comprehension skills of the more able.
6. Last year children aged seven reached average standards in writing, although no children attained the higher level, Level 3. A scrutiny of work by the current Year 2 children showed that they had made good progress over the last term, they were coming from a low starting point. The school recognised that there was a need to raise the standard of writing across the school, and especially to improve the attainment of boys. Analysis of children's work showed that there were weaknesses in children's handwriting and spelling. As a result, the school has introduced additional teaching sessions focusing on these areas. They have also invested in a commercial scheme to give guidance and ensure that spelling skills are steadily built up. This is having a positive impact on learning. Children have writing logs and they contain good examples of marking, especially in Year 6, which clearly indicates what children have to do to improve.

Good opportunities are provided for writing across the curriculum. These ensure that children have appropriate experiences to write for a variety of purposes and to express their thoughts in writing. Staff deliberately group boys and girls together so that they can share their ideas and encourage each other. This is successfully raising the attainment of boys. No marked difference was observed in the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection.

7. The successful implementation of the numeracy strategy is having a positive impact on standards in mathematics. There is a strong emphasis on the development of mental mathematics skills, which is successfully increasing children's understanding of numbers. Children enjoy the activities and this is also helping them to learn well.

8. By age seven children have a sound understanding of mathematical vocabulary, the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, symmetry, fractions, such as halves and quarters, and numbers up to and beyond 100. They attain results in National Curriculum tests that are in line with national averages.
9. Children make good progress as they move through the school. At age eleven they achieve results above the national average in national tests. The work set is well focused on their learning needs to help them improve. Analysis of past results indicated that children did less well in problem solving. As a result, there is a good concentration on developing their skills in reading questions and working out the answers. A good lesson was observed in Year 6 where children were setting their own problems for other groups to solve. One group used a book catalogue to set problems, such as how much change from £20 would there be if certain books were bought. Other groups were pricing menus or setting entrance fees for an event. These activities gave good scope for matching the level of the challenge to individual's needs. For example, some children were including discounts and sale prices in their problems.

The governing body and the acting headteacher are working well together to introduce improvements that are firmly focused on raising standards.

10. The acting headteacher and the governors have faced the challenge provided by the long-term illness of the headteacher well. They have worked together to introduce measures that are clearly focused on raising standards of achievement. They have also created an environment where all staff work together very well as a team and staff morale is high. Although there have been inevitable difficulties associated with the headteacher's absence, notably the use of supply teachers in Year 3, the school has worked hard to keep these to a minimum, and more stable arrangements have now been devised.
11. The acting headteacher and the governors have produced an improvement plan that contains appropriate actions, which address the needs identified by the school. The school approached the local education authority with an action plan showing the needs of the school. This included additional financial support to meet the costs of providing cover for the absent headteacher, so that the deputy could be released from his class and another member of staff could take over the role of special educational needs co-ordinator. The plan also highlighted the need for additional outside expertise in information and communication technology to provide the training that the headteacher was going to undertake. All these areas have been successfully addressed. The school is running smoothly and parents are happy with the current management team. The special educational needs provision is well organised with the necessary paperwork up to date. Staff are very happy with the training they have received this term in information and communication technology. The up-to-date computers have been organised so that the programs are easy to access, staff expertise has increased and teachers are enthusiastically looking forward to more training. Additional adviser support has also been used to assist the work in the reception and Year 1 class which is helping to raise awareness of how to plan for the children's very varied needs.
12. Improvements have been made in target setting and clear individual targets are now being provided from Year 2. In most classes children's work is well planned and there is a clear link to their learning needs. The smaller age group classes in English, mathematics and science, each morning, are working successfully in Years 3 to 6. Children are achieving well in these lessons. The English and mathematics co-ordinators and the acting headteacher have monitored work in class. This has helped

pinpoint areas for improvement for individual teachers, which they are addressing, and is helping to raise the quality of teaching further.

13. Members of the governing body come from a variety of backgrounds and they have a range of skills, which they apply to their work as governors. They are well informed about the strengths and areas for improvement in the school. They gain insight into the work of the school, both officially and unofficially. Some governors have formally visited the school. They have had discussions with co-ordinators and observed lessons. Their findings, in the form of a written report, have been relayed to the curriculum committee and then the full governing body. Many governors have children in the school. They are frequent visitors as they help in school, for example, with reading and cooking and they come to the weekly open morning.

Staff create a very good environment for learning. They manage children well and as a result relationships in the school and arrangements for extending children's social, moral and personal development are very good. Children develop enthusiastic attitudes to learning and they behave well.

14. Staff develop very good relationships with pupils and they are very good role models. All teachers create a good learning environment in lessons. They listen carefully to what children have to say and treat their responses with respect. As a result, children learn to relate to each other well. They listen carefully to each other in discussions. They gain confidence and readily share their own ideas and opinions. Children are keen to learn and work hard. This has a positive impact on their learning. They work together successfully in groups and in pairs, for example on the computers. Through their study of subjects, such as geography and religious education, children gain a good insight into the way people in different parts of the world live and they develop an awareness of customs and beliefs from different countries. For example, children in Year 6 learn about tobacco farming in Tanzania and the way the people rely on remote and dirty water holes.
15. There are strengths in the way the teacher in the reception and Year 1 class ensures that new children settle quickly and well. She gives good opportunities for children to learn to relate to each other and to develop their personal and social skills. They are encouraged to share and take turns, for example when they share the buns they have made. The children visit the school with playgroup leaders one afternoon a week in the term or two before they start school. This helps them to become familiar with the classroom, the teacher and school routines. They use the class facilities whilst the other children are in the hall for physical education. They join the class for afternoon play and then a story.
16. Staff manage pupils well in lessons and in the playground. They have a consistent approach and high expectations of behaviour. Children can become lively, but they respond quickly and positively to adults' instructions. Children's moral development is very good. They develop a very clear idea of right and wrong and of what will happen if they break the rules. Parents are rightly happy about this aspect of school life. Staff recognised the need to encourage children to find ways of playing together in the playground, other than football. A mid-day assistant took on the responsibility of introducing new games and the use of apparatus, such as small balls and hoops. The assistants showed their commitment to their job by organising a local disco to raise money to buy additional equipment for children to use in the playground.
17. Staff show great care for all pupils. They get to know them and their families well. Staff are sensitive to individual children's circumstances and tackle difficulties as they

arise. One class teacher showed great sensitivity when children were making their own family trees and she discussed with one child the death of a baby in her family. Staff give good help and guidance to pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs. All children are included in all aspects of the school's work. Spotlight awards are used effectively to acknowledge good work and they also recognise when a pupil has tried particularly hard or been helpful and caring for others.

18. Through the personal, social and health education curriculum (PSHE), and studies in geography related to the local environment, children develop a good awareness of social issues. For example, Year 5 children learn a developer's constraints when setting up a local playground, such as the need to consider what the community wants, safety issues and financial considerations. Year 6 children discuss issues relating to global warming. The school provides good opportunities to extend pupils' personal development and children respond very well to these. Children in all year groups are given responsibilities in class and they undertake them willingly. There is a good family atmosphere in school and the older pupils help to take care of the new children at lunchtime, by playing with them and taking them back to their classroom. The annual residential trip also plays a valuable part in extending children's personal and social development, as does the visit to an outdoor centre.

The school effectively extends the learning opportunities provided by using resources in the community, especially the talents of parents, and by developing links with local organisations.

19. There is a very good partnership with parents and this has a positive impact on children's learning. The questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection and the parents' meeting indicated a high level of satisfaction with the standard of education provided. There were some understandable concerns expressed about the continued absence of the headteacher. Parents give good support to children through homework. Parents are also kept well informed about how their children are progressing. The Friday morning open invitation to parents, to come in and see children's work and to talk to teachers, works well. Children develop pride in their work through sharing what they do with their parents. Twenty parents, including one or two fathers, regularly help in school on a weekly basis. They hear reading, help pupils working on the computers and cook with the younger children. A further 20 parents help from time to time with special events or on school trips. This is a high level of involvement for a small school.

The parents are well briefed as to what they have to do and they effectively extend children's learning. For example, parents helping children in the reception and Year 1 class make buns discussed with them what the ingredients look like and how they changed as they were mixed together. Children from Year 4 were working with a parent learning how to enter data on a spreadsheet and in Year 3 they were working with a father learning how to manipulate text on the computer.

20. The good level of involvement of parents in their children's education is further illustrated by their involvement in two local initiatives, the Investors in Parents project and a programme managed by the Family Education Development Trust, which uses funds from the Department for Education and Employment (DFEE). The former is a project developed through Devon Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), which aims to enable parents to take the lead in developing schemes to improve the partnership between home and school. It has led to the introduction of the home-school contact books, which are working well, and a meeting between staff and parents to discuss the year ahead, the topics to be covered and teachers' expectations. The group has

also run a successful mathematics workshop and organised a meeting for new parents. The latter initiative led to the Budwiser project, which is also having a positive impact on children's learning. The aim of this is to encourage the use of computers within the community, to give information about the school and to develop links with the local secondary school. Two parents, two children and two teachers received website training at the local secondary school. The local facilitator helped them put together a website for the school and also made one for the community. The school's website is now successfully being used by Year 6 children to air their views on the design of the new village playground, so it is playing a significant role in extending children's use of information and communication technology. A 'buddying' system is also being set up so that children in Year 6 have the opportunity to e-mail Year 7 children at the secondary school to find out what the school is like.

21. The school is an integral part of the local community and it makes good use of facilities in the local area to extend the learning opportunities for children and teachers. The school is a member of a group of local schools, which send pupils to the secondary school. The group has regular meetings to discuss professional issues and governors are now also invited to meetings. The good links with the local playgroup ensure that children make a smooth transition into school.

22. The open-air swimming pool in the school grounds was funded through local initiatives and provides a very valuable resource for the school. Without this facility the children would have to be bussed some distance and valuable curriculum time would be lost. Parent volunteers and past pupils, who are now at secondary school, acts as lifeguards during lessons in the summer and local people also use the pool. Fund-raising events are held to obtain the necessary funds to maintain it. The whole community supports school events very generously. The recent Christmas Fayre, for example, raised £800. The community also helps the school in other ways to provide facilities that the school could not afford to buy itself. The local Young Farmers dug the pond in the school environmental area and a nearby garden centre provided the fish.

23. Ministers from local churches regularly take assemblies in school and make a valuable contribution to children's spiritual development. The local developer who is providing a playground for the village discussed the project with Year 5 children. He gave children a good insight into the factors, such as safety and cost, that he has to take into account, raising their understanding significantly of how a business works. Successful visits are also made to local businesses and places of interest. The museum in Exeter is used to enhance the topic on the Tudors and visits to nearby research centres give children the opportunity to see scientists at work and to conduct their own experiments.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Achievement in information and communication technology across the school, as standards are not as high as they should be.

24. Standards are below those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Children are currently making good progress in lessons and in some areas, such as manipulating text, they are achieving appropriate standards, especially if they have access to a computer at home. Children have a good awareness of the wide variety of uses of computers and their benefits. The main weaknesses are in the use of

control and monitoring devices and in presenting data. The school is well aware of the need to improve standards and has taken appropriate steps, but it will take time for children to build up their knowledge and skills to the required levels.

25. The previous report found that children were reaching the expected levels, but more is now expected. There are several reasons for the weaknesses in children's attainment:
- teachers did not have the necessary expertise to teach all areas of the curriculum, especially areas such as control and monitoring and the use of spreadsheets;
 - the school's equipment was out of date and could not support work of the required standard;
 - there was an emphasis on introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this area of the curriculum did not receive sufficient attention;
 - there was no clear scheme of work to ensure that the whole of the curriculum was covered, with new skills and knowledge steadily introduced to build on what children already knew;
 - teachers did not set aside enough time to teach new skills and they did not give sufficient opportunities for children to extend their skills by using information and communication technology in other subjects.
26. The school clearly identified what it needed to do to improve. The headteacher, who is the co-ordinator, undertook training so that he could give support and guidance to teachers. The school reacted quickly to his absence and found a colleague who has visited the school and given training to teachers, worked with children and set up new equipment. Recent initiatives, which account for the current good gains in knowledge and understanding in lessons are:
- increased teachers' subject knowledge. Teachers have gained confidence. They are excited by what they have learnt and are keen to share their new knowledge with the children;
 - new equipment has been purchased in the last year and organised in a similar way throughout the school, so that children and teachers become familiar with it;
 - teachers now allocate some time to teaching specific skills and giving children the opportunity to practise what they have learnt;
 - teachers are beginning to link the use of computers to work in other subjects. For example, the teacher in Year 4 demonstrated how to use the Internet and 'Ask Jeeves for Kids' to research topics related to recycling. There was good emphasis on developing essential research skills, such as identifying keywords and scanning the information obtained to find out if it is relevant. The teacher in Year 2 used pictures taken by the digital camera and stored on the computer to provide a focal point for children's family trees;
 - the school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work which ensures that all areas of the curriculum are covered and that skills are steadily developed.
27. It will take time for children to develop the required skills as they have to make up for the lack of opportunities in the past, but the school is making good progress in addressing past shortcomings. However, there are no formal assessment procedures in place to give teachers a clear record of children's skills. Teachers are enthusiastic about their work and they are helped by a good level of computer ownership amongst the children, which means that many children have confidence and skills that they are keen to share with others. Children work together well in pairs.

Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall for the youngest children, there are weaknesses in the quality and range of learning activities provided.

28. Children enter school in either September or January prior to their fifth birthday and they are in a class of mixed reception and Year 1 children. They attend part-time for the first two weeks and then full-time. At the time of the inspection, the new children were still only attending the morning session. The previous report highlighted weaknesses in the provision for the youngest children in the school. Since then there have been some improvements. There is now a secure outside play area, which is equipped with wheeled toys that provide good opportunities for co-operative play and that extend children's physical skills. The other issue, relating to ensuring that the work is well matched to the needs and level of attainment of the children, has not been satisfactorily addressed.
29. A new curriculum was introduced in September 2000, the Foundation Curriculum, for children in reception classes. It reinforces the need to allow young children to learn through play and to make their own choices about what they are going to use. The activities provided by the school do not give enough opportunities for children to undertake practical tasks. For example, when they were learning to write the number three, there were insufficient opportunities for them to experience making groups of three objects. Children do not have enough access to paint, glue and construction material. They are also required to sit for quite long periods with the Year 1 children, for example in a mathematics lesson. The activities, counting to 100 and back to 1 from 20, had little relevance to their needs.
30. There are also shortcomings in the curriculum provided for Year 1 children and the older and more able reception children. Planning is brief and does not take sufficient account of the varying abilities within the class. There is a lack of detailed assessments to give the necessary information to ensure that work meets children's individual learning needs. As a result, some of the more able children are not sufficiently challenged and they do not achieve as well as they could. Some children who require additional reinforcement do not receive the help they need. Many activities are too formal and consist of filling in worksheets, when children still need practical activities to reinforce their learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

31. To improve the quality of education further the headteacher, governors and staff should:
 - (1) raise standards in information and communication technology to the levels expected by the end of Year 6 by:
 - extending teacher's subject knowledge further to cover the whole curriculum, especially in the use of control and monitoring equipment and data handling;
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring that enough time is spent on the subject and that all areas are covered in sufficient depth;
 - extending the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum especially in mathematics and science. This will further enhance the learning in these subjects and also give additional opportunities for children to practise their skills and use their knowledge in a variety of settings;
 - developing assessment procedures to show what children know and what they need to do next.
 - (2) improve the learning opportunities for the children in reception and Year 1 by:

- giving children, especially those in reception, more activities which allow them to learn through well-planned practical tasks which have specific learning objectives;
- allowing children to make choices for themselves;
- making more detailed assessments of what individual children know and understand and identifying what they need to do next;
- improving planning, so that the work set clearly matches children's learning needs.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

16

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

18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	69	25	6	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)

133

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

18

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

0

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

25

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

9

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

5

Attendance 1999/2000

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year		2000	*	*	20
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*	
	Girls	*	*	*	
	Total	18	16	19	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (64)	80 (55)	95 (95)	
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*	
	Girls	*	*	*	
	Total	16	15	11	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (64)	75 (82)	55 (50)	
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)	

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

*Numbers 10 or less are omitted from the tables.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year		2000	*	*	18
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*	
	Girls	*	*	*	
	Total	16	15	16	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (65)	83 (70)	89 (85)	
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*	
	Girls	*	*	*	
	Total	16	15	16	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (70)	83 (70)	89 (95)	
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)	

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

*Numbers 10 or less are omitted from the tables.

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	133
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)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	297535
Total expenditure	305160
Expenditure per pupil	2261
Balance brought forward from previous year	-7467
Balance carried forward to next year	-15092

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

124

Number of questionnaires returned

44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	50	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	68	2	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	52	2	5	5
The teaching is good.	59	32	5	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	20	5	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	14	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	59	34	2	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	43	36	7	2	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	41	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	48	14	7	11

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents expressed concerns about the impact the continuing absence of the headteacher was having on the school.