

INSPECTION REPORT

St Helen's C of E Primary School

Abbotsham, Bideford

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113446

Headteacher: Mrs K Baker

Reporting inspector: Dr C Lee
21854

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 3 May 2001

Inspection number: 192548

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Abbotsham
Bideford
Devon

Postcode: EX39 5AP

Telephone number: 01237 475276

Fax number: 01237 475276

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs C Burnside

Date of previous inspection: 10 – 13 March 1997

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21854	Dr C Lee	Registered inspector	English Art and design Information and communication technology Music Physical education	Characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
9999	Mrs R Orme	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils The school's partnership with parents
20645	Ms R Webber	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs Equal opportunities Foundation Stage	The quality of the curricular and other learning opportunities offered to pupils

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Ltd
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Helen's C of E Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. In reception to Year 6 there are 135 pupils on roll, 64 boys and 71 girls. At the time of the inspection, four children were under five years of age. Numbers have increased since the last inspection when there were 111 pupils at the school and the rising numbers reflect the growing popularity of the school. During the course of the last school year, 18 pupils joined the school after the usual time of admission and six left. Pupils are from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds that are average overall. One pupil is from a minority ethnic group and no pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is 10.4 per cent, is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and this, at 0.7 per cent, is also below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, currently ten per cent, is below average. Children's attainment on entry to the reception year can vary from year to year due to the small numbers involved. However, a baseline assessment carried out shortly after children start at the school indicates that the attainment on entry of current reception children is average overall. Religious education and collective worship have been inspected separately by a Diocesan team.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Helen's is an effective school where pupils' achievements are at least in line with what is indicated by their previous attainment. Standards in end of key stage national tests reflect the generally small numbers of pupils but often very wide ability ranges in year groups. In 2000 the test results for eleven-year-olds were average in English but well below average in mathematics and science. With 40 per cent of the year group having special educational needs, the pupils actually did well in relation to their capabilities. By comparison, the standards of pupils now approaching the end of Key Stage 2 show improvement. Their work is average overall in English, with reading being above average, and below average in mathematics and science. They also achieve standards in art and design and design technology that are above expectations. All pupils have very good attitudes to school and are very eager to learn. Pupils' sound achievements and progress are the result of good teaching and good leadership and management. Despite many staff changes, the school has achieved good improvement since the last inspection, and is providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school
- By the age of eleven, pupils' standards in art and design and design and technology are above expectations
- The more able pupils achieve high standards in all areas of learning
- Pupils' personal development is very good and, in particular, relationships between pupils of different ages are very good
- Consistently good teaching and learning occurs throughout the school
- There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress through assessment of their learning and the setting of short-term targets
- Good leadership and management and the support of a very good governing body provide a strong foundation for further school improvement

What could be improved

- Although improving, the standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in mathematics and science are not high enough
- Music provision for Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory
- Teachers' planning is not consistent in the identification of the specific learning to be achieved by different groups of pupils in lessons

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 achieved good improvement overall since the last inspection in March 1997. This is especially commendable when the extensive range of key issues arising from that inspection have had to be addressed by a small, mostly new staff. All key issues have been rectified successfully. There has been very good improvement in the development and use of procedures for assessment of pupils' learning. Good improvement has occurred in the detail and usefulness of school development planning. Other weaknesses, relating to compliance issues, curriculum development, planning and management, all show satisfactory improvement. Beyond the key issues from the last inspection, other aspects of the school's work show improvement. Standards of eleven-year-olds in information and communication technology and design and technology show good improvement. Provision for the more able pupils, the quality of teaching, leadership and management, the effectiveness of the governing body and the now excellent school administration are all significant improvements. Thorough procedures for self-evaluation have been developed by the teaching staff and these enable the school to identify comparative weaknesses. The school thus has a good capacity for further improvement.

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	A	C	C	C
mathematics	D	E	E	E
science	E	D	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The results in 2000 reflect the characteristics of the group of pupils involved. A combination of factors, including the number with specific learning difficulties, contributed to the above results. In comparison with what was expected of the pupils concerned, their achievement was satisfactory as they reached the targets that had been set for them in English and mathematics. When the years from 1996 onwards are considered, the school's results have not kept up with the rise that has occurred nationally. However, where small numbers of pupils are involved, as at St Helen's, results and trends do have to be treated with some caution. The school predicts what pupils should achieve in the national tests and sets realistically challenging targets for them. The current Year 6 pupils have been set higher

targets than their immediate predecessors but they are in line to achieve these targets when they take the national tests in May 2001. The standards of work now being achieved are matching the national average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Standards are above average in art and design and design and technology by the end of Key Stage 2 at age eleven. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations.

In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, results were well below average in reading and very low in writing and mathematics. This was significant under-performance by these pupils who, when given similar tests shortly after the national tests, achieved much higher levels that matched national averages. Now that these pupils are in Year 3, they continue to show that their true attainment is in line with average national standards. The current Year 2 pupils are also achieving well. These pupils, who are approaching the end of Key Stage 1, are achieving average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Their standards in all other subjects match expectations. By the age of five, children's standards are meeting expectations for their age in all areas of learning except their personal and social development, in which they exceed expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good, pupils enjoy coming to school and are very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, pupils conduct themselves well both in class and around the school. In the playground, although play is sometimes boisterous, pupils generally behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, contributing to the very good overall personal development. Older pupils show very good concern for the care and welfare of younger pupils.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above national rates and the amount of unauthorised absence is much less than in most schools.

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 the inspection, all lessons seen were at least satisfactory, 53 per cent was good and a further 15 per cent very good. The percentage of very good teaching has risen since the last inspection. The teaching of pupils at the Foundation Stage is consistently strong with the teacher meeting very successfully the differing requirements of reception and Year 1 pupils. This is achieved through good planning, very good management of the class and good all-round knowledge and understanding of how children learn. All teachers work very well with support staff and use a wide range of resources that stimulate pupils' learning very

successfully. English is taught well overall at Key Stages 1 and 2 and the basic skills of literacy are consolidated well across the whole curriculum. The teaching of basic numeracy skills and mathematics as a whole is satisfactory. Teaching is generally matched well to the needs of pupils of all abilities with particularly good provision for more able pupils that enables them to achieve very good standards. Good teaching of basic skills in most subjects prepares pupils well for their future learning. All teachers constantly assess what pupils have learned and this also is used very well for planning of the next stages in learning. At all stages, pupils work hard and their very good pace of working results in production of a good volume of work in lessons and over time. They maintain good levels of concentration and interest in their work despite having to work in cramped conditions.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	At the Foundation Stage and at Key Stages 1 and 2 the school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities through as broad and balanced a curriculum as is possible in the severely limiting physical environment of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory overall and the Code of Practice is implemented fully. There is early identification, good liaison with parents and regular review of pupils' progress towards the specific targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with strong emphasis and very good provision for moral and social development that encourages respect for others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community providing very good support and guidance and attending well to all aspects of pupils' welfare. Very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are used well to plan their future work.

The school works hard to develop links with parents and is involving them well in their children's education. The group of parents who voluntarily and regularly assist in classes have a very good impact on the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher leads the school well with good support from the key stage co-ordinators. As subject co-ordinators, all teachers carry out their management responsibilities well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The provision of constructive guidance and a very clear vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses ensure very good fulfilment of responsibilities.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Good self-evaluation procedures enable the school to identify priorities, set itself targets and pursue effective courses of action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good use of physical and human resources and very efficient management of the limited finances available.

Staffing levels are good, learning resources are satisfactory overall but the school's accommodation and facilities are poor and have an adverse effect on educational provision. The school applies the principles of best value well, challenging itself and securing good value for money in the services and resources that it acquires.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Children's good progress • The good standard of teaching • How the school deals with their questions or problems • The school has high expectations of its pupils • Good leadership and management • How children are helped to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework set for pupils • The range of activities outside lessons • The information provided about their children's progress • The way in which the school works with parents

Inspectors endorse all the positive views of parents and, in the inspection team's judgement, parental concerns are unfounded. The type and amount of homework set for pupils are suitable. There are less activities outside lessons than at many primary schools but organisation of such activities is dependent on teachers having time to volunteer to run them. Staff at the school have excessive workloads due to their small number and the wide-ranging responsibilities held by each. Parental wishes for more extra-curricular activities are understandable but inspectors cannot endorse their concern. The arrangements for informing parents of their children's progress compare well with many other schools and parents have many informal and formal occasions for consulting teachers. This, together with the approachability of the staff that is considered a strength by the majority of parents, leads inspectors to the conclusion that there is a very close working relationship with the overwhelming majority of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment is assessed by a formal, baseline assessment when they enter reception. This is shown to be average overall although in the past it has fluctuated and some of the year groups in the school entered with above average attainment levels. By the age of five, the current reception children are exceeding the expectations of their age in their personal and social development. They achieve the expectations in all other areas of learning covered by the new national Foundation Stage curriculum. Children are therefore making satisfactory overall progress during their time in the Foundation Stage.
2. The school's results in National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds have fluctuated during the past four years but the pattern is the same in all tests. A fall in 1997 was followed by good improvements in 1998 and 1999 but a fall in 2000. These fluctuations reflect the variations in attainment when pupils start at the school. It should also be noted that where numbers are small, as at St Helen's, results do have to be treated with some caution. Compared with both all other schools and with similar schools, pupils' results were well below average in reading and very low in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment of science showed standards to be average. The percentages of pupils who reached the higher than expected Level 3 in the tests and the science assessment were below average in reading and writing, well below average in mathematics and above average in science. Compared with similar schools, the Level 3 percentages were below average in reading, well below average in writing, very low in mathematics and above average in science. However, the school's concern with these results led to a very thorough investigation as they fell well short of carefully formulated predictions. There is strong evidence that this group of pupils under-performed very considerably in the 2000 tests. The data from tests taken shortly after the national tests indicates that a truer picture of their standards is one that places them much closer to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
3. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds, results have fluctuated from year to year. This is largely the result of variations between each successive year group, and years when results have fallen have tended to reflect the higher numbers of pupils with learning difficulties in that particular year. This was one of the factors present in the group who took the tests in 2000. Over time results have generally not kept pace with the improvement that has occurred nationally. Compared with both the national averages and the averages for similar schools for 2000, the school's results were average in English and below average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the tests was well above average in English but below average in mathematics and science when compared with both all schools and similar schools.
4. Annual targets are set by the governing body who anticipate the percentages of pupils who are expected to achieve Level 4 or above in the English and mathematics tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In conjunction with the local authority, the school makes predictions based on pupils' performances in tests taken when they are younger. The governing body considers these predictions and then sets the targets. In 2000, the targets were achieved and this represents satisfactory achievement by the pupils concerned. Realistic targets have been set for the current Year 6 pupils, who will take the tests in 2001, and they are in line to achieve these targets.

5. The school has introduced several strategies for improving pupils' performance in the national tests, as well as their achievement overall. These include grouping pupils aged seven to eleven by ability for English and mathematics, grouping by age for science and the use of the specialist expertise of the subject co-ordinators with upper ability groups. These initiatives are starting to raise the overall quality of teaching and levels of pupils' achievement in mathematics and science.
6. Seven-year-old pupils, who are approaching the end of Key Stage 1, are achieving above average standards in reading and average standards in writing, mathematics and science. Eleven-year-olds similarly are above average in reading and average in writing but below average in mathematics and science. The latter, although improved on last year, remain below national averages as a result of weaknesses in the teaching of these subjects when these pupils were younger. Compared with the last inspection, reading standards have improved at seven and eleven and writing standards have been maintained. At seven, mathematics and science remain the same but, at age eleven, standards in these subjects have fallen from average to below average.
7. In the other subjects of the curriculum all pupils are maintaining satisfactory, and sometimes good, levels of achievement and standards are generally in line with the age-expectations in each subject by the ages of seven and eleven. By the age of eleven pupils show two particular strengths and these are in art and design and design and technology where standards exceed expectations. Additionally, at the age of seven pupils' standards in music exceed expectations for the age. There has been very good improvement in design and technology since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. Information and communication technology also shows improvement throughout the school, having progressed from below expectations in 1997 to meeting expectations now. These improvements are due to the good work of the subject co-ordinators in developing the planning of what is taught and the good teaching. In the case of information and communication technology the recent introduction of specialist support staff is having a significant impact on standards. In collaboration with class teachers and in response to their planning he is delivering a very good range of learning opportunities that is very quickly raising the skill levels of all pupils. A similar arrangement for art and design where a subject specialist is employed on a part-time basis has raised standards at age eleven from in line with expectations to above. In all other subjects, the standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained although this inspection has no evidence of standards in music by the age of eleven.
8. In relation to their abilities, pupils of all ages are generally showing satisfactory levels of achievement in most subjects and in some year groups, notably Years 3 and 4, they are achieving better than earlier indications of their attainment suggest. There are some variations between different groups. Pupils with special educational needs, for example, achieve satisfactorily in relation to their abilities. They approach their work with confidence due to the good levels of support they receive within the school. They progress steadily towards achieving the targets for learning in their individual education plans. These targets are clear, appropriate to pupils' needs and are reviewed regularly. The more able pupils are achieving at least the standards that they are capable of and in some aspects of their work they are exceeding what can reasonably be expected of them. This is the case in Year 4, where more able mathematicians are achieving standards that are well above average for the age. Similarly, the poetry and other creative writing of some of the more able pupils in Year 6 is of a very high standard. These examples are due to the very high expectations of teachers and the level of challenge that is presented to these pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils come to school with great enthusiasm to take part in all that is on offer. Almost all parents report that their child likes school. Pupils are interested in what they learn and they are happy to discuss what they have found out. They are keen to contribute to discussions in lessons. Good concentration and a purposeful working atmosphere are features of many lessons.
10. Pupils who have special educational needs are well integrated into school life and show interest and concentration while working. Teachers value the work and contributions that special educational needs pupils make in lessons; this builds the pupils' self-esteem effectively and pupils are confident to join in all school activities.
11. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at the village playground is good. Nearly 90 per cent of parents agree that behaviour is good. There have been no exclusions of pupils during the past school year. This good behaviour is the direct result of the very good behaviour management policy and its consistent use. Good behaviour makes a positive contribution to the progress made in lessons. The challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils is handled effectively and consistently by all staff. Rare instances of oppressive behaviour are carefully resolved by staff.
12. Pupils' personal development is very good, and nearly all parents report that the school is helping their child to become more mature. Pupils have great respect for the feelings and beliefs of other people and they reflect very well on the impact of their actions on others. For example, pupils in a Year 5/6 personal, social and health education lesson discussed very sensitively the things that made them angry. Older pupils look after the younger ones very conscientiously and with obvious care on visits to the church for assembly and to the village playground for recreation periods. They look out for younger pupils during dinner-time. Older pupils exercise very good responsibility, and they are willing to use initiative as, for example, in organising their contribution to community activities such as the Village Fair.
13. The very good relationships are a strong feature of the school. The school has a positive 'family' feel and a strong ethos of mutual care. 'Family group time', when pupils start each week in a group composed of pupils from each year group, makes an effective contribution to this. This is a good opportunity for pupils to learn co-operative skills and for older pupils to consider the needs of younger ones. This arrangement also forms the foundation to the work of the school council, where Year 6 pupils represent the family group to which they belong.
14. Levels of attendance and punctuality are good, and broadly in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory. Fifteen per cent of teaching is very good, 53 per cent is good, 32 per cent is satisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and this is an improvement compared with the last inspection as is the greater proportion of very good teaching.
16. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and enables the children to make good progress in the time they are in the reception year. Even though

the youngest children are in a mixed class with Year 1 pupils, through very good organisation and management the children are frequently taught in their own age group. The teacher has a good understanding of the new Foundation Stage and her very good planning results in the provision of activities that ensure the children learn through lively, practical experiences wherever possible, even when the cramped working conditions and limited facilities make this difficult. Support staff and volunteers are used very well. They are thoroughly briefed on each activity's purpose and their good quality of interaction with the children has good impact on learning. Individual children are carefully assessed and activities are well matched to individual needs. Relationships are very good and the children benefit from the very well-established routines.

17. Teaching is good overall at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Good teaching is particularly evident throughout the school in English. There is good teaching of music at Key Stage 1 and, at Key Stage 2, of mathematics, science and design and technology and this contributes well to the progress that pupils make in their learning in these subjects.
18. All teachers create a purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils respond very well to teachers and other adults and work conscientiously and co-operatively. This is particularly evident when pupils, from reception onwards, are expected to work without direct supervision. Pupils respond very well to the independence that they have at these times. They maintain very good levels of interest in their work and show commendable maturity in their attitudes. They settle to work quickly, work at a good pace and achieve good productivity. The relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom with pupils are good and teachers make very good use of support staff to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils. Support staff are briefed thoroughly and the quality of their guidance to pupils is good. These staff and volunteers have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work.
19. In the best teaching, lessons are carefully prepared and resources are used very well to aid pupils' learning. Teachers question their pupils in a purposeful manner to consolidate pupils' understanding and extend their learning. There is a brisk pace to very good lessons and work is matched carefully to pupils' individual needs and abilities. All these characteristics were evident in the very good teaching of a literacy lesson with the upper ability group in Key Stage 2. In preparation for writing a book of poems for Key Stage 1, pupils analysed a sample of poems provided by the teacher in order to identify different styles of writing and the use of metaphors and similes. The teacher adjusted the activities so that they were carefully matched to levels of prior attainment and communicated high but realistic expectations. Pupils responded very well to the demands made of them. All pupils were challenged sufficiently by their work and made good progress in their learning.
20. Teachers' subject knowledge is good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall at Key Stages 1 and 2. Good use is made of specialist expertise in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and design. This expertise is having a good impact on pupils' learning throughout Key Stage 2 in particular. The music co-ordinator has a very good level of subject expertise but this is currently benefiting Key Stage 1 pupils only.
21. The teaching of basic literacy skills in both key stages is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy very effectively by providing a good range of activities that are matched well to the needs of groups of pupils of different abilities. Teachers are successful at using lessons in subjects other than English to develop

pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. This is particularly evident in many lessons at Key Stage 2 where pupils' work contributes well to their overall progress in the basic skills of English.

22. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented satisfactorily overall. Teachers are growing in confidence and previous weaknesses in their subject expertise are being eradicated by training and the guidance of the new co-ordinator. In the best mathematics teaching, number work is strongly promoted and this is having a positive effect on standards.
23. Grouping pupils by ability for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 ensures that the needs of special educational needs pupils are met well. The teacher responsible for special educational needs teaches these pupils very effectively during the literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are regularly assessed against their learning targets and the teacher uses these assessments very effectively to set new targets and plan future work. The special educational needs teacher takes on the responsibility of writing the individual education plans (IEP's) for pupils alongside the class teacher and learning targets are sufficiently precise. Although the special educational needs teacher uses the IEP's effectively to plan work in English and mathematics lessons for pupils with special educational needs, class teachers do not sufficiently refer to them when planning work in other subjects across the curriculum, and teachers' short-term planning does not specifically identify planning for special educational needs pupils. Support assistants interact well with special educational needs pupils and give good levels of guidance in order to support pupils' learning across the school. Teachers manage those pupils who have behavioural targets well and use support assistants effectively to monitor their progress against their behavioural targets.
24. Teachers' provision for more able pupils is good and reflects the high expectations that teachers have of these pupils. There is not always sufficient detail in teachers' planning of the particular learning to be achieved by different groups of pupils. Thus, as has been explained, while the needs of Key Stage 2 pupils with special educational needs are met well in English and mathematics lessons because the pupils are always taught by the special educational needs co-ordinator, there is more variable provision in other lessons. It is here that the lack of detail about the learning to be achieved is most evident. Where teaching is good, the teacher not only identifies precisely what is to be learned in the lesson but displays this on the board, shares it with pupils and re-visits it during the lesson. Here, there is good attention to the planning and provision for pupils with special educational needs. Many otherwise satisfactory lessons do not adopt this approach and pupils' learning is satisfactory only because they themselves work vigilantly towards the specific targets that they have on their individual target cards.
25. The target cards that record the precise literacy and numeracy skills that individual pupils need to work towards are the product of teachers' very good use of assessment. This combines careful scrutiny of pupils' work by both the class teacher and, on other occasions, by staff in key stage or whole-school groups, analysis of pupils' performance in regular tests, and discussion with pupils about what they need to work towards improving. Such discussion compensates for some of the variability in marking. For example, pupils' learning in English is assisted well by the high quality of teachers' marking. This is detailed and provides pupils not only with confirmation of good features of their work but also indicates what should be worked on for further improvement. There is far more variation, between teacher and between subjects, in other marking. In mathematics, for example, the provision of written guidance on what pupils should do to improve is very inconsistent. However, despite the inconsistencies between teachers, in reference to learning intentions of lesson activities and in marking,

the overall effect of assessment and guidance to pupils is a situation at Key Stages 1 and 2 where pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning.

26. All pupils' learning is positively influenced by the intellectual and physical effort that they put into achieving as well as they can from the experiences that are provided for them. Key Stage 1 pupils show particularly good levels of interest in all their learning activities and, by maintaining good levels of concentration, they make good progress in lessons as well as over time. When encouraged to work independently without constant attention and guidance from the teacher, pupils respond very well despite being in very cramped conditions in most classrooms.
27. The use of homework at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. All pupils have practice at the basic skills of literacy and numeracy that consolidates well their learning in lessons. Projects set for older Key Stage 2 pupils challenge them to produce significant pieces of work in a variety of subjects. Pupils' research skills are positively enhanced by these opportunities and this compensates for the severe restrictions of the accommodation that prevent the provision of opportunities for pupils to work quietly away from their classrooms either individually or in small groups.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory. The curriculum is generally well balanced and meets the legal requirements of the National Curriculum and the Diocesan agreed syllabus for religious education. However, the organisation of the teaching of music and geography in blocks of time throughout the year does restrict the development of key skills and concepts in a progressive manner, particularly in music. The school's policy for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education is very good and is a strength of the school. This aspect of learning is particularly well planned, structured and organised and is promoted very effectively through various activities such as family groups and circle time and aspects of the science curriculum. Appropriate attention is also given to sex education and drugs misuse. Equal opportunity is strongly promoted by the school with careful attention being paid to the educational inclusion of all pupils in all areas of the curriculum. All pupils thus have equal access to the curriculum.
29. Since the last inspection the school has implemented appropriate policies for all subjects and curriculum planning in subjects is now satisfactory. Long-term planning ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered except the statutory programme of study for music at Key Stage 2. Medium-term planning is effective overall but is still under development. The school is trialing guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in order to inform teachers' planning in subjects and intends to evaluate after a year their effectiveness. Planning in history and geography has recently been reviewed by the co-ordinator and a new scheme of work that ensures skills are taught in a progressive way is soon to be implemented. Teachers' short-term planning does not always sufficiently identify precise learning objectives for different groups of pupils.
30. The provision and curriculum planning for pupils in the Foundation Stage (reception) is good. Planning is detailed and clearly identifies precise learning objectives in all the appropriate areas of learning for children of this age and this leads well into the National Curriculum. Children are effectively introduced to the organisation and structure of the literacy and numeracy hours in readiness for starting Key Stage 1.

31. The school has effectively implemented both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum. For example, in design and technology pupils measure accurately when designing to scale and make graphs on the computer to show their favourite fillings for a sandwich; however there are too few planned opportunities to develop literacy skills across the curriculum.
32. Grouping Key Stage 2 pupils by ability for English and mathematics is effective as it ensures that planned activities are well matched to the needs of pupils in relation to their prior attainment and provides suitable challenge in order for them to make better gains in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs benefit well from such arrangements. For example, this strategy allows pupils to be taught effectively by the school's specialist teacher for special educational needs. Targets on individual education plans are used well to inform planning in English and mathematics by the specialist teacher, however, with the exception of behavioural targets identified in individual education plans, class teachers do not sufficiently refer to, use or develop the individual learning targets identified in the individual education plans for special educational needs pupils in order to develop targets within other subjects.
33. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Regular school clubs consist of choir, netball, football, and Christian club, all of which are well attended.
34. The school has established sound links with the local community. Although the school has not established any business links as such it does make effective use of local facilities such as the village hall and playing fields in order to support physical education and the school contributes to a village newsletter each term. Pupils and teachers from the school take part in all major village events. Visitors to the school such as theatre groups, the school nurse, the police and local artists contribute well to pupils' learning in personal, social and health education and art and design. As a church school it has strong commitment to links with the local church and uses its facilities effectively every week for whole-school assemblies.
35. Satisfactory links exist between the school and its main receiving secondary school. Both the headteacher and key members of staff such as the special educational needs co-ordinator from the secondary school visit the school in order to talk to teachers and Year 6 pupils. Pupils from the school have opportunity to visit the secondary school in the summer term and to further foster links with the secondary school. Year 7 pupils who left the school the year before come back twice a term to talk to Year 6 pupils about starting a new school and this begins to prepare pupils well for their next stage of education.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

36. The provision the school makes for pupils' moral and social development is very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Spiritual development is promoted well through religious education and assemblies and the school has a strong Christian ethos. In family group sessions and circle time pupils are given opportunity to discuss and reflect on important aspects of life such as death and explore their personal experiences, feelings and emotions about everyday life within a caring and supportive environment. For example, through a well chosen story in circle time pupils were asked to think about their feelings about anger and the effective questioning by the teacher allowed pupils to talk about their feelings openly and honestly. Although spiritual

development is strongly promoted in religious and personal and social education, overall there are too few planned opportunities for spiritual development in other subjects across the curriculum. However, school development planning for the current year includes the establishment of a policy for spiritual development across the curriculum.

38. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school teaches pupils right from wrong very effectively. The school has devised and implemented a good behaviour policy which is consistently applied by all adults throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to respect property, themselves and others. Pupils are made to feel valued by staff and this contributes significantly to the very good relationships that exist between pupils and adults within the school. When minor inappropriate behaviour occurs teachers deal with it quickly and effectively. For more persistent inappropriate behaviour the school has effective strategies in place such as the careful formal monitoring of pupils' behaviour and the setting of behaviour targets for the pupil to achieve. Moral issues are also very effectively promoted in assemblies and through personal and social education. For example, in addition to consulting both parents and governors, teachers used Family Group time sessions well to discuss with pupils what they thought should be included in the school's behaviour and bullying policies.
39. The provision for pupils' social education is very good. The school provides many planned opportunities to develop pupils' social skills. Pupils of all ages have jobs of responsibility in varying degrees in relation to their age. For example, from an early age pupils are encouraged to take the register to the office and older pupils look after younger pupils during key times during the school day. For example, older pupils pair up and hold hands with younger pupils in order to walk them to the church for assembly and help to organise and supervise games at lunchtimes. Social skills are well promoted in weekly family group sessions. This activity ensures that pupils of all ages work together in family groups in order to develop key social skills such as co-operation and team work. The school has effectively established a playground 'Buddy' system which involves older pupils befriending younger pupils when they have no one to play with or when they are feeling unhappy for some reason. Older pupils regularly organise and run charity events and this effectively develops pupils' awareness of the needs of other people both in this country and abroad. Planned residential visits for older pupils contribute significantly to pupils' social development.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through different subjects across the curriculum. For example, in history pupils study the Ancient Egyptians and learn about life in Tudor times and in geography pupils learn about the lifestyle of people in St Lucia. In art and design and Key Stage 1 music, pupils are introduced to the work of a wide range of artists and composers and gain knowledge of contemporary work through the visits of local artists and musicians with whom the pupils are able to work. Literary cultural heritage, particularly in poetry, is a prominent feature of the English curriculum. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of local traditions as they prepare to dance around the maypole at a major village social event. In religious education Key Stage 2 pupils learn about the traditions of other world faiths as they study the Jewish and Islamic faiths and discuss major religious festivals such as the recent Hindu festival of Kumb Mela. Although the school does recognise other religions and cultures in its work, overall there are too few planned opportunities in other subjects for pupils to learn about other cultures in society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school makes good provision to ensure the welfare of pupils. Good records are kept on each pupil. Procedures for child protection are good, and staff are regularly reminded to be vigilant. No health and safety concerns were noted during the inspection. There is good supervision of pupils at breaktimes when they use the village playground. Staff, pupils and parents are actively following the Healthy Schools Initiative. For example, most pupils bring fruit for their breaktime snack.
42. All staff know the pupils well, and they monitor their personal development well. For instance, pupils' behaviour during whole-class activities is frequently monitored and recorded by a classroom assistant in order that the behavioural patterns of individuals and their levels of involvement in activities such as discussion can be evaluated. This information is used well by class teachers in subsequent lessons in order that pupils can maximise their learning. The school promotes good attendance well, but the monitoring of reasons for absence is not thorough enough.
43. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed against their learning targets in English and mathematics by the special educational needs co-ordinator and assessments are used effectively to set new targets and inform future planning. The school has appropriate access to various support agencies such as the LEA's learning support team and the educational psychologist.
44. There is a very good policy for encouraging good behaviour and this is applied very consistently by all staff. This consistency makes a significant contribution to the standard of behaviour in the school. The playleaders manage behaviour well at lunchtimes. There is a very positive response by the school to any instances of oppressive behaviour so these are reduced to a minimum.

Assessment

45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good and an improvement on the last inspection. They refer to the key elements of learning and are carefully analysed in order to ensure that any weaknesses in provision may be addressed. Regular, planned opportunities to measure the effectiveness of learning and to respond to the individual and group needs are consequently identified and used. These occur through ongoing observation and evaluation of pupils' responses and standards of work in lessons, assessment of learning and progress at the end of units of work and the analysis of pupils' performance in regular tests. One consequence of these measures and procedures is the setting of specific learning targets in literacy and numeracy for individual pupils. This is very good use of assessment information that is having a very direct and positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. The annual cycle of assessment, recording and reporting provides very clear guidelines for a manageable system of information collecting and recording that is used very well to track the progress of each pupil.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school has a good partnership with parents. Parents make a significant contribution to learning and to the work of the school in general by assisting in classrooms, accompanying pupils on visits and residential trips, providing practical and expert assistance, and serving as members of the governing body. During the inspection parents accompanied Year 4 and Year 5 pupils on a visit to the church and helped them work in a small group; this enabled pupils to study the features of the church in greater detail. Other parents provided help in classrooms during the family group time. Parent helpers are given clear instructions about what the teacher wants

them to do. Parents also run the Friends of St Helen's Association. Parental contribution is a strength of the school.

47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately informed about the targets identified on individual education plans and the school encourages the support of parents in developing the targets at home when appropriate. Parents are invited and involved in all review meetings for pupils with a statement of special educational need.
48. Parents receive good information about their child's progress through full and extra interim reports, consultation evenings and open days. Staff are also available for informal discussion by appointment. The school provides a good range of curriculum and general information. The administrator is a friendly and efficient contact for parents, and she works hard to make parents feel welcome and well-informed. However, despite the good provision, a number of parents report that they do not feel the school works closely with them. Parents' views of the school are positive overall.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. A new headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection and, since September 2000, the management structure of the school has changed by abolition of the post of a deputy headteacher whose responsibilities have been subsumed within the posts of the two key stage co-ordinators. Leadership and management of the school was satisfactory at the time of that inspection and it is now good due to the clarity of the headteacher's priorities for school improvement and the very good support provided by the key stage co-ordinators. The headteacher provides good, purposeful leadership while carrying out a significant teaching commitment. She has successfully created a strong staff team of teachers who, with one exception, have joined the school since the last inspection. Together they share a very clear sense of educational direction for the work of the school and as a result good progress is being made.
50. The headteacher's awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses has led to clear priorities for the school's development and thorough planning of the initiatives necessary for school improvement. The very effective day-to-day management of the school contributes significantly to the good quality of relationships at all levels and the development of a shared sense of purpose amongst teaching and all non-teaching staff. Particular emphasis has been given to the delegation of responsibility and the development of corporate objectives and decision making. All staff are responsible for the co-ordination of several subjects each and they carry out the responsibilities associated with this co-ordination very effectively. Curriculum development as a whole and the development of very good manageable systems of assessment are very good achievements by staff.
51. The school's aims and values are integrated very well in all its work and, following the example set by the headteacher, all staff show high levels of concern for pupils' welfare. There is thus a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to creating a caring environment for all pupils in which they are helped to achieve improving standards in their academic and personal development.
52. The school implements its equal opportunities policy very thoroughly. All pupils have the same opportunities for each area of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for in terms of staff support and are totally integrated into all aspects of school life. The quality of planned educational inclusion is good.
53. The school has good systems for monitoring and evaluating its own performance as a

result of the headteacher's successful introduction of a range of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching and the standards of pupils' work. The strength of these arrangements is the ongoing review of the curriculum that enables new initiatives, including national initiatives and subject guidelines, to be incorporated into what is taught. Standards of pupils' work are also monitored very effectively through thorough analysis of National Curriculum assessment test papers each year, including the optional tests taken by Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils that are similar in format to the end of key stage tests (SAT's). The strengths and weaknesses of each year group are identified and action is taken to address and rectify identified weaknesses. The monitoring of teaching is limited by the actual time that can be allocated to it. The headteacher completes as much observation as is possible and, by the employment of supply teachers, teachers are provided with occasional periods away from their classes so that they too can observe colleagues. The strength of the staff as a team means that observations are discussed openly and constructively enabling staff to learn from one another about good practices.

54. The management of special educational needs provision within the school is good. There is accurate identification of pupils' needs and monitoring of progress is very conscientiously carried out by the co-ordinator. The programme of work is very effectively delivered by good quality support staff. The governor for special educational needs effectively monitors provision and meets regularly with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
55. Management of the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher responsible for co-ordination of this stage and Key Stage 1 has developed efficient procedures that ensure continuity between the reception year and Year 1. The co-ordinator has paid good attention to methods of planning to ensure that the demands of the new Foundation Stage are fully met despite constraints of accommodation and facilities.
56. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well. It is led very well by a chairperson with a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's overall management is strengthened by the very good working relationship between the headteacher and the chairperson. The governing body provides very good support for the work of the school and individual members visit the school to assist in a variety of ways. Through their visits and liaison with co-ordinators, governors are very familiar with the school's working methods. There is constructive monitoring of the school's developments by the governing body through visits and the reports received from teaching staff. The headteacher consults widely about proposed improvements, seeking the contributions of all staff and governors and developments proceed with the commitment of all concerned. As a result, the school development plan provides a good framework for school improvement and combines review of what has been achieved in the previous year with appropriate detail of prioritised targets for the current year. The financial and resource implications, including the demands on personnel, are identified and detailed costings and success criteria are included. Wherever it is applicable, success criteria relate to improved standards. The governing body has carefully monitored the action plan that followed the last inspection and parents have been regularly informed of progress with that action plan.
57. The governing body has established a finance committee and has properly defined its role. Governors are fully meeting their responsibilities in relation to budget setting and expenditure is carefully monitored. The governing body thoughtfully evaluates the cost-effectiveness of major spending decisions through the reports of the headteacher, through discussion and through analysis of assessment and other data. Governors compare the school's results with national averages and those for schools with a

similar intake. A desire for high standards and improvement is central. These instruments enable the governing body to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are very aware of the need to ensure that money is spent carefully. Competing quotations are obtained before contracts are issued although governors are mindful that the cheapest price does not always represent the best value.

58. Financial control and office administration are very good as a result of the very good work and strong commitment of the school secretary. The school makes very good use of computer analysis. Very good use has been made of the additional money made available to the school through specific grants such as those to support literacy and the development of information and communication technology skills. The financial allocation for educating each pupil is broadly average but the school does not have the cost advantages of scale associated with a larger institution. Overall, the school uses its resources shrewdly and productively.
59. The school is adequately staffed with both teachers and support staff for the number of pupils on roll and teachers are suitably qualified and experienced to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Support staff are well briefed by teachers and are effectively integrated into the classrooms and they contribute significantly to pupils' learning. The school administrator is very efficient and makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. In-service training needs are appropriately identified and effectively targeted within school development planning and this ensures that staff effectively keep up to date with current developments in teaching. The teacher responsible for special educational needs has attended relevant courses and is well qualified to meet the needs of this particular group of pupils. There are appropriate arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers to the school, however, there is no induction policy for new members of staff to the school and this has not improved since the last inspection. All teaching staff have had their targets set in line with the school's appraisal policy, however, because of delays in appropriate training for governors the headteacher has not yet had appropriate targets set.
60. The accommodation for effective delivery of all aspects of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children under five is poor. Classrooms are small and cramped and the school has insufficient storage space to be able to store a range of curriculum resources. The school playground area is very small and the school has no grassed area of its own and the outdoor enclosed safe area for children under five is inadequate. There is no school hall and this adversely affects the development of pupils' physical education and drama opportunities and the school library is contained within a classroom. Teachers do their best to compensate for the limitations of the building by using the church for assemblies and the village hall and playground area for physical education and playtimes. Although the school building is inadequate it is nevertheless kept very clean and tidy and teachers do their best to create a lively, stimulating place for pupils to learn in through bright, attractive displays of pupils' work.
61. Resources in most areas of the curriculum are adequate. The school has a sufficient number of library books and the school uses the school library service very effectively to supplement its book collections in history and geography. Although resources in geography are sufficient overall there is a limited number of globes for pupils to refer to and use. In design and technology the quantity and quality of tools need updating and extending although resources are satisfactory overall. Resources for music are inadequate and there is an insufficient number of computers for pupils to use. There is also an insufficient number of large wheeled toys and equipment for children who are

under five; however, this is due to the limited space the school has for storage. All subjects have sufficient resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve the standards of work and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise mathematics standards that are achieved by pupils by the age of eleven by ensuring that teachers are consistent in their use of the National Numeracy Strategy and applying the school policy for evaluative marking of pupils' work (paragraphs 6, 25, 81, 83, 86).
- (2) Raise science standards by the age of eleven by continuing with the new arrangements for teaching Key Stage 2 pupils in year groups (paragraphs 6, 89, 90).
- (3) Teach the National Curriculum Programme of Study for music at Key Stage 2 and ensure that pupils have sufficient, regular learning opportunities to enable their skills, knowledge and understanding to build step by step on previous learning (paragraphs 7, 28, 116, 119).
- (4) Achieve consistency in lesson planning through identification of the specific learning to be achieved by pupils in that lesson and, where applicable, by different groups of pupils in activities planned for them (paragraphs 24, 29, 77, 86, 91, 100, 105).

In addition, the following less important weakness should be considered by the school:

- (1) Establish an appropriate policy for the induction of newly-appointed teachers other than those who are newly-qualified (paragraph 59).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
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
15	53	32	0	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)	135
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

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	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	7	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	3	4
	Girls	9	7	8
	Total	14	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (95)	53 (95)	63 (89)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	4	5	6
	Girls	8	11	11
	Total	12	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (95)	84 (89)	89 (89)
	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	7	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	3	5
	Girls	10	9	9
	Total	14	12	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70(73)	60(59)	70(77)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	2	5
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	10	10	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50(68)	50(59)	65(68)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	79(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	114
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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)	5.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	242,535
Total expenditure	237,432
Expenditure per pupil	1,745
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,190
Balance carried forward to next year	13,293

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	135
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	48	6	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	45	16	4	3
The teaching is good.	55	41	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	32	30	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	26	6	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	38	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	42	38	10	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	68	23	3	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	36	3	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	4	35	29	20	12

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

63. The school makes good provision for children who are under five. These children are taught in a class alongside some Year 1 pupils. The quality of teaching and curriculum planning is good and ensures that children make good progress in all appropriate areas of learning for children of this age. By the age five, most children have achieved national expectations in all areas of learning appropriate for their age; with the exception of personal and social development which exceed expectations. Assessment procedures to monitor the children's progress are very good and the teacher uses the information gained very effectively to identify children's needs and inform future planning. The school assessments indicate that children's attainment on entry to the school is average overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. The children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because of good teaching and planning for this area of learning. Both teachers and non-teaching staff promote this area of learning very effectively and by the age of five children's attainment exceeds national expectations. Staff effectively establish a caring, friendly and safe learning environment in which children quickly and happily settle and respond to daily routines. Through a range of activities such as group work, play and family group sessions, children soon develop self-confidence and join in activities with appropriate interest and enjoyment and show good levels of concentration for their age. Adults encourage children to become independent and take responsibility for themselves. For example, children get and put on their own art gowns and dress themselves after physical activity. Children relate well to each other and can work co-operatively in groups and show they are able to wait and take turns when playing games and sharing equipment. The teachers and other adults effectively teach right and wrong and children soon learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and their behaviour is consistently good.

Communication, language and literacy

65. The quality of teaching in communication, language and literacy is good. Children make satisfactory progress in acquiring early literacy skills and by the age of five their attainment is in line with national expectations. Children have good listening skills and listen attentively to adults and each other during whole-class sessions. The teacher strongly promotes early reading and writing skills and children soon learn their initial letter sounds and begin to use this knowledge well to build and read simple words and by the age of five most children can read very simple sentences. In writing, children show good pencil control skills and can write many letters of the alphabet reasonably well for their age. By the age of five most children recognise that several words make a sentence and begin to write a few simple words independently.

Mathematics

66. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good. Children make good progress in this area of learning and their attainment by the age of five is in line with national expectations. Children can count and order numbers to 20 well and can do simple addition and subtraction sums to five. The teacher effectively promotes proper mathematical vocabulary in lessons and children make good progress in understanding

positional language and know the terms before and after. For example, in the numeracy hour children were able to identify the numbers that come before and after 14 and 11. Children make good progress in shape and measure and can identify a square, circle and triangle, understand shorter and taller and can tell the time on the hour.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Appropriate planned opportunities for children to investigate and explore the world around them ensure children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. For example, children learn that seeds need to be put into soil and watered in order to grow well as they plant their own sunflower seeds. They learn about the different size and shapes of seeds as they make observational drawings of apple pips. Children begin to successfully investigate forces as they find out that some toys need to be either pushed or pulled in order to make them move and begin to describe the changes they notice between day and night as they explore the topic of light sources. Children begin to understand well geographical terms such as beach, bridge and cave as they explore their local environment.

Physical development

68. The quality of teaching in physical development is satisfactory and the children's attainment and progress are satisfactory. The school has limited space within a safe enclosed area for pupils to use and this restricts the rate of progress children make in this area of learning. However, teachers do make the best of the facilities that are available to them and plan physical activities effectively to develop pupils' gross motor skills. For example, children have the opportunity to use the village playing field and grounds; and teachers organise space and equipment effectively to ensure that children experience a range of physical activities such as small apparatus work and ball skills. Children show satisfactory development of physical co-ordination and control and can throw a ball at a specific target reasonably accurately. Children's fine motor skills are well developed for their age and most show good levels of pencil and brush control while writing and painting. For example, some children show very good physical control when measuring out specific amounts of powder paint for mixing together in order to obtain the exact shade they require before printing with potato printing blocks. While working on the computer most children show they are able to manipulate the mouse well for their age.

Creative development

69. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. The reception teacher effectively plans and organises a range of activities that promote well children's creative development. The teacher plans and organises resources, adult support and different groups of children well to facilitate creative development. For example, different groups of children effectively experience printing techniques as they use different objects to print with. Children make good progress in painting and show they are able to mix colours and apply paint well in order to get the precise shade of colour they want. For example, in their paintings of a rainbow children show appropriate attention to colour and shade and have mixed two colours together effectively to create an appropriate shade. With support they can use natural materials found on the beach such as wood, shells and pebbles effectively to make interesting sculptures. Children make sound progress in music and can sing a number of familiar songs well from memory. Children manipulate scissors well to cut paper and other materials and use these skills effectively to make models out of junk materials.

ENGLISH

70. Pupils' achievements in English are consistently reflective of their abilities and by the age of eleven standards have generally been close to or above national averages since the last inspection. Fluctuations between different groups have been apparent when they have taken the National Curriculum tests but the current seven- and eleven-year-old pupils are achieving satisfactorily overall, with reading and speaking standards being above average and writing average. This is due to consistently good teaching throughout the school that applies the National Literacy Strategy successfully. In addition, the oldest and the most able pupils benefit from the obvious enthusiasm for the subject that is demonstrated by the subject co-ordinator who teaches them. This has particular impact on the work of the more able pupils, who often achieve very well in writing.
71. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 the results were well below what had been predicted by the school. There is sufficient evidence in the form of the data from further testing shortly after those national tests and from scrutiny of work that those pupils have completed since September 2000 that the results were not a true picture of the pupils' ability. The actual results compared poorly with all schools nationally and with the results achieved in similar schools. The reading result was well below national and similar school averages and writing was very low compared with all schools and well below the average in similar schools. The inspection finds that the overall standards of pupils in the current Year 2 are above the national average in reading and matching the national averages in speaking, listening and writing. In relation to these pupils' attainment when starting at the school, this represents good achievement and progress in reading and satisfactory achievement in speaking, listening and writing. Reading standards have improved since the last inspection and other aspects have been maintained.
72. Achievement in the National Curriculum tests taken by eleven-year-old pupils in 2000 shows that standards in English matched the national averages for all schools and for similar schools. This was a good achievement by a group of pupils of whom 40 per cent had special educational needs. The inspection finds similarly good achievement among the current eleven-year-olds. Reading standards are above average and speaking, listening and writing are average overall. However, a particular feature of written work is the standards being achieved by the more able pupils which are generally well above average.
73. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' speaking and listening skills are at the levels that are expected for their age. Most listen very attentively to teachers and to each other. They benefit from the well-planned opportunities provided in most lessons for offering opinions or explanations. Teachers allow pupils time to express their thoughts and encourage them to ask questions about their work. This helps pupils to gain confidence in speaking and to express themselves clearly.
74. Achievement in reading is above the national averages at ages seven and eleven. The importance placed upon this skill and the systematic method of teaching is very successful in promoting reading standards. Pupils enjoy reading, have frequent opportunities to do so and are eager to discuss what they have read. By age seven, they develop a good range of phonic and contextual skills in order to tackle unfamiliar words. Most are able to use simple dictionaries and very good standards are achieved in relation to library skills with pupils able to retrieve information from non-fiction texts by quick reference to contents and index pages. The more able pupils explain the use of a

glossary correctly. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils can read books containing quite challenging text with fluency and expression and can discuss the contents maturely, presenting a perceptive analysis of the characters and the plot. They are beginning to use more advanced skills such as scanning. More able pupils have an appreciation of inference and figurative language that is well beyond their age.

75. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' achievements in writing are in line with the national averages. Pupils' awareness of grammatical structure and punctuation is good in relation to their age. Most possess a broad vocabulary and are able to express themselves clearly and confidently. Spelling is methodically developed and pupils achieve very good levels of accuracy. Standards of letter formation and control are satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils produce a good variety of different types of writing such as poetry, instructions, news and stories. Their understanding of the basic structure of story-writing is developing well as a result of the use of a 'story planner'. The breadth of writing and the skills that are acquired show steady progress as pupils get older. By the age of eleven, pupils show good imagination and a satisfactory vocabulary in their story-writing. They have a particular strength in poetry, which is enjoyed by all. From the humour evident in their own limericks to the detail of analysis of poems such as Wordsworth's 'Daffodils' and Auden's 'Night Mail', pupils' knowledge and understanding of the structure and use of language in poetry is above average for their age. The work of the most able pupils occasionally reaches a very high quality with one particular parody of the 'Three Little Pigs' being a quite outstanding piece of writing.
76. Word processing skills are satisfactorily developed and information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support reading and writing throughout the school. At age seven, pupils use CD-Roms successfully as sources of information. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce work of high quality, such as the instruction booklet written about a programmable toy.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching is very good and learning is good overall. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well as the structure to their lessons. It is a feature of all teaching that skills such as spelling, grammar, handwriting and punctuation are developed extremely systematically. In the best teaching at Key Stage 2, teachers have high expectations and good subject knowledge. A further feature is very thorough planning and, within this, a characteristic of very good teaching is the clarity about the learning that pupils are to achieve in lessons. This is not so clear at Key Stage 1, where lesson planning tends to describe the activities that pupils are to do but not what they are to learn from doing them. The clarity of learning intentions was very evident in the very good teaching of the middle ability group at Key Stage 2. Pupils were constantly reminded of the fact that their work on the differences between discussion, argument and persuasion would help them to improve their understanding of how points of view can be sequenced in discursive writing. The teacher's very good learning activities built step by step to enable pupils of different abilities to make maximum progress in their learning. The lesson also demonstrated how the very good teaching uses pupils' own ideas very successfully. All ideas and opinions are valued and often used to develop the next stage in pupils' learning. Year 3 pupils came to a lesson on proverbs having researched their parents' own favourites and the teacher very skilfully developed the lesson from examples provided during the initial discussion. The respect given to pupils' contributions, and the use of their work to reinforce specific points that the teacher wants to emphasise, results in pupils being very involved in lessons, keen to work and maintaining very positive atmospheres in which learning is both enjoyable and productive.

78. Grouping all Key Stage 2 pupils by ability is successful in ensuring that pupils are provided with work that is matched well to their abilities. All pupils with special educational needs are taught literacy by the special educational needs co-ordinator and provision is good with the effect of enabling these pupils to maintain good progress in their learning. All pupils' learning, and their steady progress at an individual level, is further enhanced by very specific target-setting. This occurs automatically each half term but sooner if a pupil achieves the targets. There is a constant emphasis on these targets but they receive particular emphasis in the writing task referred to as 'Target News'. This is an innovative approach to the regular and almost traditional requirement placed on primary school pupils to record their news – after weekends or holidays. At St Helen's this news writing is marked and assessed using the criteria of a pupil's specific targets. This provides teachers with good opportunities to track pupils' progress and pupils with very good knowledge of their own learning.
79. The subject is led and managed very well. The co-ordinator for English is committed to improving standards and has a clear sense of purpose. Following her leadership, the school places considerable emphasis upon English and the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced with care and rigour. This initiative, together with the quality of teaching and the positive attitudes of the pupils, are significant factors in determining the often good levels of achievement and learning. Pupils' increasing competence in literacy makes an important contribution to standards in other areas of the curriculum although there is insufficient planning of the development of literacy skills in other subjects. This is reinforced by organisation of the Key Stage 2 curriculum to provide weekly lessons in extended writing and in topic-based literacy. The co-ordinator's very thorough analysis and evaluation of test data and work assessment leads to very clear priorities for subject development. In the past, evidence of boys' under-achievement has been addressed successfully by whole-school training provision for teachers and by revision of procedures for target-setting. The assessment procedures used to measure progress are very good as is their use to guide the content of subsequent work. The co-ordinator marks one piece of work by all pupils at least twice a term as part of the monitoring of standards. This, together with the thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching, enables her to establish very appropriate priorities. During the past year these have been the raising of teacher expectation and the integration of information and communication technology. Both have seen good development. The good use of information and communication technology that now occurs, and the good quality of the monitoring of teaching, are reversals of weaknesses found by the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

80. Annual National Curriculum test results show that standards in mathematics have been well below national averages for some years. An appropriate priority has been placed on improving standards, and improvements in teaching combined with the appointment of a co-ordinator with good specialist knowledge are resulting in a gradual rise in standards.
81. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven, their performance was very low in comparison with the national average and very low in comparison with similar schools. In the tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils' results were well below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment in the current Year 2 is now average and in Year 6 it is below average. Throughout the school, the more able pupils achieve standards above the national average. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are also attaining standards in line with age-related expectations. This rise in attainment is due largely to the successful

implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy which has improved the quality of teaching and the acquisition and use of better resources to teach the subject. The effective way the school groups its pupils by ability at Key Stage 2 enables teachers to plan work more precisely to meet the needs of all pupils and to ensure that pupils make appropriate gains in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported to be in line with the national average.

82. All pupils, including the more able and gifted, make at least satisfactory progress and Key Stage 2 pupils with special educational needs make good progress in mathematics lessons because of effective teaching and non-teaching support that ensures that the pupils receive appropriate help and guidance when needed.
83. Throughout the school pupils achieve better attainment in number and algebra. By the age of seven pupils have a sound understanding of the value of the digits in a two- or three-digit number and can order numbers to a 100 and can add 40 to a three-digit number well. Year 1 pupils know that 31 is a larger number than 13 and can calculate 10 more than 20. By the age of eleven most pupils have a sound understanding of the four rules of number and can add and subtract large numbers well. They use knowledge of short multiplication and division effectively to solve mathematical problems. For example, Year 6 pupils can use their knowledge of multiplication in order to calculate the area of a regular shape. Teachers promote mathematical vocabulary well in lessons and this ensures pupils gain a good understanding of mathematical language. For example, when identifying equivalent fractions Year 4 pupils use appropriate related language such as mixed numbers and equivalence and Year 3 pupils know several terms for addition and subtraction such as count on, plus, more and less than. The ability of most pupils to calculate and work out number problems in their head is quite slow and needs improvement.
84. All pupils make satisfactory progress in shape, space and measure and data handling. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a sound grasp of some of the properties of both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and can use some standard metric units of length and capacity and can tell the time to half past the hour. In data handling they interpret bar charts and Venn diagrams well. By the age of eleven pupils know how to find the perimeter of simple shapes and can collect data and record on frequency tables and line graphs.
85. Pupils are able to apply their knowledge and understanding of measure and data handling well across the curriculum. For example, in design and technology, Year 3 pupils collect data about their favourite sandwich filling and effectively construct bar charts to record the information. Also in design and technology pupils throughout the school measure accurately to make plans for their designs and in geography pupils interpret frequency graphs about the weather.
86. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. At the time of the last inspection teaching was reported to be satisfactory with some unsatisfactory teaching. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved teachers' planning in the subject and has ensured skills are taught progressively. In the best lessons, teachers use board work very well to demonstrate key skills to support pupils' learning. Questioning techniques are used effectively to extend the thinking and understanding of different ability groups within lessons. Teachers use resources very well to support learning and use a range of teaching strategies effectively to ensure pupils stay well focused and interested. Lessons are well organised and structured. Teachers have very good relationships with

pupils and they manage their classes well. Teachers use ongoing and other assessment procedures well to monitor what pupils know and can do and they use the information gained very effectively to support future planning. However, there is a comparative weakness in much teaching that the learning objectives in lesson planning are not sufficiently identified for different groups of pupils. Additionally, during independent work some teachers do not sufficiently target a specific group of pupils for intensive support and the pace of the mental agility session at the beginning of the numeracy hour is too slow. A general weakness is the fact that the marking of pupils' work is not sufficiently evaluative and does not indicate to pupils how they can improve.

87. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator. Strengths and weaknesses in the subject have been appropriately identified through the careful monitoring of standards, teaching and learning in the subject. Resources for the subject are adequate. A new scheme of work has been implemented and this effectively supports the teaching and delivery of the numeracy hour.

SCIENCE

88. Weaknesses in science have been evident at Key Stage 2 for the past five years but they are now being addressed successfully and standards are starting to rise. Since appointment, the subject co-ordinator has had a good influence on improving the curriculum and, across the school, teachers' subject knowledge has improved. Younger pupils are achieving expected standards as a result of changes in organisation of science teaching but ten- and eleven-year-olds have gaps in their knowledge due to past weaknesses in teaching.
89. Teacher assessment of science at age seven in 2000 placed pupils' standards in line with national averages. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven pupils' performance was well below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. Although a slight rise in standards was evident in 1999, overall the trend in the National Curriculum tests for the last three years has been well below average. Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment by the age of seven are in line with national averages and by the age of eleven they are below the national average. There is now better achievement and progress being made by pupils in developing their investigative skills since the last inspection and standards are beginning to improve at Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are achieving standards in line with national expectations in all areas of learning and more able pupils by the age of eleven do attain standards in line with national expectations. At the time of the last report standards were reported to be in line with national standards by the age of seven and eleven.
90. Across the school pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of life processes. Teachers' effective use of the local environment as a learning resource impacts well on the pupils' knowledge and understanding in this aspect of science. This was evident in Year 3 when pupils observed various plant life around the area of the school and used some scientific language to describe and label drawings about what they observed. In Year 4 pupils have a good understanding of life processes for their age and know that all living organisms exist in some sort of habitat. By the age of eleven the more able pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of physical processes and materials and their properties and can classify solids, liquids and gases well. However, with the exception of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, most other pupils' knowledge and understanding in these aspects of science is not as secure and their attainment is below what is expected for their age. For example, Year 6 pupils do not readily use scientific language to explain how materials can be changed by dissolving different

substances in water and are unsure of how to separate materials using filters and a sieve. Key Stage 1 pupils make a good start in understanding physical processes and by the age of seven can identify many different light sources and begin to successfully understand forces as they test which model vehicle they have made will travel the fastest down a ramp. By the age of eleven pupils understand simple circuits and know that a circuit must be complete to light a bulb but they do not have the expected knowledge and understanding of conventional symbols and their use in circuit diagrams.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the quality of teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good and was satisfactory overall. When teaching is at its best, lessons are well planned to extend pupils' scientific vocabulary and teachers use and promote proper scientific terminology well and encourage pupils to do the same. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations to pupils which ensures pupils gain a better knowledge and understanding about what they are studying. Previous learning is effectively consolidated and assessments are used very well to inform future planning. When there are weaknesses in teaching, lesson planning does not sufficiently identify precise learning objectives.
92. At the time of the last inspection there was no policy or curriculum guidelines in place to support teachers' planning in the subject. This is no longer the case. The co-ordinator, through good leadership and management, has successfully implemented guidelines and curriculum planning that ensure all aspects of the subject and key investigative skills are taught appropriately and progressively. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved because of well-planned and appropriate in-service training led by the subject co-ordinator and this is impacting positively on improving standards in the subject. Teaching and standards in science are now monitored very well. The re-organisation that now allows the co-ordinator to teach Year 6 pupils is enabling these pupils to benefit from her subject expertise and make good progress during their last year in school.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Despite the school accommodation's adverse effect on opportunities for the production, storage and display of pupils' artwork, teachers work hard to deliver a broad range of learning opportunities. These develop pupils' skills and creativity well and, by the age of eleven, standards exceed national expectations.
94. Achievement in art and design matches national expectations at the age of seven, as at the time of the last inspection. From age five to seven, pupils use a range of media to experiment successfully with colour and shape and to develop sound techniques. By the age of seven, these good foundations to learning result in pupils working confidently and creatively, as is evident in their three-dimensional sculptures of masks showing different feelings on the faces. Pupils' confidence and control in two-dimensional and three-dimensional work develops well from the good foundations in reception and Year 1. In these years, pupils' bold paintings of fruits combined in the form of a face, inspired by Arcimboldo, show good use of shape and colour. The same pupils have created very imaginative sculptures from things found on a beach, work that was stimulated by the ideas of a visiting artist. Printing techniques are acquired successfully and are evident in the care and sensitivity of printing with daisies in Year 1 and in the sense of pattern developing in Year 2 pupils' vegetable prints.
95. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the work of a wide range of artists between the ages

of seven and eleven. Their observational skills develop well and, by the age of eleven, work such as the paintings of daffodils, contrasting two different media, is of a quality that exceeds expectations for the age. This is an improvement on the standards at the last inspection, which were in line with expectations. Work by younger Key Stage 2 pupils indicates how these ultimate standards are achieved. Using the stimulus of the Picasso painting 'Man with a guitar', Year 3 painted their own, very well executed paintings of two guitars. These same pupils developed the theme of artists and their visions very successfully. Good observation of detail is evident in Year 4 pupils' drawings of fruit and cross-sections of the fruit. Pupils made very good use of shading and subtle colour mixing to achieve the effects that they sought. Links with other subjects such as history and English provide good opportunities to practise learned techniques. Printing and painting complement very attractively a display on Ancient Egypt that supports a Year 3 history topic.

96. No art teaching was observed during the inspection but teachers' planning and discussions with pupils about their work indicates that there is good emphasis on the development of techniques. Learning activities are imaginative and result in pupils enjoying their work, gaining good knowledge of artists past and present, and making good overall progress in their learning between the ages of five and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs are making comparable progress as their peers and their success has a good effect on their general motivation. Pupils' learning is supported and developed well by the good range of experiences that teachers provide for pupils to use graphics computer programs. Despite physical limitations imposed by the accommodation, opportunities for display of pupils' work are maximised. Particularly imaginative displays are created in the reception/Year 1 classroom where large 3D displays stimulate pupils' literacy topics and texts. There has been a significant investment in the creation of wall display cabinets in a covered walkway that enables parents and pupils to see the work of different classes.
97. Subject management is satisfactory. The priority given to raising standards has been approached by securing the employment of a specialist, part-time teacher. This is too recent for any impact to be evident although there is good evidence that class teachers are providing well for pupils' learning without specialist expertise. There is no portfolio of work that would inform teachers of standards at different ages and, without this sort of information, procedures for assessment are under-developed. Although each pupil has a sketch book that, over time, indicates progress and would assist assessment, these books are in fact only very occasionally used by pupils. The curriculum and the range of learning opportunities are enhanced by an annual art week when visiting artists conduct workshops for all pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now above national expectations by the time pupils are eleven. By the age of seven standards are in line with expectations. At the time of the last inspection standards were reported to be below age-related expectations by the age of seven and eleven.
99. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both the designing and making aspects of the subject, particularly at Key Stage 2. In design, pupils make good quality plans of their proposed designs and by the age of eleven pupils are able to measure accurately to scale and think carefully about the materials they will use to make individual component parts. Pupils pay good attention to finishing qualities and the use and purpose for which the product they are making is intended. For example, Years 5/6 pupils make very successfully slippers for a young person and

show they understand well that size and fit and finishing techniques are important. Teachers effectively encourage pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of their designs and pupils show they are able to modify their models if necessary in the light of their evaluations. For example, when designing and making a sandwich suitable for a summer picnic, Year 3 pupils consider the suitability of materials as they work and effectively make changes after their evaluations. Written evaluations identify clearly how well ideas and design worked. In the same lesson pupils show well they can cut accurately to achieve precise shapes. In Year 4, pupils measure, mark out, cut and shape a range of materials, including wood, and join and combine component parts and materials accurately to make good quality models of Tudor houses. From an early age pupils learn how to join materials together in different ways and experience making skills using a range of materials. For example, Years 1/2 pupils make vehicles out of construction kits and fit axles to wheels successfully in order to ensure their models move.

100. In the one lesson that was observed, teaching was very good and learning was good due to the very good emphasis that was placed upon the different processes of designing, making and evaluating, and skilful questioning about reasons for choices effectively extended pupils' thinking. Although the lesson was well planned to develop a good range of skills, a precise learning objective was not clearly identified.
101. Curriculum planning in the subject has substantially improved since the last inspection and the subject has been given a higher priority across the school. This and improved subject knowledge by teachers has resulted in better attainment in the subject. Appropriate guidelines have been implemented since the last inspection and teachers use them effectively to support their planning in the subject. Overall, resources are adequate but the range of tools the school has for the subject does need updating and extending and limited space in classrooms does adversely restrict the organisation and delivery of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with age expectations by the age of seven and eleven.
103. Throughout the school pupils gain a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of places and can make comparisons between different localities within the United Kingdom and places abroad. For example, Year 4 pupils make a detailed study of St Lucia and know well that it has many different physical features, such as a rainforest and volcano, and has a much hotter climate to that found in Britain. Years 5 and 6 pupils begin to understand how people can both improve and damage the environment as they look at the different forms of pollution that can be found in rural and urban areas. They make some good progress in understanding how both natural elements, such as rain and snow, and human activity can significantly affect the lives of people as they study the effects of flooding on people's lives around the UK from newspaper clippings and through debate about the effects of building a local leisure village in the area and a wall around the quay at Bideford. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in learning about their immediate environment, and by the age of seven can identify and name many different human and physical features, such as the post office, hills, stream, river, bridge and church, when studying and drawing a map of the village of Abbotsham.
104. Through map work pupils throughout the school develop a good awareness of the wider world and can recognise the relationships between places well. Pupils make sound progress in mapping skills. By the age of seven, pupils can draw simple maps

with a key and, at Key Stage 2, Year 4 pupils successfully use and interpret a map using a key to explain features. By the age of eleven, pupils use an index in an atlas confidently to find specific places around the world.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers manage pupils well and to ensure pupils stay interested and make good progress, lessons are delivered at a brisk pace. Teachers promote pupils' use of proper geographical terms effectively in lessons and make sure previous learning is consolidated well before moving on. When there are shortcomings in teaching, planning is too descriptive and does not identify clear learning objectives about the key skills to be taught.
106. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She has recently updated and revised planning in the subject to ensure that key skills and concepts are taught progressively from one year to the next. Although these guidelines are not yet implemented they should, when introduced, support teachers' planning in the subject very effectively. Overall resources for the subject are adequate but there is an insufficient number of globes for pupils to use. The school makes good use of the schools' library service in order to supplement existing resources.

HISTORY

107. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with age-related expectations by the age of seven and eleven.
108. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in history. By the age of seven pupils have acquired a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of chronology and pupils can recognise that things change overtime. For example, Years 1/2 pupils can distinguish between old and new household appliances and know that oil lamps were lit in Victorian times because there was no electricity back then. Key Stage 2 pupils develop a good sense of chronology as they complete detailed studies of various periods in history such as the Ancient Egyptians, the Romans and the Tudors. Key Stage 2 pupils particularly develop a sound knowledge and understanding of important people and events in history and understand well cause and effect. For example, Year 6 pupils can explain well why it was necessary for children living in cities and towns to be evacuated to rural areas during World War 2 and recognise how the role of women changed during the war. By the age of eleven pupils use secondary sources well to find out about the past and use dates and terms accurately when talking and writing about historical events.
109. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and in this the teaching was satisfactory. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the subject is effectively taught, all aspects of learning are appropriately covered and pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in their learning. The co-ordinator for the subject provides good leadership. She has recently updated and reviewed curriculum planning for the subject and has produced some good guidelines to support teachers' planning in the subject which are soon to be implemented. Teachers use resources effectively to support learning in the subject and resources for the subject are adequate. The school makes good use of the school library service in order to supplement existing resources

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. The weaknesses in the subject at the last inspection have been addressed very successfully, resulting in good curriculum development, improved teacher expertise

and rising standards in pupils of all ages.

111. At the ages of seven and eleven pupils' standards match expectations overall. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below expectations. A lack of resources, both hardware and software, prevents coverage of required areas such as modelling and monitoring of external events. This impacts on pupils' overall attainment by limiting the range of their learning. In the work that they are able to cover, pupils at age eleven achieve well in communicating and handling information. Improvement is due to a combination of much hard work by the co-ordinator in developing the curriculum and teachers' own skills, the good planning by teachers and the employment of a part-time specialist support assistant.
112. The work being undertaken by pupils, planning for the subject and especially the knowledge and understanding shown by pupils in Year 2 provide firm evidence of standards reaching expectations by the age of seven. Pupils use the mouse skilfully to control line and colour in pictures created on the computer screen. These pictures of characters and settings studied in literacy lessons are a good example of the well-planned integration of information and communication technology with other subjects that occurs throughout the school. In conversation, Year 2 pupils demonstrate their full understanding of how to name, print and save their work. Their use of language shows good familiarity with both hardware and software. In addition to computer-related work, pupils have good experiences and develop good competencies using tape recorders to listen to stories.
113. By the age of eleven pupils demonstrate confidence when working with computers and digital cameras. Their work shows that they understand how computers can be used to communicate information and as a research tool. The current project of Years 5 and 6 pupils is to record the progress of a round the world yacht race and material is downloaded and printed for presentation in group booklets. They access Internet web-sites quickly, use the language of computing naturally and in general demonstrate good skills, particularly in the use of the 'mouse' and in the operation of different programs. Pupils have a very good understanding of the place of these technologies in everyday life. Pupils have thorough knowledge of the features of word processing and desktop publishing programs. In conversation they provide immediate and correct explanations of the features of such programs, identifying all buttons on a toolbar and keen to demonstrate their use. Work of very good quality, that is well above expectations, is evident in the instructional program and booklet that have been produced for 'Horace the Hamster' – a programmable toy. This combines text, pictures, animations, digital photographs and sound. The result is a very professional production of which pupils are rightly proud and which they explain with an enthusiasm that reflects their high levels of interest. In other aspects of the subject, achievement is not as high. Knowledge of spreadsheets is satisfactory but explanations of current work on using a spreadsheet to establish the mathematical formula for calculating the area of a rectangle are not as secure and confident as they should be. They know how to program a robot to draw a square or turn through 180 degrees, and have used computers successfully to draw graphs and charts. Year 3 pupils are developing satisfactory skills at communicating information. They combine text and graphics successfully and create good effects by altering font type and size and by using colour. They use e-mail communications successfully.
114. No direct teaching was observed and the specialist support assistant was responsible for almost all instruction during the inspection. This work, with pairs and individuals, is planned thoroughly by class teachers and is based partly on developing basic skills and, at other times, on developing work in subject lessons. While a Year 2 literacy

lesson on the use of non-fiction books occurred, a succession of pairs of pupils learned about the use of CD-Roms as sources of information. This was a good extension of pupils' learning and similarly good experiences were gained by Year 3 pupils when accessing the Internet for information about Ancient Egyptians and, in a science lesson, creating a database of edible plants. Discussions with pupils indicate that the overall quality of learning is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, but there are gaps in this learning as a result of weaknesses in past planning that have failed to ensure that pupils are acquiring skills in a systematic progression where learning builds on previous experience. While good use is made of the specialist support, teachers other than in Year 3 generally fail to use other support staff sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs progress satisfactorily. All pupils save their work on disk and this enables them to continue work at home if they have access to a computer.

115. Leadership in the subject is good and the school is now starting to benefit from the good work of the co-ordinator in developing the subject since the last inspection. The curriculum has been developed successfully so that it now provides as good a range of learning opportunities for pupils as the resources allow. This provides many good links with other subjects but also provides clear guidelines on the specific skills that pupils should learn and the order in which they should be introduced. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in particular. Planning is closely monitored and the co-ordinator has a very good awareness of pupils' standards throughout the school. This awareness is acquired incidentally, rather than as a result of regular assessment. Present weaknesses in assessment are recognised by the co-ordinator and identified in development planning as the next priority.

MUSIC

116. The current provision for music is very unbalanced, being good at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. There is no evidence of standards, teaching or the curriculum in place at Key Stage 2. By the age of seven, standards and achievement are above expectations, teaching is good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are progressing well in their learning.
117. The fact that the music co-ordinator teaches a class of Years 1 and 2 pupils is having very good impact on standards. This is particularly evident in singing, which is above expectations by the age of seven. Pupils have an extensive repertoire of songs that they sing from memory. Performance is confident, enthusiastic and tuneful. Pupils' diction is good and they control pitch and maintain rhythm well with and without accompaniment. They perform rounds and two-part songs successfully, demonstrating good listening skills that assist this performance. These good listening skills are also evident when pupils appraise music in order to identify moods and imagery that it communicates. Such an appraisal of 'Voiles' by Debussy led to creation of a very effective 'sound picture' in which the performance of rising and falling sounds was of exceptional quality.
118. Two lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. The weekly singing lesson for reception, Year 1 and Year 2 was taught well. The lesson had a brisk pace, showed pupils' enthusiasm and confidence and the combination of new, recently-learned and well-established songs and hymns provided a good balance that had good overall impact on pupils' learning. Pupils' memories were challenged and the teacher's expectations were high, as was evident in the fact that after singing a new song through for the first time, pupils then sang at least six other songs before re-visiting the new song again. The latter was performed again very successfully with almost total recall by all pupils.

Very good teaching occurred in a lesson in which sound and rhythm were used to interpret the theme of 'The Sea'. Very good resources and an excellent combination of different types of learning activities provided a very good stimulus for pupils' learning. Pupils participated enthusiastically in brainstorming ideas about what a piece of music made them think of, they worked hard at refining their own sound pictures in response to the teacher's clear and high expectations. Individuals also responded very maturely and seriously to the responsibility of conducting the class.

119. The music co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject since September 2000 and has worked hard since then at developing the Key Stage 1 curriculum. These developments include the detailed planning of individual lessons for delivery of guidelines produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have a weekly hymn practice but no regular music lessons. A short, intensive period of workshop activities with visiting musicians is experienced in the second half of each summer term and this is the total experience of Key Stage 2 pupils apart from an opportunity to be in the school choir or, for a fee, have instrumental lessons. The latter are currently eight guitarists, three violinists and three brass/woodwind. The school has no guidelines on what should be taught and learned at Key Stage 2 and no evidence of what has been planned in past summer term workshops or is to be included this year. The resultant picture of provision is unsatisfactory, the required National Curriculum programme of study for Key Stage 2 is not being taught and provision has deteriorated since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. The school compensates very well for the lack of its own facilities and provides a balanced programme, covering most areas of activity, that enables pupils to achieve standards in line with expectations.
121. Due to the school's arrangement of blocks of time allocated to different activities, the observations have been of games at Key Stage 1 and athletics at Key Stage 2. Standards match age-related expectations in these areas of activity, as they did in physical education in general at the last inspection.
122. By the age of seven, pupils prepare properly for exercise by performing suitable stretching exercises. They explain satisfactorily the reasons for this preparation and have sound knowledge and understanding of the effect of exercise on the body. They perform basic games skills satisfactorily – a good achievement in the circumstances in which they have to work. Throwing and catching activities are performed competently with often good accuracy when throwing over short distances. They show good agility in the basic locomotion activities of sprinting and turning. All these are performed on a small hard surface area that is dominated by climbing apparatus, leaving little free space for ball or other games-related work. This requires teachers to have good organisational skills and pupils to have patience if they are having to wait to take turns at tasks. The adjacent playing field was used during the inspection by reception and Year 1 pupils but the very long grass and uneven surface made this an unsuitable environment for learning skills of ball control.
123. The athletics activities experienced by Key Stage 2 pupils are developing the basic techniques and, by the age of eleven, all pupils perform these at a level expected of the age. Their good capacity for endurance is evident in their performance of a running task for two minutes. They show satisfactory agility and co-ordination in jumping and skipping tasks. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good knowledge and understanding of health-related factors. Pupils show good levels of

interest in one another's work. The tasks of measuring and timing partners' performances are carried out conscientiously and accurately and with expressions of appreciation of the effort or achievement. School records confirm that swimming standards are in line with expectations.

124. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. All teachers plan thoroughly and generally adapt activities well to the space available. However, insufficient attention is given to the teaching of basic skills and, in athletics, pupils are placed in competitive situations before they have had sufficient experience of technique-developing practice in non-competitive situations. All teachers change into appropriate clothing, thus providing good role models for pupils. A strength in all lessons observed was the emphasis on the health-related aspects of physical education. Pupils were always provided with some form of appropriate warm-up activities, the reasons why preparation for exercise is important were discussed and pupils were given good opportunities to acquire knowledge about the effect. Teachers use support staff well, either to support group work or, at Key Stage 2, for monitoring the behaviour of individuals during whole-class activities. The latter information is used constructively by teachers to set behaviour targets in subsequent lessons should this be necessary.
125. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject although there is currently no monitoring of the quality of teaching or standards of pupils' work. She has a good awareness of strengths and weaknesses in provision. These are dictated by the absence of facilities such as a hall or playing field that have to be compensated for by using community amenities. These are adjacent to the school and permit dance and gymnastic floorwork in the village hall, games and athletics on the hard surface playground and playing field. Facilities further afield are also used for games and swimming. The school provides a small range of extra-curricular activities, in which there is good parental involvement. Opportunities for a rural school to participate in competition against other schools are limited but the school takes every opportunity that occurs.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Inspected by a Diocese Section 23 inspection.