

# INSPECTION REPORT

**UPTON NOBLE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Shepton Mallet

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123782

Headteacher: Mrs Lindy Lydiate

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward  
18605

Dates of inspection: 26-29 June 2000

Inspection number: 192845

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chapel Street Upton Noble Shepton Mallet Somerset
Postcode:	BA4 6AU
Telephone number:	01749 850375
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Robin Day
Date of previous inspection:	December 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Mathematics, music	Standards
		Religious education Special educational needs	Teaching/learning
Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values
			Personal development and care
			Parents' views and partnership
Philip Whitehead	Team inspector	English, information technology	Leadership and management
		Art, equal opportunities	
		Physical education	
Susan Wheeler	Team inspector	Science, under fives	Curriculum
		Design technology geography, history	

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Number of full-time pupils	169		(below average)
Pupils with English as an additional language	0		
Pupils entitled to free school meals	13	7.5%	(below average)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	17	9.8%	(below average)
Average class size	28.5		

The school is a fairly typical village school serving a broad mix of families from the local rural community. All pupils have had some pre-school experience and enter at four years old with levels of attainment just below the national average in literacy and numeracy but below for their personal and social development.

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

This is an effective school where standards are above average for 7 and 11 year-olds in speaking and listening and mathematics and in all areas of learning for the under fives. Overall, the teaching is good or better. The headteacher's leadership and management are very good and she is very well supported by governors and staff. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The under fives make a very good start.
- Standards in speaking and listening are above the national average at the end of both key stages; in mathematics, they are well above for 7 year-olds and above for 11 year-olds.
- Pupils are keen to learn, like school and get on very well with each other and staff; they show respect, concern and initiative.
- Pupils are well looked after and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- 80% of the teaching is good or better.
- The curriculum emphasises literacy, numeracy and personal development and extends beyond the classroom.
- Governors, the headteacher and staff work very well together and are committed to raising standards.
- Parents are very appreciative and supportive of the school.

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

- Standards of attainment in information technology at 7 and 11 years.
- The behaviour of a few boys in most classes.
- The progress in writing and science of higher attaining pupils in most classes, although satisfactory, is not as good as in Year 5/6.
- Assessment procedures and setting targets for improving pupils' learning and raising standards.
- The school library and outside facilities for the under fives.

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

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

The school was last inspected in December 1996 and has improved significantly since the appointment of the current headteacher in January 1999. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of good or better teaching has doubled to 80%. Standards have generally risen in line with the national trend. Nearly all the key issues have been tackled effectively. However, the behaviour of a few boys is still a concern and more able pupils do not make sufficient progress in writing. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	A*	A
mathematics	B	B	A	B
science	C	D	C	D

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

While more than half of the current five year-olds started school with attainment below what is expected, they have made very good progress and all have now reached or exceeded the desirable learning outcomes for their age. In national tests in 1999, the performance of 11 year-olds in English was in the highest 5% in the country and well above average in mathematics. Results for 7 year-olds were equally impressive with pupils' performance in reading being in the top 5% and well above average in writing. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards have been maintained in speaking and listening and mathematics at the end of both key stages. However, in reading, writing and science standards of attainment are about the national average. This is not a true reflection on the trends in this school: in 1999, the Year 6 cohort was only 15 and this year, there are more pupils with special educational needs. Generally, pupils are achieving well in relation to their capabilities, apart from high attainers in writing and science. However, standards of attainment in information technology are below average across the school as pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to use new technologies to support their learning. The school has set specific targets to raise standards in English and mathematics by 2001 but these are not demanding enough as they do not sufficiently take into account under-performing pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school, mostly do their best and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good in and around the school but a few boys in most classes become inattentive and are slow to respond to staff.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils show concern for each other, their school and the local environment, developing an increasing sense of responsibility and personal initiative.
Attendance	Above the national average. No time is wasted as lessons start promptly.

## 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.*

Overall, 80% of the teaching observed was good or better, with no unsatisfactory teaching. A third of the teaching in the under fives was very good and nearly all the rest good. In Key Stage 1, nearly two thirds was good and the rest sound. In Key Stage 2, just over under a quarter was very good, nearly two thirds good and the rest sound. Nearly all of the teaching seen of English and mathematics was good or better.

The best teaching keeps pupils interested and fully involved in learning throughout the lesson, as activities appeal to and are appropriate for pupils of all abilities. The teachers are enthusiastic, know their pupils very well and provide just the right amount of challenge and support to help pupils make progress in their learning. When pupils leave school, aged 11, they are confident and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall with a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and personal development and a very good range of additional opportunities in and out of school. Provision for information and communication technology is limited but being developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers, assistants and voluntary helpers ensure pupils with special educational needs cope with work and are fully involved.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Every effort is made to develop pupils as all round, well balanced individuals with the personal skills to become successful citizens. The Christian ethos is well represented in the life and work of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Generally good. There is a family atmosphere and pupils feel secure and safe. However, pupils are not sufficiently clear about what they need to do to improve their work

As over half the families live at some distance from the school, informal daily contact with parents and carers is limited. However, written communication is good and the school organises a number of interesting events to keep parents and carers informed about their children's education.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very good leader, very well supported by governors and staff, and manages developments sensitively and effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed to raising standards, know their school very well and play a full part in moving the school forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and has well thought out and realistic plans for improvement. However, measures to evaluate the effectiveness of actions are not specific enough to be helpful.
The strategic use of resources	Governors and the headteacher spend wisely and look after funds carefully. The school provides good value for money.

Generally, staffing, accommodation and learning resources are sufficient and well used. The school grounds are well developed and used creatively. However, there is an inadequate stock of non-fiction books, the school library is unsatisfactorily sited and outdoor provision for the under fives is inappropriate. Funds have been allocated to tackle these deficiencies.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm family atmosphere, friendly and very approachable</li> <li>• Children make good progress</li> <li>• School has high expectations and helps pupils become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Children are well behaved and a credit to the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More contact with parents</li> <li>• More information about pupils' progress</li> <li>• The leadership and management</li> <li>• The amount of homework</li> </ul>

The inspection endorses all of the parents' positive views. Communication with parents is very good as is the leadership and management of the school. Homework is varied appropriately to suit the age and maturity of pupils and information on pupils' progress is generally helpful, although sometimes not specific enough about what needs to be done to improve.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Inspection findings show that standards for the oldest pupils in the school are above average in speaking and listening and mathematics, are average in reading, writing and science and below average in information technology. For pupils aged 7, standards are well above average in mathematics, above average in speaking and listening, average in reading, writing and science and below average in information technology. Attainment on entry to school for four year-olds is just below average but the current pupils make very good progress in the reception class and reach or exceed the desirable learning outcomes by the time they start compulsory schooling at five years-old.
2. The most recent national assessment results in 1999 show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are in the top 5% in the country for reading, are well above average for writing and average for mathematics. Teacher assessments in science are average although the proportion attaining the higher level 3 is well above average. When compared to similar schools, results are well above average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics. The lower results in mathematics are due to the well below average proportion attaining the higher level 3. Trends since 1996 show that results in reading and writing have stayed above the national average, dipped in mathematics in 1998 but have risen since.
3. Results in 1999 national tests for 11 year-olds indicate that standards are well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. When compared to similar schools, results are above average in English and mathematics and average for science. The lower results in science are because not enough pupils reached the higher level 5. Results over the last four years have been in line with the national trend. Those in English and mathematics have been well above average while results in science slipped well below in 1998 but have since risen.
4. The school has set specific targets for English and mathematics for 2001 based on a prediction of individuals' performance in national tests and tasks. These targets are not sufficiently challenging as they do not take enough account of pupils' capabilities and whether they are under-performing. However, as the number of pupils taking national assessment tests is small, the effect of a change in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs causes considerable fluctuation in the overall results. Consequently as there are more low attaining pupils in the current Year 4, 5 and 6, the targets over the next few years will be somewhat lower than in 1999 when there were no pupils in Year 6 with special educational needs.
5. On entry this year, pupils' attainment at four years-old is just below average in language and mathematics and below in their personal development. This trend has continued for the last two years. By the time they are five, all pupils have reached or exceeded the desirable learning outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. This is because of the good or better teaching they consistently receive, based on the teacher's and assistant's very good relationship with the pupils and their extensive knowledge of the personal and educational needs of their pupils.
6. Currently in English, standards in speaking and listening are above average for 7 and 11 year-olds and around the national average in reading and writing. The school reports that this is mainly because there have been significant changes to the planning and teaching of literacy through the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. In speaking and listening,

most pupils speak well, expressing themselves clearly and listening attentively to others. Even the youngest are confident in talking to adults and by the time they are 7 years-old, they are aware of the vocabulary and tone required for more formal situations. The oldest pupils give very thoughtful and considered answers to questions and demonstrate a good range of vocabulary and expression in discussions.

7. By the time they are seven years old, most pupils read competently for their age, using a range of strategies, breaking down regular words and building them up using phonics. Most pupils read accurately, although some higher attaining pupils do not always self-correct or read difficult texts they have chosen for meaning. By 11 years-old, pupils discuss the features of the books they read in terms of genre and character and they are beginning to explore themes and make reasoned predictions. Most enjoy reading but the school library area is infrequently used. It is inaccessible at times due to its location in the hall and has limited stocks of books. This is restricting pupils' choice and the development of their personal study and research skills.
8. Most 7 year-olds have a keen sense of audience and purpose for their writing, which includes interesting stories as well as a wider range of non-fiction texts. Their spelling of common words is generally accurate and they write neatly. Most 11 year-olds write thoughtfully and experiment with vocabulary to improve the effect of their work. Most write legibly and cursively, using appropriate punctuation. They spell accurately, review and edit their writing to improve its clarity and presentation.
9. Standards in mathematics are well above average for 7 year-olds and above average for 11 year-olds. Pupils' numeracy skills are continuing to improve at both key stages and they are becoming increasingly adept at problem solving. This is as a result of teachers' confidence in using the National Numeracy strategy and the interesting and appropriate activities they effectively use to ensure pupils of different abilities make progress. Pupils enjoy mathematics and look forward to learning and applying their knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the subject in which they achieve well.
10. Standards in science at the end of both key stages are around the national average. Two years ago they fell sharply but as a result of the introduction of a new policy, scheme of work and teacher training, there has been an improvement. In science, most 7 year-olds enjoy carrying out simple experiments. They observe carefully and discuss their findings confidently. They are beginning to have a good understanding of the natural and made world around them and have a sound knowledge of physical processes, including electrical circuits, sound and light. By 11 years-old, most pupils have developed the appropriate skills of fair-testing, comparison and prediction. They use these skills confidently when carrying out systematic investigations. They observe and record their findings accurately and draw conclusions based on a good understanding of the scientific processes. Pupils have a sound understanding of science, including the characteristics of materials, light and shadows, changing state and life processes.
11. Overall, standards in Information technology at the end of both key stages are below average. Although most pupils' attainment in word processing and handling data is as expected for their age, their use of controlling and modelling is generally below average. The school is aware of this shortcoming and has produced a new scheme of work that will be introduced fully in the next term.
12. Insufficient lessons could be observed in other subjects, including in religious education, to make a secure judgement about standards, but on the limited evidence available, most pupils' attainment is as expected for their age. By the time they leave school, all pupils can swim twenty-five metres and are aware of the principles of water safety.
13. High attaining pupils make good progress in mathematics because they are generally given thought-provoking problems that sustain their interest and lead on to further investigations.

However in science and writing, while their progress is satisfactory in Years 1-4, they are not challenged sufficiently as they are in Years 5/6. Insufficient attention is given to developing the creative skills necessary to extend both writing and scientific enquiry. The school is aware of this and has appropriate plans for improving the teaching and pupils' learning in these areas. The few gifted musicians in Key Stage 2 are well supported and make good progress.

14. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress as their learning is broken down into smaller steps. Teachers and assistants work effectively together to provide just the right amount of support and praise to enable these pupils to feel good about their achievements.
15. Generally, standards are improving and the school has the capacity to raise them higher, particularly in writing, science and information technology.

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

16. The pupils have a very good response to their school experience. Their attitudes to school, personal development and relationships are very good. While behaviour is now generally good, at the last inspection the behaviour of all pupils was very good. Attendance is good: this is an improvement since the last inspection when attendance was satisfactory.
17. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. Nearly all pupils are very enthusiastic about learning and come eagerly to school. They show a very high level of interest and are involved in the extensive and rich range of activities provided. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson, the teacher's quick fire questioning during mental maths kept the attention of all pupils and they were very enthusiastic with their responses. In a Year 4 music lesson on the layering of sound in composition, the pupils concentrated very well while doing their group performances. The pupils' attitudes are very good because of the generally good teaching and the interesting, well-prepared lessons.
18. In an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour, most pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and outside. The school functions as an orderly community. With few exceptions, pupils respond well to the school's clear routines when moving around. On the playgrounds and playing field pupils mix happily and play well together, showing a very caring attitude to others, particularly to the younger children. A concern was raised by a parent about the bad language used by some pupils. It is not possible to confirm or deny this concern as during the inspection no examples of bad language were heard. A parent was concerned that standards of behaviour have fallen since the last inspection. To a limited extent the inspection findings support this concern. Overall, the standards of behaviour are good, with many instances of very good behaviour. However, throughout the school there are a small number of boys in each class whose behaviour, at times is unsatisfactory. In a Year 6 music lesson, several boys were inattentive during a performance and noisy between songs. The class teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and when instances of unsatisfactory behaviour are handled skilfully, this lessens the disruption to the learning of others.
19. All pupils are very friendly and courteous to visitors, adults and to each other. They introduce themselves confidently and demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others. At lunch time, a pupil politely offered guidance to a visitor about the procedure for clearing away dinner plates, and a Year 6 pupil helped and supported a Year R child giving encouraging comments and reassurance until she was settled and able to eat. Even the youngest pupils talk confidently to visitors asking such questions as "*Do you like your job?*" and "*We like our school and hope you do*".

20. Pupils show respect for property and they handle resources with care, as in a Year 1 numeracy session when pupils carefully folded number lines and neatly stacked number squares.
21. The personal development of pupils is very good. They are very eager to volunteer for, and accept responsibility. They are fully involved in the daily routines of the school community and fulfil their duties with great enthusiasm and pride. Hall monitors help set out resources and operate the music for assembly. Year 6 pupils help the younger ones when lining up at the end of playtime. Year 2 pupils water plants and Year 6 pupils confidently give guided tours of the school to parents of pre school children. Throughout the school, pupils show initiative by helping each other spontaneously, or by extending their own learning without waiting to be told what to do. Under fives gave advice to each other about spelling in a language and literacy lesson. In a design and technology lesson, Year 1 pupils selected appropriate words from a range of resources to enable them to complete an extension activity – making a passport and a map - without the support of their class teacher. In a Year 6 music lesson, pupils organised themselves into groups and choose appropriate instruments for their task. Some pupils do independent extension work at home as they have enjoyed their project work at school.
22. Through assembly, circle time, the personal, social and health programme and religious education pupils reflect on their own experiences, express their feelings and respect, understand and empathise with the feelings of others. In a Year 2 science lesson, pupils listened very well to each other and approached the discussion respectfully, working together and showing interest in the work of others in their group. Pupils readily help and support each other's learning, working collaboratively in groups or in pairs. In a Year 6 music lesson, high levels of collaboration were seen in groups composing short rhythmic pieces. Pupils of differing abilities support and encourage each other, a high attaining pupil helped a slower reader, and pupils spontaneously applauded work read out by a special educational needs' pupil.
23. Attendance is good and above the national average. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted.

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

24. Overall, teaching is good throughout the school. 80% of the teaching is good or better. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection as there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the amount of good or better teaching has doubled. A third of the teaching of the under-fives is very good and nearly all the rest is good. In Key Stage 1, nearly two-thirds is good and the rest is sound. In Key Stage 2, just over a quarter is very good, nearly two-thirds good and the rest sound. Nearly all the teaching observed of English and mathematics is good or better.
25. Teaching of the under-fives is nearly all good or better. The temporary teacher is an asset to the school and works effectively with support staff to plan a rich and varied programme. Pupils come to school eagerly, want to learn and try hard to do their best. Staff know their pupils very well and show interest in their development. As a result, they plan activities that reflect pupils' maturity and prior attainment so that they make very good progress and quickly catch up with their language, mathematical and personal development.
26. While just over three-quarters of the teaching is good or better in both key stages, the best teaching occurs at the beginning and end of Key Stage 2. This is characterised by teaching that is lively and well matched to pupils' ages and capabilities, particularly as these classes have mixed year groups. Pupils make very good progress as they find the new knowledge and skills being introduced build easily on what they have learnt previously. Teachers have high expectations and are always checking to see that pupils are trying their best. Pupils know exactly what is required of them, are industrious and are developing independent study skills.

27. The numeracy strategy is firmly established and has ensured standards of attainment have improved through confident and imaginative teaching. The literacy initiative is having positive effects on speaking and listening but has not been so effective in reading and writing. The school reports that teachers felt they needed to follow the national guidance rigidly and as a consequence, not enough attention has been paid to breadth in reading and creativity in writing. However, standards have been maintained around the national average because of the focus on basic literacy skills and the school is discussing how to make learning in English more adventurous. The use of information and communication technology in teaching is at an early stage. Teachers are keen to incorporate new technologies and all have been developing their professional skills and knowledge through training and practice. Developments in this area are a priority for the school over the next academic year.
28. Teachers' planning is good and takes account of the different rates and stages of pupils' learning; a concern of a few parents with children in mixed-age classes is not supported by inspection findings. Teachers effectively interpret national, local authority and commercial schemes of work to prepare their lesson plans and ensure the work covered not only meet requirements but adds additional interest and is based, where ever possible, on first-hand experience.
29. Although teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well, there are instances in all classes when individual boys are not attentive. While this causes only a small disruption to the learning of others, teachers are not sufficiently successful in helping these pupils acquire self-discipline. Often, the boys are slow to respond to the teachers' requests and then, re-offend in later lessons.
30. Teachers use a range of methods but report that their experience with the literacy and numeracy strategies has been most helpful in providing a structure for lessons. The process of clarifying what learning is intended, having core teaching points, group work at different levels of difficulty and a plenary session to check pupils' understanding has been skilfully adapted for other subjects. This has improved teaching and pupils' progress.
31. Teachers, support staff and voluntary helpers work well together to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in learning activities. Teaching is adapted and varied to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are organised into groups based on their prior attainment for English and mathematics and learning activities are generally effectively matched to challenge and support high and low attaining pupils. This is particularly apparent for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers thoroughly brief assistants and helpers to make sure they know what learning is intended and how the activities can be broken down into easier learning steps. Staff and helpers are particularly good at using questions and praise to give lower attaining pupils confidence. This helps them succeed, improves their self-esteem and, consequently, they make good progress. High attaining pupils are not always encouraged to try out new ideas and extend their learning. In Years 5/6, this is done by the teacher setting these pupils suitable investigations that are often followed up at home. Some parents were not sure about the value of these topics but the inspection found them enriching and enjoyed by nearly all pupils. Homework is also used effectively for the under fives and in Key Stage 1 to re-enforce early reading skills.
32. Teachers know their pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and use this information effectively when checking their progress. Generally, this ensures pupils do not often become frustrated in their learning. Teachers and support staff are quick to notice when there is a problem and intervene appropriately, not by giving answers but making suggestions to help pupils become more confident at finding out for themselves. Teachers regularly mark work but do not give sufficient guidance, particularly for the older pupils, about what they need to do to improve. Currently, the school is trying different ways of setting targets with pupils to give them clearer guidance but this initiative has not yet had time to impact on raising standards.

33. As a result of the large proportion of good or better teaching, by the time pupils leave school, aged 11, they are confident learners and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

34. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all pupils: that provided for the under fives is a particular strength of the school. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2 is good. There is a high level of emphasis on literacy and numeracy throughout the school. There have been major improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection. The shortcomings in the under fives provision, design and technology, art and English have been remedied. However, while the information and communication technology programme has recently been revised, it has not yet been fully implemented.
35. The curriculum is planned systematically and there is comprehensive long, medium and short term planning that appropriately takes account of the split year classes in Key Stage 2. Pupils gain a great deal from teachers' use of national guidance on literacy and numeracy. The school reports that the guidance has been most helpful in curriculum planning. Pupils have a good quality and range of learning opportunities in speaking and listening, mathematics, religious education and science. The coverage in the other subjects and aspects is sound as the school is already implementing national guidance to be introduced in September 2000. Better provision for writing, science and information technology has been identified by the school as an area for improvement.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school with activities well planned to match their stage and rate of learning. Individual education plans are detailed and the guidance is specific and helpful for staff. They are regularly reviewed in partnership with parents. The school is also developing a programme to support gifted pupils, from which the few talented musicians are already benefiting.
37. Pupils take part in a broad and rich range of extra curricular activities including "beginners" and "intermediate" recorder, the Green Team (environment), cricket, rugby, cross country, football, choir/drama, chess, athletics, textiles and tennis. Groups are organised mostly across lunchtimes to allow wider access and to avoid disruption to bus arrangements. The majority of staff are involved, including the headteacher and the school secretary. Pupils also have very good opportunities for a wide range of educational visits to support their learning, including a Year 2 visit to a museum in Weymouth and a Key Stage 2 visit planned for the millennium dome. There are residential visits for older pupils, which support their personal and social as well as academic development. Curriculum enrichment week is another opportunity offered by the school to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. A few parents felt this provision was not sufficient; a view not supported by inspection findings.
38. All pupils have good access to curriculum opportunities in the classroom and beyond. The school makes every effort to ensure every pupil knows what is available and is helped to participate fully. Work for low and high attaining pupils is planned in lessons in order to provide an appropriate level of support and challenge, depending on their capability, but is not always sufficiently demanding in writing and science.
39. The curriculum meets requirements and provides appropriately for sex, drug and health education. The religious education curriculum follows the locally agreed syllabus. The personal, social and health education programme is good and reflects the school's mission of "Living and learning together".
40. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good and effectively enriches and supports the curriculum. The rural location means that the school has to work very hard to tap the limited resources available within its locality and beyond. Links with local

businesses and industry continue to be developed. During the forthcoming curriculum enrichment week, many visitors have been invited to talk about their work, amongst these are a web designer, doctor, nurse, jockey and journalist. Visits by members of the local community extend pupils' knowledge, for example, demonstrations of sheep shearing, weaving, spinning and cookery. The school regularly provides after-school seasonal coaching sessions with outside experts. This summer term a six-week cricket course has been provided. Other visitors not only enrich curriculum provision but also make positive contributions to pupils' personal development. Visits by community police officers and cycling courses increase pupils' awareness of personal and road safety issues. There are regular links with the church and rector through assemblies held in the local church. The head teacher and the rector work closely together on the content of school assemblies. The locality is well used as a learning resource. Year 3/4 visited the library and effective use was made of the village to support geography and history projects. Further afield, trips are made to the Glastonbury rural life museum, the millennium dome and Weymouth museum. However, opportunities to link with schools around the world via the internet are, as yet, limited because of difficulties caused by the local authority's network.

41. The school has very good mutually supportive relationships with its many partner institutions. The head teacher makes visits to local playgroups and nurseries and their staff and children are invited to the school. There are very positive formal links through meetings and very good communication through the local authority's early years' advisor. These contacts and visits contribute towards the pupils' smooth transfer to school. There are many opportunities for informal contact with local primaries, for example, through special events and sporting occasions, and more formally through federation meetings.
42. For pupils joining the school other than in Year R, there are very good procedures to ease them into the life of the school. This includes visits and a child "buddy", a teacher mentor for Key Stage 1 pupils and another for Key Stage 2 pupils. The mentors keep in regular contact with the parents throughout the settling in period. Pupils transfer to three secondary and two middle schools causing organisational difficulties for the school, which it skilfully overcomes. There are many occasions for Year 5/6 pupils to make formal and informal visits. Secondary staff make visits, take assemblies and spend time with Year 6 pupils; after examinations, older secondary pupils spend time at Upton Noble school helping staff and pupils. Transfer arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are very good and sensitively handled. Year 6 pupils feel well prepared for the next stage in their education.
43. The school very successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. There is good provision for promoting spirituality and very good provision for the promotion of moral, social and cultural development. These findings broadly reflect the findings of the last inspection and confirm these aspects as a strength of the school.
44. The promotion of pupils' spiritual development is good. There are opportunities within curriculum planning to promote knowledge and insight into values and beliefs. Staff are working on a school approach to the planning and promotion of spirituality in every subject. At present teachers sometimes, but not systematically, plan learning activities that encourage pupils to respond sensitively, explore their own and others' feelings, and reflect on what they have heard or experienced. Such activities are appropriate to the pupils' age and maturity and staff sensitively guide and encourage this reflection. The youngest pupils marvelled at changes in themselves since birth, and at how a camera works. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, pupils experienced joy and excitement at the impending birth of a baby. In a circle discussion time, Year 3 pupils shared thoughts on how to support someone experiencing sadness. Pupils' self esteem is consistently promoted throughout the school through the use of praise and other rewards. The attractive displays of pupils' work and the general use of plenary sessions reflect the value teachers have for pupils' ideas.
45. Pupils' moral development is very well promoted. Pupils are made aware of what is expected of them and the differences between right and wrong through informal daily

routines and class discussion. The school's moral code fosters such values as courtesy, fairness, caring and respect for each other. The school's aims and the application of Christian principles effectively support moral development. There are very good planned opportunities for pupils in both key stages to develop and express moral values and extend their social and personal understanding, particularly through well-chosen stories. In a Key Stage 2 assembly, the story about trustworthiness allowed pupils the opportunity to explore the effect of dishonesty and deceit; Year R children discussed the values of right and wrong in circle time; and Year 4/5, working on a history topic, discussed within a group the reasons for punishment. Opportunities to express moral values are also provided in the school's support of charities.

46. There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils' social development. Many opportunities are provided for all pupils to take on responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. The head teacher, all staff and voluntary helpers provide very good role models treating all pupils, visitors and each other with respect. All adults display very effective team working skills. Throughout the curriculum and across both key stages, staff plan very many opportunities for pupils to learn how to relate to each other by working in pairs and in small and large groups. In a design and technology lesson, Year 1 pupils in mixed ability groups happily shared resources and ideas; in music, Year 5/6 pupils worked very co-operatively in groups, discussing and practising their composition. The school actively encourages pupils to converse over lunch and this is reflected in their good interpersonal skills.
47. The school plans a wide variety of other activities to promote social development, for example, a varied and rich programme of extra curricular activities and some inter school events such as football, encourages team work, competition and fair play. School productions, concerts and visits provide pupils with the social skills involved when working with large numbers of people; and a residential experience for Year 5/6 pupils at Bluff Cove enhances social development. The school helps all pupils to take responsibility by giving them a variety of duties within class and around the school. Pupils are able to voice opinions at regular house assemblies; this acts as a school council, and the school responds effectively to their suggestions.
48. The promotion of pupils' cultural development is very good. The school actively supports and teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the richness and diversity of other cultures both through curricular provision and an extensive range of extra curricular activities. Very positive contributions to pupils' cultural development come from aspects of English, religious education, geography, history, art, physical education, music, science and design and technology. In history pupils have very many opportunities to appreciate life and culture in other times and from other cultures; these have been enriched by visits to museums. Collective worship themes such as the Chinese New Year, Roman gods, Mayan culture and the rich and varied programme of music used in assemblies ensures appreciation of aspect from other cultures. Opportunities given to study the work and styles of many artists are reflected in the very good examples of pupils' work in the aboriginal style displayed in Year 5/6 classroom. Visitors have added to this rich programme provided by the school. These include a local artist who has made living willow sculptures in the grounds, an archaeologist, visiting theatre groups and a samba drummer. Physical, mental and creative traditions are very well supported in the range of clubs provided by the school, such as football, chess and drama. The school has a very active approach and makes very good use of special opportunities to enrich pupils' cultural experiences. For example, the drama club has visited a theatre in Bath. Also, the school has established links with other schools around the world.

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

49. The school provides good care of its pupils. This reflects the findings of the last report. The school ensures the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils, doing all that it reasonably can to protect the pupils in its charge from harm.
50. Very good relationships have been developed between staff and pupils, and the pupils' needs are put first. This has created a happy, friendly caring school community. Even recently appointed teachers know their pupils very well, are aware of their various needs and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Prompt informal support is given to children showing distress during daily routines and lessons. Consequently, pupils feel that they are cared for and have confidence in all adults for advice and support. The school takes good care of all pupils with particular needs and works closely with parents and other agencies to support these children.
51. Effective child protection procedures are well established and staff are well aware of their responsibilities. The curriculum is used to help pupils protect themselves, as in the personal, social and health education programme where aspects of safety are covered; for example, traffic, strangers, safe medicines, safe places, people who help us and coping with peer pressure. The day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision and awareness of hazards within and beyond school, creates a sense of the importance of health and safety of pupils. Following a national incident, the absence of pupils is immediately followed up until their whereabouts is established.
52. At the end of the day, pupils travelling by coach are safely escorted by staff from the playground to the bus. Staff often stress safe working practices to children: pool rules for safe movement around their swimming pool, and in handling equipment in class. Regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out and deficiencies quickly remedied.
53. The registers are accurately kept and monitored by the secretary who checks for any unusual patterns of absence. The very few unauthorised absences have been successfully followed up and resolved. However, the school does not actively discourage parents not to take holidays in term time.
54. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. There is a climate of good behaviour in this orderly community with clear routines and class rules agreed between pupils and teachers. There is a reward system of house points and certificates. Staff have high expectations of discipline and good behaviour and generally minimise disruption through their skilful handling of pupils in lessons. The lunch-time supervisors have devised their own behaviour support system with a 'table of the week', celebrated in the Friday assembly. High profile is given to intolerance of bullying, and the head teacher monitors any incidents and deals with them effectively.
55. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The school believes that personal development is as important as academic progress and, therefore, celebrates more than academic achievement. It acknowledges pupils' achievements in terms of effort, attitude and behaviour through the consistent use of praise and reward systems, such as certificates and house points. Pupils who experience difficulty with a specific area of personal development are encouraged to improve this aspect. Teachers and assistants support these pupils well and help them set their own individual targets.
56. Assessment procedures are generally sound in both key stages and good for the under fives. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are involved in carrying out an evaluation of their own work, where they make judgements on what they find easy and where they have difficulties. This procedure is not yet carried on throughout the school. However, samples of pupils' work are regularly collected and kept as a record of individual achievement. These records

are used effectively by teachers when making end of year judgements about pupils' progress. Generally, strengths and weaknesses of pupils are clearly identified through the assessment of work and regular tests. Although this information is used to help plan teaching and learning activities, it is not sufficiently analysed to identify individuals and groups and set challenging targets for improvement. Currently, targets are generally predictions based on results of national tests and not enough attention is given to pupils' capabilities and whether they are under-performing.

57. Pupils with special educational needs have their progress regularly assessed through careful monitoring of individual education plans, in partnership with parents, and from feedback given by classroom assistants.

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

58. The school has good links with parents. Parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good and these links are highly effective. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when partnership with parents was only satisfactory.
59. Parents are very supportive of the school and are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. They find the school very approachable, feel welcomed and appreciated. The quality of the information provided by the school is generally good. There are regular newsletters letters from the head teacher. The school is very proactive in seeking parents' views and as a result of a recent communications' survey, class newsletters have been introduced giving general information and helpful information about what pupils will be studying. The rural location of the school means there is very little informal contact with a majority of parents, and this initiative is designed to help overcome this shortcoming.
60. The school prospectus contains helpful information. It is currently being redesigned as it is missing a significant amount of required information. The governors' annual report to parents is also being revised to meet statutory requirements as it has minor omissions.
61. Curriculum meetings are held but are not well attended. School and home work well in partnership, sharing information about pupils, their learning and how they feel. This partnership starts well with very good induction procedures and continues through a range of good formal and informal procedures for sharing information to support pupils. This good exchange is effective because parents find the school very approachable and know that any concerns will be dealt with immediately.
62. Parents have three formal opportunities a year to meet with the teachers to discuss their children's progress. In the end of year reports, descriptions of what pupils can do are not detailed enough to ensure that all parents understand the reasons for the levels of attainment and specific targets for improvement are not given. Reports for the reception class do not comply with requirements, as they do not give information on the nationally recommended areas of learning for the under fives. Most parents are satisfied with the information that they are given, but a small number feel that the school does not keep them well informed. To the extent outlined, these concerns are justified.
63. The school has a very good range of productive and consistent links with parents, that help pupils learn. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is actively sought and welcomed. Many parents contribute directly by helping in classrooms, hearing readers or accompanying school trips. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson, a parent helper made a very good contribution to the learning of a group of pupils through sensitive support.
64. Parents are given clear information on homework expectations. They support their children's learning at home, with reading in the early years and increasingly demanding homework as pupils get older. Home/school link books are well used by teachers and parents to pass on

information about pupils' progress. Parental guidance on homework tasks is sometimes helpfully provided and this improves parents' ability to support their children's learning.

65. The parent teacher association makes a very good contribution to the life of the school and pupils' learning. As well as social activities, additional resources and practical help, it sees itself as an extra link between parents and school. Members like to be involved in many aspects of the school life. For example, they formed a traffic action group, which still monitors the difficult situation caused by the daily arrival and departure of the pupils.
66. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be fully involved in the termly meeting and annual review of their child's individual education plan. Parents value the level of support provided by the school and their quick response for specific help when needed.
67. The school makes great efforts to work closely with parents and often consults them on policy issues, such as the recent good home/school agreement, homework and behaviour policies and the communications policy. A small number of parents did not believe that the school worked closely with parents, the inspection did not find evidence to justify this concern. When parents are involved, this partnership improves their children's progress.

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

68. The leadership and management of the headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher and a very effective governing body, is a strength of the school.
69. Since her appointment in January 1999, the headteacher has worked extremely hard and sensitively to establish effective teams of staff and governors. There is a climate that values and encourages confidence, trust and openness in the common purpose of continually improving teaching and pupils' learning. The headteacher has a collaborative leadership style that has ensured governors, staff, pupils and parents contribute to discussions about important decisions, such as building the new library and information and communication technology resource area.
70. The headteacher reviewed management roles with staff when she first arrived, a key issue of the last inspection. However, the long absence of a senior, experienced teacher through illness, has meant co-ordination of English and the early years has had to be shared out temporarily amongst other teachers. Implementation of the National Literacy initiative has not suffered because of effective team-work by the head teacher and two volunteer teachers. The new Foundation Stage is being introduced appropriately and planning is already in place.
71. All co-ordinators now systematically monitor teachers' subject plans to check that the National Curriculum is covered and look at samples of pupils' work to see that learning is at an appropriate level for pupils who learn at different rates. The head teacher and deputy are beginning to observe teaching and pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy lessons and discussing their findings with each teacher. The science co-ordinator will begin to monitor colleagues through team teaching in the near future. As well as helping individual staff improve, common areas for development have been identified, such as encouraging pupils to be more involved in setting improvement targets for themselves and teachers sharpening up their questioning in oral sessions.
72. Governors are very well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, not only through the headteacher's regular detailed and clear reports to the governing body but also because so many are frequent visitors to classrooms where they act as voluntary helpers. As a result, discussions in governors' meetings are clearly focussed on raising standards, ensuring funding is appropriately targeted at priorities and holding the headteacher accountable for her actions. The governing body and committees very

effectively cover the required areas of responsibilities and operate very efficiently in checking that money is spent as planned and budgets are not exceeded. The headteacher and governors are helped considerably by the very good administrative support they receive that allows them to concentrate on their shared and separate responsibilities.

73. Development priorities are compiled collaboratively by staff and governors following an annual review of progress and standards undertaken by the headteacher, deputy and co-ordinators. The views of parents and pupils are also taken into account through questionnaires and surveys. While the current school development plan contains appropriate priorities and it is clear what needs to be done, by whom and at what cost, targets to improve the attainment of pupils are generally not specific enough to be measured. This makes it difficult for staff and governors to evaluate the effects of their decisions and actions. However, the school is on the right course to continue to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
74. The school is aware that new technologies are not yet being used widely enough because teachers still lack skills in some areas and new equipment has yet to be used to its full potential. Outdoor provision for the youngest children is inappropriate and inadequate and the lack of an accessible library area inhibits pupils' learning. Plans are well in hand to develop these areas and funding has been earmarked for staff training, the acquisition of up-to-date equipment and support material and the building and refurbishment of a new library and information and communication technology area.
75. Effective use is generally made of staff, accommodation and learning resources. Teachers are regularly appraised and given good support for their professional development. This has had a beneficial effect in raising standards in literacy, numeracy and science. Other staff training is also supported and assistants and midday meal supervisors meet regularly with the headteacher and deputy to discuss their concerns and developments. The induction of the newly qualified teacher is reported as being very effective but other induction arrangements have not been so good. The school is reviewing how new staff can be better supported. Outdoor play areas are very good and have been developed creatively to incorporate the natural environment, such as using willow tree sculptures, to make attractive shelters from the sun. In addition to the information and communication technology improvements, the inadequate stock of non-fiction books is currently being tackled from the recent allocation of national grants.
76. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the principles of best value and apply them rigorously. Standards are generally favourable when compared to similar schools and spending on new ideas, such as the refurbishment of the library and information and communication technology facilities, is carefully considered against other priorities. Quotations are sought and contracts only agreed after quality issues have been taken into account when looking at price differences. The school community is always consulted on major issues and the views of all the partners, including the pupils, considered. The school gives good value for money.

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

77. The governors, headteacher and senior managers should:

- Raise standards of attainment in information technology for pupils aged 7 and 11 years-old by (1,11,141)
  - helping teachers improve their confidence in using new technologies to support their teaching and pupils' learning across subjects;
  - implementing curriculum programmes that show clearly how information and communication technology will be introduced at an appropriate level to match the different stages and rates of learning of pupils throughout the school in all subjects.
- Improve the progress of more able pupils in writing and science by (13,27,31,38,94,113)
  - supporting teachers' planning and introduce a wider range of challenging activities that encourage pupils to develop their creative writing and investigative skills.
- Improve the behaviour of boys by (18,29)
  - raising teachers' expectations of what is acceptable and helping them acquire effective ways of developing pupils' self discipline.
- Refine assessment procedures to identify more accurately individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses in order to (56,73)
  - enable teachers to set realistic targets with pupils to improve and develop their learning;
  - give co-ordinators information to check developments in their subjects; and,
  - provide governors with specific measures with which they can evaluate the effectiveness of their spending decisions.
- Implement plans to develop the school library and the outside play area for the under fives. (75,83,101)

In addition to these key issues, the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- pupils' personal study and research skills (7,9)
- marking of pupils' work (32)
- school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents (60)
- reports on pupils' progress to parents (62)
- activities for pupils waiting for swimming lessons (149)

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

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

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	22	59	20	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**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		169
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		17

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### **Attendance**

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	4.7	School data	0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	9	11
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (88)	92 (84)	100 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	9
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	25	26	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96	100	88
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	11	4	15
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science

Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	3	2	3
	Total	13	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (82)	80 (68)	93 (98)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)
<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	4	2	3
	Total	14]	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93	80	87
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

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

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

#### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
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#### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
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Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.4
Average class size	28.5

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

	£
Total income	298,011
Total expenditure	293,950
Expenditure per pupil	1,690
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,622
Balance carried forward to next year	20,683

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

64%

Number of questionnaires sent out

100

Number of questionnaires returned

64

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	42	3	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	52	45	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	53	9	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	41	14	2	0
The teaching is good.	48	45	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	45	13	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	30	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	34	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	48	14	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	41	44	6	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	53	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	48	13	0	6

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

- The progress of pupils in mixed aged classes.
- The amount of sporting competitions supported.
- Inappropriate language in the playground.

## **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**

78. Provision for 10 children, who were under five at the time of the inspection, is very good. Children make a good start to school through an effective induction programme which parents fully appreciate. Pupils enter school with just below average attainment in language and literacy and numeracy and below average in their personal and social development. However in their first year in school, they make very good progress because of the good or better teaching they receive. The current teacher, replacing the permanent post-holder, has created a very positive environment in which children have developed good attitudes to school and become confident learners. Many have already reached the nationally recommended learning goals before they are five and all achieve them by the time they start compulsory schooling. This is particularly evident in language and literacy where pupils have a very good phonic knowledge and a high level of enjoyment of reading, stories and rhymes.

#### **Personal and social**

79. Children develop their personal and social skills very effectively through a broad range of opportunities provided by the teacher and learning support assistant. Staff know their pupils very well and successfully help them to acquire a high level of self-esteem and confidence. Children's efforts are praised and rewarded through printed stamps on recorded work and reading diaries as well as class applause when appropriate. Children have good relationships with each other and the adults in the class. They have a very clear understanding of right and wrong because expectations are clear. At the start of each day, the children show initiative and a level of independence as they confidently select activities within well-established and clear routines. Children readily share and co-operate with each other in the wide range of activities planned for them. When working on a writing activity with a real purpose, an invitation to a meal, pupils were eager to get on with the task after spontaneously thanking the teacher for preparing the invitation templates. They shared materials and ideas, developing skills of collaboration and negotiation. Afterwards, children were able to explain their choices and correct mistakes. They are very appreciative of each other's feelings, as shown at the start of the day when a child immediately volunteered to look after another in need of support. The children are very eager and enthusiastic learners because the teacher has established an appropriate environment with a range of interesting and well planned learning tasks. She uses a variety of teaching methods that motivates children to want to keep on learning.

#### **Language and Literacy**

80. Children make a good start in language and literacy. They respond well to the strong emphasis on speaking and listening and readily engage with adults in conversations about their tasks or things relating to themselves. Children respond very well to effective questioning which helps to reinforce and extend their learning. This was shown when working on invitations where the children were asked, "*How could you get Mr Wolf to visit you?*" This encouraged them to share ideas and answer further questions, building on their own experiences. Children enjoy books, handle them carefully and know that print carries meaning. They have an awareness of the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts and select either as a book to take home to share with parents. Generally, children read very well and are happy to share their ideas with others including aspects of a story they like best. Children have a very good knowledge of phonics, using this as a major strategy when they meet new words. This provides a very firm foundation for their literacy development as they move into Key Stage 1. During the shared reading of a text "*What's the time Mr Wolf?*"

children were enthusiastic and showed good understanding of the use of appropriate emphasis and intonation. In written tasks, children generally have very well formed handwriting and are making a good start to cursive writing. They are able to write for a range of purposes. Children approach language and literacy with confidence because of the teacher's and assistant's high expectations coupled to encouragement. The environment provided is rich with language where children's work is valued and celebrated.

### **Mathematical Development**

81. Numeracy is a focus for all children and routines are regularly used to reinforce their understanding. Children counted around the circle with the even numbers being said in a louder voice, which enabled pupils to learn a difficult concept in an enjoyable way. The teacher managed the activity sensitively using their mistakes to extend their knowledge and understanding. Children use mathematical vocabulary with confidence because when new words are introduced, they are explained and reinforced by the teacher. They are given a wide range of challenges. In a session on time, some were working on counting tasks using a 1 minute timer, other using dice and some working on days of the week. Children of different abilities explain with confidence what they have been learning and use the relevant mathematical language appropriately. For example, "more than" and "less than" as when a child responded that they had counted "more than Lucy in a minute" and "less than Jack". Nearly all children are on course to exceed the recommended goals in mathematical development by the end of the reception year.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

82. Children are given a wide variety of rich experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are developing a sound understanding of technology, readily using the computer for language and mathematical focused activities. They are beginning to understand the past and are involved in a project, well supported by a parent, where they are looking at photographs of themselves as babies and then taking an instant picture of themselves for comparison. This also gives them a sense of wonder at the way they have changed over time. Children have found out about and identified features in the local area and drawn maps of their journey to school. They are also busy developing their knowledge and understanding of their environment, planting tubs and containers with summer flowers. Children are developing their skills of discrimination and have an understanding of the world around them including the school community and the village.

### **Physical Development**

83. Children's physical development is well provided for in terms of classroom space, hall times and opportunities to swim when appropriate. However, the outside space adjacent to the classroom is inadequate as a learning area. It crosses a pathway, which slopes steeply to another building, and is not designated for play. Children move confidently, are aware of their own and others' space, follow simple commands and respond to a range of signals, including voice and whistle as the recognised method at the pool. Swimming sessions are particularly well organised with the effective support of parent helpers. Children are developing confidence in swimming, entering the pool and participating in a breadth of age-appropriate activities, including "being beans" – jumping, holding knees to their chest and floating. They make both a physical and mental effort to listen carefully, respond correctly and to think before they act. Children use a range of small equipment with a high level of skill and co-ordination as demonstrated in their work on making model mice, where they formed cones and stapled them. Their handling skills are well developed through activities such as cutting, sticking, drawing and painting. They also have good control in their use of pencils, pens and brushes.

## **Creative Development**

84. Children are given a wide range of creative development opportunities. A variety of stimulating activities are well planned to match the age and maturity of the class. Pupils make good progress in art and music. They carry out creative tasks sensibly, handling potentially messy materials with care. They concentrate and take pride in their work. They sing well, keep a rhythm and enjoy music-making, as in the well organised session on the "Dingly, Dangly Scarecrow". Children respond confidently to challenges and problem-solving. When asked to make decisions on how to fix the edges of a semi-circle to make a cone, they gave due consideration to the choice of using either a stapler, glue or sticky tape.

## **Teaching**

85. A third of teaching in the early years is very good and nearly all the rest is good. The teacher and classroom assistant work well together as a strong team, effectively planning a rich, interesting and varied programme. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when aspects of the early years provision were unsatisfactory. The planning is good and sessions are well organised with use already being made of the new Early Learning Goals to support children's learning. Pupils' progress is very well monitored and individuals' strengths and weaknesses are regularly recorded. This information is used effectively to plan the next stage in the children's learning and is shared appropriately with other staff to ease the transition into Key Stage 1. The early years provision is further supported by having a designated early years' governor.

## **ENGLISH**

86. Since the previous inspection, there has been steady improvement in raising standards, particularly in writing. Assessment results at both key stages from 1996 to 1999 have generally been better than the national trend. The school reports that this is mainly because there have been significant changes to the planning and teaching of literacy through the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. All classes have introduced the Literacy Hour and this is having a positive impact on teaching and pupils' learning.
87. The results of the 1999 assessments and tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that standards are above average when compared with all schools in both reading and writing. These results are above those in similar schools. Overall, the number of pupils not reaching the level expected for their age is lower than nationally. The proportion achieving higher levels is well above the national average for reading and writing.
88. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, assessment results show that standards are well above the national average in English. Generally, these results are also better than those achieved by similar schools. The number of pupils not reaching the level expected for their age is below average whilst the proportion reaching a higher level in English is above the national average. At both key stages overall, the performance of girls is about the same as boys: this is against the national trend and is a better performance by boys nationally. Teachers' assessments at both key stages are the same as these national test results.
89. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are generally lower than last year's national assessment results for the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. The entry assessment profile for both these groups indicates that there are more low attaining pupils when compared to last year's classes. However, these pupils are achieving well and those in Year 6 have made particularly good progress.

90. The school has set specific annual targets to continue to raise standards of literacy but has yet to set a clear target for 2002. Arrangements for improving standards in literacy closely follow the National Literacy Strategy and are effective.
91. The quality of English teaching is generally good. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory and most were either good or very good. There were examples of very good teaching in Years 3 and 6. Similarly the quality of pupils' learning was good overall and never less than satisfactory. Pupils learn well because teachers plan effectively, following National Literacy Strategy guidelines. The structure of the Literacy Hour also enables them to utilise a range of pupil groupings and demonstrate good teaching skills. In Years 2, 3 /4 and 5/ 6 teachers displayed very good questioning skills, focusing on individuals rather than asking the whole class to respond. This enabled them to challenge different groups of pupils appropriately. A Year 2 Literacy Hour lesson demonstrated this to great effect. The pupils learned how to frame questions about snails and seek answers from the "big book" text. Pupils wrote questions on strips of paper and stuck them onto a board. This allowed the teacher to analyse not only their text level questions but the handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation in a positive and supportive manner. Pupils found answers to, 'How are snails born?' 'Who are their attackers?' 'How do they move?', making snail books for a younger class.
92. Teachers in both key stages are successfully introducing a wide range of writing for pupils that takes into account narrative, poetry and different types of non-fiction, such as persuasive leaflets, information booklets and letters of thanks, with a real sense of audience in mind. This is more extensive in some classes than in others. In Year 6 pupils have very good opportunities to consolidate learning by writing a wide range of texts before moving on to secondary school.
93. All written work is marked, often with encouraging comments, although they are not always constructive ones. The Year 3 /4 pilot scheme of setting targets for pupils alongside the marking is a constructive approach and is successfully raising the standards of writing in this class. The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They are well motivated, work hard and, with just a few chatty exceptions, are productive.
94. Generally, the progress high attaining pupils make is satisfactory although some pupils could be challenged more during class sessions. There is not always sufficient direction from teachers and writing activities for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 to 5 are often not demanding enough to develop their creativity.
95. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the overall supportive learning environment, especially the contribution made by class assistants during Literacy Hour group work.
96. As a consequence, by the end of both key stages, most pupils are sufficiently confident readers and writers for their age. They are very confident speakers and listeners.
97. In speaking and listening, most pupils speak well, expressing themselves clearly and listen attentively to others. Year 2 pupils explore and communicate their ideas effectively in a range of contexts. They are confident in talking to adults about their work, the trips they have been on and their school likes and dislikes, with swimming a current and topical favourite. They are aware of a more formal vocabulary and tone required for these situations. Year 6 pupils give very thoughtful and considered answers to questions and demonstrate a good range of vocabulary and expression. The older pupils' skills in this area were evident during informal lunchtime discussions and more formal talk, when explaining a computer program or discussing their reading choices in a group.
98. By the time they are seven years old, most pupils read well, using a range of strategies. Pupils can break down regular words and build them up using phonics, as one boy did to work out 'pretending'. Most pupils read accurately, although some higher attaining pupils do

not always self correct or read difficult texts they have chosen for meaning. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 read at an appropriate level. Pupils in Year 6 are able to discuss the features of the books they read such as genre, character and they are beginning to explore themes and make reasoned predictions. Most pupils at Key Stage 2 also meet national expectations for reading. Pupils in both key stages read a range of books including poetry, fiction and non-fiction although the latter is only occasionally a choice for most readers. Older pupils invariably choose fiction, although poetry was a favourite for some, reflecting a teaching emphasis. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading, most read at home regularly and visit the local library when one is close by. The school library area is infrequently used, inaccessible at times due to its location in the hall and has limited stocks of books. Non-fiction texts are particularly poorly represented. This has a negative impact on standards of reading as pupils' range and the opportunity to develop library and research skills are restricted. However, pupils' attitudes to reading are best summed up by a lower attaining reader in Year 2 who said, *'I love reading!'*

99. Most of the pupils in Year 2 write interesting stories and increasingly write a wider range of non-fiction texts. Pupils have a keen sense of audience and purpose in this class, making leaflets, pocket books, reflective comments on works of art and labels for displays. They spell common words accurately and write neatly. Most pupils reach national standards in writing although there are fewer higher attainers in writing than in reading - a balance achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 between reading and writing. Pupils in Year 6 successfully consolidate their knowledge of a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry text types. Standards are in line with national expectations and pupils of all abilities make good progress in writing during their final year. Their writing is lively and thoughtful with interesting and often adventurous vocabulary choices. In one piece of writing, pupils analysed the poem, "The Tyger" by Blake. One pupil identified metaphor, rhyming structure and went on to comment on the deeper meaning, *"...because of Blake's religious questions many people despised him"*. Most pupils write legibly and cursively, using a wide range of punctuation. They spell harder words accurately and are competent in improving their work, using draft books and the computer. Two pupils from the school won prizes in a national writing competition to celebrate the millennium.
100. Teachers effectively develop pupils' speaking and listening skills in other subjects as great importance is placed on discussion, particularly in class sessions at the start and end of lessons. A greater focus has been placed on writing skills and pupils are beginning to recognise the importance of using specialist words to give greater clarity. This is evident in mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. While pupils are generally competent at reading for information, the limited stock of non-fiction books hampers the further development of their research and study skills.
101. The English co-ordinator is on long-term illness leave and consequently the headteacher has taken over the role of co-ordinator, supported by other teachers. Due to the experience and commitment of the staff team they have made an effective contribution to raising standards of literacy at both key stages. Effective action includes the monitoring of planning and teaching by the headteacher during the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, the assessment of writing against standard assessment test descriptions, increasing the book stock and introducing pilot target setting procedures. The headteacher has clearly identified actions that need to be taken to further improve standards in English. There are plans to build a new library and extend book resources, especially the non-fiction stock. The headteacher also recognises the need to extend the provision for drama within lessons, in addition to the annual productions and drama club. The target setting scheme is being extended which will benefit all pupils and is intended to be an effective way of building in challenge for the higher attaining writers in Years 1 to 5. The school is building up a wealth of data on pupil performance, which the headteacher is beginning to analyse carefully. The school is in a strong position to build on the foundations established in English and continue to ensure pupils make good progress.

## MATHEMATICS

102. Standards in mathematics at the end of both key stages are continuing to improve as they have been since the last inspection. For pupils, aged 7, standards are well above average and for 11 year-olds, above average. The school reports that this is because of the positive effect on teaching and pupils' learning of the National Numeracy initiative.
103. The learning of pupils as they move through the school allows them to make good progress as a result of generally good teaching that focuses on the acquisition of number skills and problem solving. This is a recent development brought about by the introduction of the numeracy strategy. Teachers report that the training they received has helped them structure lessons better and bring more variety and interest to teaching and pupils' learning. In particular, the focus on mathematical mental thinking and encouraging discussion about the different ways solutions are arrived at, has helped pupils of all abilities understand more about the patterns and relationships in mathematics. This has been of special benefit to high attaining pupils, who have thrived on the stimulating and thought provoking problems they have been set in most classes.
104. Pupils enjoy the introductory class session developing mental strategies and join in enthusiastically, trying their best to work out calculations quickly and accurately. However, they are not afraid of making mistakes and teachers encourage risk taking and then support pupils in working out solutions step by step, to discover where they slipped up. In a Year 5/6 class calculating Value Added Tax at 17.5%, a girl had difficulty holding the subtotals in her mind until the teacher helped her to start with 10% then use the "halving" technique to arrive at 5% and then 2.5%. There is plenty of variety in these initial sessions, with games, competitions and mental quizzes. This sense of enjoyment ensures pupils' interest is sustained and they keep on making an effort. In a Year 4/5 lesson, pupils vied to complete a bingo game using numbers 1-9 on a grid as the teacher asked them to find the answer to division sums based on multiples of 6.
105. Class sessions are also more structured, catering for the range of prior attainment in split age cohorts as well as for pupils who learn at different rates. Teachers work co-operatively with class assistants to ensure that low attaining pupils are well supported by having the learning broken down into smaller steps. Staff know their pupils well and questions are appropriately targeted at individuals. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In a Year 2 lesson on calculating amounts of money using three different coins, the low attaining pupils were helped considerably by the teacher's well-prepared visual aids. She had displayed a collection of large purses with three different replica coins inside on the wall behind the class shop. When she asked one of these pupils for the addition total of three coins, they worked together counting on using a number line to achieve the correct answer.
106. Group work is generally based around a core activity following on from the main points discussed earlier by the class. Once the learning has been consolidated, pupils are given extension activities that are at an appropriate level of difficulty. Pupils find this interesting and most concentrate well, completing an appropriate amount of work in the time allowed. In a Year 3/4 session, the real problem of re-organising the music cupboard was set. This sparked off animated discussion and, in the group session, high attaining pupils used their knowledge of Venn diagrams effectively to sort instruments into sets of wood, metal and wood and metal and then easily went on to more complex problems classifying numbers by their factors.
107. Plenary sessions are used effectively to check pupils' understanding in a number of ways. Groups of pupils feed back, explaining what they have been doing. The teacher poses

questions linked to the recorded work of each group. A class problem is set and individual pupils are asked to work through different sections orally with support from the teacher. Effective links are made to homework and work to be studied in the next lesson. Often, the teacher gives an overall summary, pointing out common difficulties. In a Year 4/5 lesson, developing pupils' understanding and use of a systematic approach to problem solving, the final session covered many of these points. A problem of working out how many boys and girls went on a school trip caused some difficulties in the use of fractions. A projected image on to a screen of the stages to go through was effective in giving pupils a visual outline to use. Individuals broke down the problem into separate calculations. The use of fractions had caused many pupils difficulties, so the teacher carefully talked them through this stage. Even with this help, some were still struggling. The teacher ended the lesson by suggesting they try out some examples for homework and he would use the next lesson to revise work on fractions.

108. By the end of Key Stage 1, national assessment results for 1999 were only around the national average and below, when compared to similar schools. Pupils' attainment has improved because of the impact of the numeracy strategy. Provisional assessment results for this year and inspection findings confirm that standards are now well above average. By seven, pupils have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of basic number facts and confidently use addition and subtraction to solve problems in different situations. They are beginning to use standard measures in time, length and money. They construct simple graphs from data they collect, such as about favourite pets and foods. They understand and can represent fractions by showing areas on basic geometric shapes.
109. At the end of Key Stage 2, national test results in 1999 were well above the national average and above in comparison to similar schools. The inspection found this trend continuing. The oldest pupils enjoy playing with numbers and are inquisitive about the patterns and relationships found in mathematics. They manipulate fractions and percentages easily, such as in calculating Value Added Tax and discounts. They work through long multiplication and division using different methods. They explore logic and probabilities. Much of this achievement is because they have been effectively taught not to worry about mistakes but to make informed estimates and then check out their calculations systematically.
110. Mathematics has a high profile in the school. In other subjects, opportunities are taken to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in practical ways. In science, accuracy in measurement is encouraged; art and design and technology use shape and measure; in geography, distance, time and co-ordinates are referred to; in history, epochs, time-lines and dates are emphasised; and in music and physical education, teachers talk about the importance of time intervals when talking about pulse and beat. However, information technology is not yet used consistently to support teaching and pupils' learning in mathematics.
111. The co-ordinator, the deputy head, has a good grasp of the subject and has been active in ensuring the smooth implementation of the National Numeracy initiative. He has begun to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms using video filming but is not yet fully confident in identifying and feeding back on specific shortcomings. Currently, teachers are using a number of published schemes they previously relied upon for their core programme to supplement activities they design themselves. They are finding the preparation of materials very demanding and are considering other more efficient solutions. They have a concern, supported by inspection findings, that while the programmes of study are covered appropriately, there is not sufficient attention paid to the impact of mathematics on human development in the past and present.
112. The school has set a specific target for standards of attainment in 2001 based upon predictions of pupils' performance in national tests and tasks. As there are a greater proportion of low attaining pupils in Year 5, this target is lower than those set in previous years. However, the school is not yet analysing assessment data sufficiently thoroughly to

identify and set more realistic targets for under-achieving pupils that, if met, would ensure the current target is exceeded. The co-ordinator is involved in local authority initiatives to do this and the school has well-thought out plans to tackle this shortcoming. The school is well prepared to make further improvements in mathematics.

## SCIENCE

113. Standards at the end of both key stages are around the national average. As a result of a decline in standards two years ago, a new policy and scheme of work were introduced and teachers embarked on a training programme. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now achieving well, particularly in developing their investigative skills. However, the changes in teaching have not yet had time to impact fully on raising standards, mainly because high attaining pupils are still not sufficiently challenged.
114. Pupils have a good start in the reception class as they have numerous, well planned practical activities linked to interesting topics. They continue to be challenged throughout Key Stage 1 where the teaching is generally good giving pupils a sound foundation in their scientific thinking. Teachers' planning ensures the programme is appropriate for the stage and rate of learning for most pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to pose skilful questions to make them think scientifically. As a consequence, pupils find science enjoyable, interesting and demanding. They enthusiastically participate in all aspects of the lessons including sharing resources; setting up and putting equipment away; and discussing developments and outcomes. Teachers organise interesting practical investigations and explain carefully what is required. Pupils are generally well motivated, they know what they are doing and why, they ask questions and listen to the responses of others. Year 2 pupils were able to work in a sustained and focussed way looking for variation between their own face and that of their partner. Pupils showed a high level of sensitivity, with one boy gently holding the face of his partner whilst scrutinising the physical features. A low attaining group worked particularly well with an assistant. She helped them develop their understanding of what to look for in the face features. As a result, they produced very detailed observational drawings.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection findings show that standards are around the national average. Last year, teachers' assessment of nationally set tasks showed standards in science, overall, the same. However, pupils' performance was very high in life and living processes and materials and their properties.
116. Through Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is generally good. Teachers plan appropriate learning activities to develop a balanced range of scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils generally make good use of resources and approach the subject with enthusiasm and confidence. In Year 3/4, pupils worked satisfactorily on developing a fair-test to establish whether a given set of materials was opaque, translucent or transparent. They worked systematically and handled apparatus and materials sensibly. The teacher used questions very effectively to help pupils explore the density of different materials by holding samples in front of a light source. For instance, "*What is it that will tell you that more or less light is passing through?*" "*What is the evidence?*" All pupils were able to discuss the reasons thoughtfully, using correct scientific vocabulary.
117. Low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are fully involved in practical investigations and are well supported by teachers and class assistants. Consequently, they make good progress. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were engaged in tasks to develop the skills of "thinking like a scientist". The low attaining pupils were set the task of making a windmill and given instructions broken down into easy steps. Staff made sure they know exactly what to do but encouraged them to try out different ways. Pupils discussed their difficulties and were helped to use appropriate scientific language. They were required to build on their prior knowledge and make informed guesses.

118. While teachers are gaining more confidence with organising systematic practical investigations, they do not yet give more able pupils sufficiently challenging work to extend their creative scientific thinking. The school is aware of this shortcoming and has plans to obtain more appropriate learning resources for high attaining pupils.
119. National test results in 1999 for pupils aged 11 were above average in comparison to all schools and average in relation to similar schools. Inspection findings show that, as there are pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6, overall standards are now around average.
120. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have developed the appropriate skills of fair-testing, comparison and prediction which they use confidently when carrying out a range of systematic investigations. They observe and record their findings accurately and draw conclusions based on a good understanding of the scientific processes. Pupils have a sound understanding of science, including the characteristics of materials, light and shadows, changing state and life processes.
121. The subject is well led with staff receiving appropriate information and support from the co-ordinator. Effective use is made of national and local guidance in curriculum planning. Pupils' progress is appropriately monitored through regular and systematic examination of pupils' work and national tests and tasks. Teachers' plans are regularly checked by the co-ordinator to ensure effective coverage of the science curriculum. This is to be strengthened through a planned programme of team-teaching by the science co-ordinator. A good development plan has been devised for science to improve the performance of high attaining pupils. Resources are sufficient and of good quality, allowing pupils to carry out an appropriate range of investigations; effective use is also made of the grounds and local area.

## **ART**

122. It was not possible to observe the teaching of art during the inspection so judgements are based on talking to pupils and examining their work and discussions with teachers and looking at their plans. A significant amount of art was displayed around the school in classrooms, the hall, corridors and in the school grounds.
123. The samples of work seen and discussions with pupils indicate that currently, the attainment of pupils in the school is about what is expected for their age. By the time pupils leave the school age eleven, they have experienced a broad range of appropriate work, including both two and three dimensional, using a range of media.
124. Teachers have successfully encouraged pupils to use art to express their creative ideas in many different ways. The younger pupils made large-scale beanstalks and monsters using construction techniques. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 painted Aboriginal pictures using pointillism, whilst pupils in Year 3 and 4 have kept sketch books all year, recording both their learning and the range of media explored from charcoal to water colours. The use of sketch books is a particularly effective approach. There was some very impressive work displayed in the Year 2 classroom showing a wide range of art and craft. A pupil in this class responded to a Turner painting, 'Snowstorm', by painting her own swirling picture. The teacher had asked pupils to reflect on their paintings and the response was – *"I like the Snowstorm because it has lots of colours spinning round like a whirlpool"*. Teaching and learning in art is enriched by the contribution of adult volunteers and visits by professional artists.
125. A scheme of work was introduced after the last inspection but this is now being reviewed to link in with Curriculum 2000. A part of this review will include discussions on how best to ensure pupils have opportunities to see a wider range of artists' work through the use of the internet and visits to galleries.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

126. During the inspection only two lessons of design and technology were observed. Judgements have been made using these observations, talking to pupils, examining their work, discussions with teachers and looking at their plans. This evidence indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is around that expected for their age. The subject is generally effectively planned and well resourced. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
127. Pupils in Year 1 working on materials have been developing a project on 'dressing Teddy'. They designed, made and tested a range of materials to provide warmth, water proofing and comfort. The teacher made effective use of a computer program to allow pupils to model some of the designs. One pupil demonstrated his clear understanding of the concepts when he said, "*Barnaby Bear is a volcano-ologist who is wearing lava-proof clothes. He couldn't wear plastic because it would melt*".
128. Year 2 pupils refined and developed their design and making skills through a topic based around "Jim and the beanstalk". They enjoyed talking about how they had constructed the giant's glasses, toothbrush and comb and showed a sound understanding of the use of materials and fixing agents.
129. Year 3/4 pupils showed considerable imagination in designing chairs for specific purposes. The task offered a sufficient level of challenge around form and function. The teacher successfully encouraged a productive discussion about the problems pupils had encountered. Through careful questioning she sensitively led pupils to re-examine their work and refine and improve their chair designs.
130. A group of Year 5/6 pupils worked well together to solve the real problem of building a "shop" for the Year 2 class. They measured the younger pupils, used a computer program to try out their ideas and then successfully completed the task. They involved the Year 2 pupils in evaluating how suitable the shop was for displaying goods and serving customers.
131. Generally, pupils appreciate the need to think carefully about the design process before embarking on making things. They are developing appropriate craft skills and refining these as they tackle more complex constructions. Effective use is made of new technologies in recording the making process and evaluating outcomes. This was particularly well demonstrated in Year 5/6 where pupils used a digital camera and word processor to record the making of desk lamps.

## GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

132. During the inspection only one geography and one history lesson were observed. Judgements have been made by talking to pupils, examining their work, discussions with co-ordinators, looking at the teachers' planning and from displays around the school. This evidence indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is generally around that expected for their age in both geography and history.
133. In geography, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are able to distinguish between features of town and country using comparative studies, for example Upton Noble and Weymouth. They are able to identify features of their own locality including the lack of shops and make choices about possible future developments. In Year 2, the local study encourages pupils to develop their understanding of features of Upton Noble. The teacher asks challenging and relevant questions such as, "*What is the importance of having a village hall?*" This elicited a wide range of thoughtful responses, including as a venue for birthday parties.

134. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop a satisfactory range of geographical skills including an understanding of human and environmental factors and appropriate geographical language. Pupils understand geographical features in Britain and other parts of the world, including Europe and the North America. The teacher to reinforce information technology and mathematical skills effectively used the weather project in Year 3/4, as well as developing appropriate geographic knowledge and understanding. Good use is made of self assessment in Year 5/6 and Year 4/5 where pupils use a 'traffic light' system to assess their attainment in a particular unit of work and then discuss with the teacher areas for development.
135. In history, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are developing a sense of chronology. Pupils understand that history is about the past, understand about the principle of 'then' and 'now' using appropriate vocabulary and they communicate their knowledge well, particularly orally. They understand that information about the past can be discovered by looking at books, artefacts and by asking people about their experiences. Pupils also appreciate that they have a history that can be investigated and told. Teachers make effective use of visits within and beyond the locality. Pupils were very impressed by a visit to a museum in Weymouth and confidently recounted the history of the "seaside holidays". The teacher also used a project on the history of houses to make effective links with geography, science and design technology. This project was particularly effective because of the high level of parental involvement, providing information and photographs of local houses.
136. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied a range of historical periods including Victorians, Tudors and Britain since the 1930s. They have a sound understanding of these periods and competently access information through a variety of sources, including artefacts, reference books, photographs, CD-ROMs and people within the community, including a local archaeologist. The good knowledge, understanding and interest of their teachers ensures pupils are enthusiastic about history and want to find out more about the past and its impact on the present.
137. The teacher to help Year 6 pupils empathise with the plight of the Jarrow Marchers has used the project on "Britain since the 1930s" effectively. Pupils also showed an appropriate awareness of the issues surrounding the immigration of people from the West Indies in the 1950s/60s. The teacher made good use of photographs and key questions to challenge pupils' values. An example was of a West Indian man looking for accommodation and confronting racism. The pupils were asked very pertinent questions, such as, "*How do you think this man felt? Why do you think he was treated this way?*"
138. In a Year 4/5 lesson, the teacher gave pupils a clear insight into the life of Tudor seafarers through an interesting exploration of the jobs carried out on board ship, including the Marshall and the Boatswain. His sound questioning helped focus pupils' thinking about how they would feel working in such cramped, dark and unpleasant conditions.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

139. There was only one short information technology lesson during the inspection so judgements have been made based upon the observation of individuals and pairs of pupils using new technologies to support their learning, discussions with groups of pupils, interviews with teachers and examination of curriculum plans and pupils' work.
140. Since the previous inspection, there has been some improvement in raising standards in aspects of information technology. There were shortcomings in medium and short term planning, the areas of modelling and monitoring and there was a need to update the scheme of work. The school has been insufficiently successful in tackling some of these issues and standards overall are below average.

141. Standards in both Key Stages 1 and 2 are variable across the different strands of information technology. Standards in controlling and modelling are unsatisfactory, although they are sound in the communication of ideas through word processing text in both key stages and some aspects of handling information at Key Stage 2. A new scheme of work has been produced that covers these areas more comprehensively but it has yet to be fully implemented.
142. Pupils' learning in information technology is variable and overall unsatisfactory, particularly as a result of the lack of opportunity they have had to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding and equipment that either breaks down or new equipment that is not yet running to its full potential. The computer in the Year 2 class broke down on the first day of the inspection. There was a successful e-mail link with a school in Sweden in the Year 4/5 class that has also been disrupted. Pupils in Year 6 have used the internet to find information for history and geography projects. Pupils in both key stages know how to use computers to enter, store, process and retrieve information. Pupils write poems, prayers, stories, posters and scientific explanations using their classroom computers in an increasingly skilful way from Year 1 through to Year 6. A digital camera has been used to good effect by Key Stage 2 pupils to record images of their work linked to a project on Egypt; pupils in Key Stage 1 have learned how to programme a wheeled toy and pupils in Year 5 ably demonstrated their knowledge of control technology by switching on and changing a sequence of model traffic lights. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils know how to program a buggy to travel across the classroom, two pupils entering the appropriate commands into their computer. Pupils show sustained interest and enjoyment in this work and concentrate well.
143. Not all teachers satisfactorily incorporate a full range of information and communication technology skills in their lesson plans in order to develop and support pupils' learning across subjects. The subject co-ordinator has been able to monitor teachers' medium term plans and identified gaps, for example in data handling in Key Stage 1. The information technology co-ordinator is experienced and has made an effective contribution to staff knowledge, skills and confidence in using new technologies. The school is well aware of the shortcomings in attainment, the variability of pupils' learning and the range of learning opportunities currently on offer to them. Comprehensive and realistic development plans have been devised for the next two years to improve the provision and raise standards. This is a funding priority discussed and agreed by the governing body to increase the range, quality and accessibility of computers and to train staff. A new information and communication technology suite is planned as part of this initiative.

## **MUSIC**

144. As only three lessons of music could be seen during the inspection, no overall judgement about the quality of teaching and standards in music has been made. Evidence from the lessons, singing in assemblies, instrumental playing and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that levels of attainment are as expected.
145. In assemblies, pupils of all ages sing with enjoyment and nearly all are able to follow the tune having some awareness of the musical elements. While singing "Shine on me", even the youngest were able to clap the rhythm correctly in the chorus and showed an appreciation of being part of a large performing group. Recorded music is also used effectively to create a suitable atmosphere for Collective Worship. The pupils' attention is regularly drawn to the composer and the mood being created. During the inspection, Jacques Loussier's jazz arrangement of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" was used effectively to illustrate how a modern interpretation gives a different perspective to a familiar classical composition.
146. The school uses a commercial scheme of work effectively to give structure to the music programme. This is helpful to non-specialists but also gives the music co-ordinator and the

headteacher, who also teaches music, a way of ensuring pupils' musical development covers an appropriate range and skills build progressively. In the inspection, it was possible to see examples of this across Year 3 to 6 with musical composition. In Year 3, the headteacher developed pupils' understanding of standard notation effectively by linking this to building up a rhythmic performance using non-pitched and tuned percussion instruments with words associated with a dragon suggested by the class: "fierce", "scaly" and "fire breathing". They were interested and involved, performing with increasing confidence and skills. In Years 4/5, the headteacher led the class to explore texture, helping them to analyse recorded music and then demonstrated how these effects could be created. Pupils worked co-operatively in small groups with non-pitched and tuned percussion instruments to compose their own short pieces. Not all were able to achieve the desired effect but enough did to illustrate effectively what was required. The headteacher successfully encouraged the class to listen attentively and appraise each group's performance, showing respect and appreciation for each other's efforts. In Year 5/6, the teacher showed very good understanding and knowledge of music when challenging pupils to think of ways of composing creatively using rhythms found in an African song the class had been singing. Pupils showed maturity and self-discipline in the way they worked in small groups, some outside the classroom and not being directly supervised. The teacher set high expectations and, because of the careful preparation, pupils worked hard and produced an interesting variety of compositions. In the final session, she used well-constructed questions effectively to help pupils listen carefully to each performance. As a result, they came up with constructive ideas on how the works could be improved.

147. The school provides an appropriate range of additional musical activities. There is individual tuition for violins, woodwind and brass taken by 20 pupils, ranging from Years 2 to 6. Three of the older pupils are particularly gifted and the school encourages and supports them well by acknowledging and celebrating their success in national examinations and public performances. These pupils make a positive contribution to the school's musical provision by playing their instruments in lessons, assemblies and concerts. Other pupils have opportunities to learn the recorder and take part in annual musical concerts; this year celebrating the millennium.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

148. Although five lessons of physical education were observed during the inspection, all were in swimming as the school made good use of its outdoor pool. Consequently, no overall judgement is possible about the standards of pupils' attainment in physical education. However all pupils can swim twenty-five metres when they leave school at age eleven and they are aware of the principles of water safety.
149. In the lessons seen, the teaching was generally very good as pupils were successfully encouraged to work hard at improving their swimming skills and develop confidence. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher was particularly helpful with two pupils who were reluctant to get their face wet. She sensitively built up their confidence until they happily put their heads under. The size of the pool means that only half the class is swimming at one time and those waiting are not always given productive activities. However in the Year 4 session, the teacher kept involving the non-swimming group by asking them to observe and comment on what swimmers were doing well. This made a positive contribution to their learning. The school has plans to use a local comprehensive sports centre next year to involve older pupils in the further development of skills, stamina and water safety.
150. In addition to swimming, the school has a well-balanced programme covering gymnastics, athletics, dance and games that meets statutory requirements. Photographs, newspaper articles, letters to parents, school plans and the pupils themselves describe interesting and varied activities. This includes successes at local sporting events, such as hockey tournaments and dance festivals. A small number of parents felt that the school did not

sufficiently support participation in area sports. Inspection did not support this view as pupils compete in all the main games available to primary aged pupils, such as football, rugby, hockey, cross-country and netball. In addition pupils' physical educational experiences are fully enriched by providing an extensive range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. During the inspection, lunch time and after school clubs observed included cricket, athletics and tennis. At other times in the year, the school reports there are clubs in sports such as football, hockey, basketball, gymnastics and netball. A curriculum enrichment week is planned this term and a dance teacher will work on the millennium theme with pupils throughout the school.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. During the inspection only three lessons of religious education could be observed. This is insufficient to make secure judgements about the overall quality of teaching and standards at either key stage. Additional evidence from examining pupils' work, talking to small groups and with teachers indicates that pupils' attainment at 7 and 11 years-old is in line with locally agreed expectations.
152. Pupils in Year 2 have a feeling for other people's experiences about important events in life, such as birth, marriage and death. They relate these to happening in their own lives. Two girls talked sensitively about the death of their pets and how their parents helped them to come to terms with the loss. Others spoke about weddings they had been to and how happy everyone was for the couple. Some have been to baptismal ceremonies and know that Christians go to church to celebrate these occasions. They have visited the local church and recall important features, such as the vestry, font and lectern, correctly describing their function in religious ceremonies. They have a firm foundation of the Bible appropriate to their age and retell stories from the Old and New Testament, such as Noah's ark and the Nativity. They know that there are other world religions and, with help from each other, are able to name the Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic faiths.
153. Pupils in Year 6, have explored the different ways Christians worship and also compared this with the way Hindus, Muslims and Jews practise their faith. They have done this by relating their own experiences to those of children from different faiths living in this country. They have discussed how differences have resulted in bigotry and misunderstandings. They have studied how important people, like Helen Keller, Dr Barnardo and Anne Frank, have been influenced by their belief to help and improve the world. They know more about their own journey through life, what they would like to happen and what they need to do to reach these goals.
154. In Year 2, the teacher successfully helped the pupils explore their feelings through a religious education lesson retelling Jesus' parables about "the lost sheep", "the lost coin" and "the prodigal son" and reinforced this in a personal, social and health education session talking about their own losses. Pupils were able to be open in sharing their feelings as the teacher had established a supportive environment where they felt safe and secure. As a result in the religious education lesson, pupils easily put themselves in the role of characters from the Bible stories and described sensitively how loss was experienced. One girl said, *"it's like something very dear to you being taken away and it makes you cry inside."*
155. In Year 3, pupils were effectively helped to see the connection between the way Christians believe God is three persons in one while Hindus see one God in many forms. The teacher used a large picture of a Shamrock to illustrate the Trinity and artefacts to show a number of Hindu gods, such as Ganesha and Lakshmi. The colourful models and the clear description by the teacher motivated pupils to discuss enthusiastically how and why they and Hindus prayed.

156. In Year 6, the difficult concepts of faith and principles were covered well by the teacher using the story of the missionary, Dr Livingston, and his meeting with the American journalist, Stanley, in Africa. She told the story using contemporary illustrations taken from the Internet and this created a sense of suspense and adventure. The group task of making up a short drama about the historic meeting appealed to pupils and they worked hard to compose appropriate dialogue. When it became obvious pupils were having particular difficulties interpreting faith, the teacher intervened at just the right moment to make a class teaching point. Consequently, most groups made presentations that showed they had fully understood Dr Livingston's motives for leaving the security of his own country to explore Africa.
157. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, has recently drawn up a new scheme of work, which is appropriately based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. This is closely linked to the school's personal, social and health education programme. Topics are going to be planned on a two-year cycle for Key Stage 2 to ensure that there are no omissions or overlaps in classes with split year groups. The school has recognised that there are few reference books and has allocated funds to purchase a wider range.