

INSPECTION REPORT

STANLEY GREEN FIRST SCHOOL

Poole

LEA area: Poole

Unique reference number: 113694

Headteacher: Mrs Doreen Butterworth

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Edwards
21190

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 June 2001

Inspection number: 195124

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 8

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stanley Green Road
Oakdale
Poole
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor R O'Mahoney

Date of previous inspection: 03 - 03 - 97

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Keith Edwards, Registered Inspector (Ofsted No 21190)	Music	What sort of school is it?
	English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		How well are pupils taught?
		How well is the school led and managed?
Robert Miller, Lay Inspector (Ofsted No 9619)		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
		How well does the school care for its pupils?
		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Adrian Portlock, Team Inspector (Ofsted No 21411)	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
	Information and communication technology	
	Physical education	
	Equal opportunities	
Beccy Russell, Team Inspector (Ofsted No 8867)	Foundation Stage	
	Design and technology	
	Geography	
	History	
	Religious education	
Sandra Sutcliffe, Team Inspector (Ofsted No 22884)	Mathematics	
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	Art and design	
	Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stanley Green First School in Oakdale on the outskirts of Poole draws most of its children from the immediate locality. There are currently 370 boys and girls on roll, all of whom attend the school on a full-time basis. The pupils are taught in thirteen classes in discrete year groups. Although statistical information from Ofsted shows that fewer than eight per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than the national average, local statistical information indicates a much higher eligibility. However, very few families avail themselves of this benefit. Most, but not all, of the pupils are white and the overwhelming majority come from homes where English is the first language.

There are two intakes into the reception classes during the course of the year. Before this, most of the pupils have attended a local playgroup or nursery. The attainment of most of the pupils on entry to their reception year is about average although there is a wide spread of ability in each class. Twenty-five per cent of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is a higher percentage than the national average. Two pupils have a statement of educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school that provides good value for money. The quality of teaching is good. By the time they leave school, the pupils attain high standards in reading and writing. The pupils also achieve well in art, design and technology, music, religious education, geography and history. The school is a very orderly community which benefits from very good leadership and management.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading and writing are above average. The pupils record their work very well across a range of subjects.
- The children achieve well in the reception classes, particularly in their personal and social development and the acquisition of language skills.
- The quality of teaching is good and it enables the pupils to make good progress in most subjects.
- The quality of the leadership and management is very good. This has enabled the school to make very good progress since the last inspection. The budget is spent prudently and the school is very well resourced.
- The school provides a rich, stimulating curriculum that promotes high standards. It is particularly successful in nurturing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes towards school. They behave very well and are keen to learn.
- The parents strongly support the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics could be higher.

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 March 1997. Action taken since the last inspection has been effective in addressing the key issues and the school has made significant improvements in many areas. The school has been particularly successful in raising the pupils' standards in speaking and listening which are now above average. The quality of teaching has improved as the teachers now take much greater account of the pupils' level of understanding when planning the work for different groups of pupils. The school has used test data and other assessment information effectively to build detailed profiles of the pupils' performance and to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. The school has

ensured that the pupils have many opportunities to be involved in investigative work in science and mathematics. This has made a significant contribution to the stimulating curriculum provided by the school but it has not yet resulted in any significant improvement in the National Curriculum test results in mathematics. The school has improved its capacity to teach information and communication technology and standards are now above average by the time the pupils leave school. Standards in art, music, history, geography and religious education have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of eight since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	B	B	B
writing	A	A	B	B
mathematics	C	C	D	D

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

The children start school with standards of attainment that are broadly average. The children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, and by the age of five most of the children are likely to reach or exceed the early learning goals for this age group. The children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They respond well in literacy and numeracy lessons and make good progress in their development of language and mathematical skills. They make good progress in finding out about the world around them and in their physical development. Their progress in their creative development is very good.

Standards in the work seen in writing are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave school. In the national tests in 2000, standards in reading and writing were above average and above those found in similar schools. Standards in the work seen confirm this picture. However, there is some under-achievement in mathematics, particularly in number work, because of weaknesses in some aspects of teaching. Standards in science are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave school. The pupils achieve well in investigational work. Overall standards, however, are consistently higher than the national average and the school meets the targets it has set itself in national tests. Standards are rising and the school is well set to sustain improvement. Standards in information technology are improving as the pupils make good use of the new computers installed in the suite. The pupils also achieve high standards in art, design and technology, music, history, geography and religious education. The school provides well for those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language and enables them to make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes towards school. They try hard and persevere with their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils behave very well throughout the school. They are polite and courteous and move around the school in an orderly manner. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.

Personal development and relationships	The pupils are becoming mature and responsible. The quality of relationships is good and makes an important contribution to the ethos of the school and the quality of the life within it.
Attendance	Attendance rates are better than the national average. Almost all pupils arrive punctually at the start of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7- 8 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.

The quality of teaching is good. It enables the pupils to make good progress overall. In all of the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better. Seventy-one per cent of the teaching was good or better with 25 per cent judged to be very good. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The staff work as a team to provide a curriculum that covers all of the areas of learning. They plan activities and experiences that motivate, enthuse and match the abilities of the children and enable them to make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals. The teaching of English is good and this helps to ensure that the pupils make good progress in the skills of literacy. The pupils record their work well across the curriculum. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory although in a few classes there is not enough challenge for the average ability pupils and too little direct teaching of methods to work out calculations. The quality of teaching in the computer suite is good and has resulted in a rapid improvement in the pupil's knowledge and understanding. The quality of teaching in music lessons provided by the co-ordinator is very good. The children with English as an additional language are taught well and make good progress. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and enabled to make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a rich, stimulating curriculum that promotes high standards in most subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides well for those pupils with special educational needs and enables them to make good progress in relation to their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for the small number of children with English as an additional language is good. The staff ensure that children receive good support and this enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good. The daily acts of collective worship make a significant contribution to the pupils' development. A full range of extra-curricular activities supports the pupils' social development well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are excellent. The school has developed its assessment procedures well but there is scope for using the data more extensively to determine what is taught to different groups of pupils in mathematics.

The partnership formed with the parents is a strength of the school. It makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher and her deputy form a very effective team and responsibilities for aspects of school life have been efficiently devolved.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in discharging its responsibilities. It has a clear view of the strengths of the school and areas for further development. It is very well organised and complies with statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is confident in the evaluation of its performance and uses a range of indicators to measure its success.
The strategic use of resources	The school shows very good awareness of cost-effectiveness. It makes good use of its annual budget and specific grants. It allocates appropriate funding to support its educational priorities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • Behaviour in the school is good • The teaching is good • Their children are making good progress • The school is well led and managed • The school expects their children to work hard and to do their best • They would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or a problem • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons

Almost all parents strongly support the work of the school. Their children enjoy coming to Stanley Green First School and are making good progress. The parents find the school to be well led and managed and approachable if matters need to be discussed. Parents feel that their children respond well to the school's expectations and good teaching and are making good progress. Their children are becoming mature and responsible. Inspectors support their positive views and judge that the quality and range of activities outside of lessons is very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Baseline assessments indicate that on entry to the reception classes, the attainment of almost all children matches what is expected for their age. However, the mathematical and speaking skills of a significant minority of children are below average. The good teaching in the reception classes results in most of the children making rapid progress and are in line to reach or exceed the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage in each of the areas of learning. They make very good progress in their personal and social development because the adults provide such good role models and provide a rich variety of experiences for the children. This also contributes significantly to the children's very good progress in the acquisition of language skills. They make good progress in their mathematical development and in learning about the world. The pupils make very good progress in their creative development. The school has invested heavily in the development of outdoor play facilities since the last inspection. The children benefit from the improved provision and make good progress. The overall progress of the children in the Foundation Stage represents a significant achievement for the school. The children with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The children who have English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.

2. The National Curriculum Key Stage 1 assessments for 2000 show that the pupils' attainments were above average in reading and writing; in mathematics they were below average. A high percentage of pupils achieved the higher levels in reading and writing and their performance was above the national average in this respect. However, in mathematics the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was close to the national average. The analysis also shows that the pupils' achievements were above average in reading and writing in comparison to those pupils attending similar schools. Standards in reading have improved markedly in the test results since the last inspection. Standards in writing are consistently above average. In mathematics, the pupils' performance was below that of pupils attending similar schools. The school consistently meets its targets but there is scope for an improvement in standards in mathematics. An analysis of the pupils' work largely confirms the results of the national tests. However, inspectors judge that standards in writing are well above average. With the exception of mathematics, standards across the curriculum have improved significantly since the last inspection. Overall, the pupils respond well to the quality of teaching and achieve well in relation to their prior levels of attainment.

3. The pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and standards are above average for their age by the time they leave school. Most pupils listen carefully and speak clearly. From an early age they learn by heart many songs. The teachers set a good example in helping the children to appreciate the richness of language through the range of stories which they tell and the quality of their expression when reading from books.

4. The pupils are making good progress in learning to read. In the current Year 3, standards are above expectations. Most pupils use their skills and knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar or difficult words. They read with a good degree of expression, fluency, accuracy and understanding. The pupils enjoy stories and can describe events in the stories they read. The pupils use reference books to research topics such as minibeasts but are unfamiliar with the school's library reference system and this impedes their ability to access books independently.

5. By the time the pupils leave the school, their attainment in writing is well above average. Standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are well above those expected of seven- and eight-year-old pupils. There are many good examples of writing in which pupils use correct punctuation and a well-formed script. The pupils make good use of

planning and drafting in their writing. One of the particular strengths of the pupils' writing is their ability to produce pieces of sustained writing, particularly stories and poems and writing linked to their work in other subjects. They are beginning to write pieces that present more than one point of view.

6. Standards in mathematics are close to average and this represents satisfactory achievement by the pupils. The school has introduced the Numeracy Strategy and the pupils are responding well to the range of practical activities. The school is making effective use of assessment information to organise the pupils into different ability groups within each class for target setting, but some of the work set for the middle ability groups lacks challenge. The pupils are making satisfactory progress in calculations involving simple addition and subtraction, data handling and measurement. The pupils should now practise their skills in different subjects such as science and geography to further develop their skills.

7. The school's performance in the teacher assessments for science in 2000 was close to average. Standards in the work seen during the inspection were satisfactory at the age of seven and by the time the pupils leave school. The pupils benefit from the opportunity to engage in a range of practical investigations. For example, the pupils investigate the habitat of mini-beasts such as snails and worms. The whole investigation is enhanced by detailed observation of the snails as a drawing exercise in art. Year 3 pupils use spinners to investigate how air resistance and weight affect the distribution of sycamore seeds. The pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

8. The school has made a considerable investment in developing the pupils' skills in information and communication technology by establishing a computer suite. Standards in the subject are improving. Standards are average at the age of seven and by the time the pupils leave school they attain standards that are above average. The pupils are familiar with the use of e-mail to communicate with other schools and understand the process of using data bases to store information.

9. The pupils achieve well in religious education. Standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the time the pupils leave the school. The pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and can name festivals of other world religions. The pupils' progress is further promoted through the daily acts of collective worship and by the school's emphasis on the personal and social development of the pupils.

10. Standards in geography and history are good. Learning is supported by clear schemes of work and a lively approach that includes visits to museums and other local places of interest. The pupils understand simple plans and maps and can describe local features. The pupils are interested in history and they make good progress in understanding changes through time.

11. Standards in art are well above average. The pupils develop a wide range of skills and are sensitive in their approach to their work. Art is used well to support learning in other subjects such as science and history. The pupils' work is well displayed and it is used very effectively to enhance the learning environment. Standards in design and technology are above expectations. The pupils' work is supported by a clear scheme of work and specialist teaching in Year 3. The pupils achieve standards in music that are above average. They combine advanced skills in composition with high standards in performance, especially singing. Music contributes strongly to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education and achieve satisfactory standards.

12. The children with English as an additional language make good progress. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The teachers ensure that the tasks set are both challenging and achievable. Consequently, pupils with special

educational needs rise to these high standards and make good progress. There is no distinction between the attainment of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. These factors make a significant contribution to the quality of learning and the progress that the pupils make. The school has put a great deal of time and effort into promoting positive attitudes to school and increasing the opportunities that are specifically designed to enhance the pupils' personal development. The pupils are given good opportunities in personal, social and health education lessons to discuss their feelings on issues such as behaviour and friendship. Assembly themes are used effectively to teach pupils to play an active role as citizens. Duties, such as book monitor, group leader and playground "buddy", in and around the school, impact on the development of confidence and responsibility of the individuals concerned. This is an area that has continued to improve since the time of the last inspection and is now a significant strength of the school that is appreciated by the vast majority of parents.

14. The pupils like school and clearly enjoy their work. The pupils' show great enthusiasm for the tasks that are set for them and speak positively about the work that they have covered. The pupils appreciate the learning opportunities that are provided and speak with delight about activities such as the artwork they have completed and that has been displayed around the school. From an early age the pupils co-operate well in lessons and willingly share ideas and resources. A school council has been established and the pupils' representatives meet regularly with staff to discuss matters of importance to them and their class members.

15. The children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils in both key stages listen attentively, follow instructions and work hard. They have a good tolerance for and understanding of one another's lives. There is no evidence of racist or aggressive behaviour. The pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons and school life.

16. Very good behaviour is successfully promoted through a number of strategies and the pupils respond very well. Most pupils behave very well in the classroom and in the playground. The pupils show a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and observe the school and classroom rules. The very few pupils that present more challenging behaviour are dealt with in a most effective manner and, as a result, the learning and enjoyment of other pupils are not affected. Bullying is not a feature of the school and there have been no exclusions during the past year. The pupils have great confidence in the knowledge that should bullying occur they could go to any adult in the school knowing that it would be dealt with quickly and effectively.

17. The quality of relationships in the school is good. The pupils work and play with each other very well. Boys and girls work well together and a clear bond of trust, respect and confidence exists between the adults and pupils.

18. Attendance rates in the school are above the national average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Almost all lessons start and finish on time but there are a very small number of pupils who arrive late at the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good. It enables the pupils to make good progress overall. In all of the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better. Seventy-one per cent of the teaching was good or better with 25 per cent judged to be very good. The teaching of English is good and this helps to ensure that the pupils make good progress in the skills of literacy.

20. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The staff work as a team to provide a curriculum that covers all the areas of learning. They plan activities and experiences that motivate, enthuse and match the abilities of the children and enable them to make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals. The teaching is shared fully with the classroom assistants; the staff are highly skilled in their management of the children, relationships are very good and the working environment is calm and harmonious. All members of the team place a strong emphasis on the use of good quality language. They encourage the children to work independently and to make choices in their work. The children who have English as an additional language are well supported and have access to the full curriculum.

21. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and builds successfully on the children's achievements in the Foundation Stage. The teachers use the National Literacy Strategy very effectively and this ensures that the pupils make good progress in reading and writing. A feature of these lessons is the emphasis placed on the development of the pupils' vocabulary and their writing skills. For example, in a particularly effective lesson in Year 1, the teacher used the story "Farmer Duck" well to encourage the pupils to volunteer a substitute word for "went". The pupils responded very well and offered suggestions such as "tiptoed", "squeezed" and "sneaked" in appropriate contexts. This contributes to the high standards in writing and the improvement in speaking and listening, which has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Another strength of the teaching is the high expectations of all pupils, irrespective of their level of attainment and the work set is usually challenging. In lessons such as religious education and history, the teachers ensure that the pupils use their grammatical knowledge to good effect when writing accounts of events of the past. The teachers provide a wide range of activities that are relevant to the pupils, which helps their enthusiasm for their work.

22. The teachers' planning is well structured in most subjects and most lessons have clear learning objectives. The planning takes account of the range of ability of the pupils in each class. There were examples of very good teaching based on secure planning in numeracy lessons. In the most successful lessons the oral work required a brisk response from the pupils and this stretched their mental agility. The tasks were varied imaginatively and this maintained the pupils' interest and involvement. The pupils were taught a range of strategies to solve calculations and the pupils' mistakes were immediately analysed and corrected. However, these elements of good practice were lacking in other lessons. A few lessons lacked a sharp learning focus so that the pupils did not always know what was expected of them and the plenary session could not be used effectively to gauge the pupils' progress. For example, pupils in Year 1 were told their learning objectives were to 'explain methods and reasoning' and 'explore reasoning about number'. Although the pupils engaged in interesting investigational activities the plenary session did not help the pupils to establish what they had learned. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory overall but could be better if more attention were to be given to the needs of the average ability pupils. In science, the teachers are successful in planning a range of practical experiences for the pupils but are not consistently effective in drawing out appropriate conclusions.

23. In all classes, the teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together. Support staff are involved in the planning and provide good support for individuals and small groups of pupils. For example in an art lesson in Year 2, support staff help the pupils to observe snails carefully and to understand the idea of using their pencils in different ways to create different effects. In other lessons they provide effective guidance to the pupils working in the computer suite. Good use is made of specialist music teaching in Years 2 and 3 to raise standards. Throughout the infant classes and Year 3, the teachers make skilful use of questioning to challenge the pupils' level of thinking and have high expectations of the pupils' achievement. They ensure that the pupils present their work as well as possible. The quality of the display of the pupils' work reflects the value that is given to it. Praise and ongoing assessment are used very effectively to motivate the pupils and to raise their achievement. In almost all of the lessons the pace of learning is good.

Homework is used satisfactorily to support learning. There is inconsistency between classes in the use of the home/school diary.

24. The strong teaching team in Year 3 enables the pupils to make good progress in their final year at school. The teachers build successfully on the pupils' earlier achievements and lessons are conducted at pace. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously. The teachers are aware that marking is most effective when there are comments that praise and encourage as well as providing guidance for the pupils on how they might improve their work. The teachers ensure that information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning.

25. The class teachers, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator, prepare detailed individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. The work is well matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to make good progress. These are used in the classes and the plans are carried out with good liaison between the class teachers and the support staff. The classroom assistants manage the pupils very well and maintain good standards of behaviour; they use a range of teaching methods to enable the pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. In most cases clear gains towards targets are being regularly recorded. The teaching of those pupils with English as an additional language is good. The teachers' provide challenging work and their sensitive support approach enables the pupils to make good progress.

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

26. The school provides a very broad and balanced curriculum for the Foundation Stage children and for the Key Stage 1 and Year 3 pupils. The curriculum for pupils over the age of five fully meets statutory requirements, including those for religious education. The school has a clear and effective curriculum framework that enables the teachers to plan thoroughly and systematically. The strengths of the school's curriculum are its provision for teaching all subjects, the provision for pupils with special educational needs, the effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy skills in all subjects, the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the provision for extra-curricular activities.

27. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very well planned and covers all of the areas of learning. It provides a good foundation for the children's entry to the National Curriculum. The teachers in the reception classes plan an interesting programme of work. There is a clear emphasis on developing the children's skills of reading, writing and number, linked closely to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and the children make good progress. Whilst many of the activities are directed by the teachers, there is good provision for imaginative play and appropriate opportunities for the children to make choices. Strong emphasis is placed on developing the children's personal and social skills, through planned creative activities and informal play, and they make very good progress in these areas. The children have very good opportunities to develop their physical skills.

28. In Key Stage 1 and in Year 3, the curriculum is very good. The teachers plan and review their work together in year teams in order to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. The school has thoroughly reviewed and evaluated the curriculum to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The planning is detailed and appropriate to the pupils' needs. Both key issues from the last inspection have been effectively dealt with. The short-term planning now has a clear focus in identifying specific targets and learning outcomes and the planning and implementation of investigational work in mathematics and science is now very good. Other issues from the last inspection have also been thoroughly resolved. The time allocated for mathematics and science are appropriate. Special education needs planning pays good attention to the pupils' targets in their individual

education plans. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities that includes games skills, chess, sewing, recorders and country dancing.

29. The school has responded positively to the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. A high priority is given to the teaching of speaking and listening, reading and writing. The daily, well-organised literacy lessons provide the pupils with very good opportunities to develop their basic skills. This has raised standards, particularly in speaking and listening. The planning is very effective in ensuring that skills acquired in literacy lessons are practised and applied across the curriculum. For example, the Year 1 pupils write poems about minibeasts and label diagrams of the life cycle of a frog linked with their science work. The school staff have undertaken extensive training to ensure the successful introduction of the Numeracy Strategy. It is beginning to have an impact on raising standards. Unconfirmed results in the 2001 indicate that standards have risen and that the school has exceeded its targets for that cohort of Year 2 pupils. However, there is scope for the further development of numeracy across the curriculum in subjects such as science and geography to extend the pupils' skills. All pupils have full access to the curriculum. The school has a commitment to include all of its pupils equally in its life and work.

30. The contribution of the community to the pupils' learning is very good. A wide range of visitors to the school together with good use of the locality adds significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. This represents a continuous improvement since the last inspection. Local businesses and the Dorset Education Business Partnership make contributions of both human and learning resources that enhance pupils' development. The Salvation Army and members of other faiths make regular visits to the school and this has a positive impact on pupils' understanding of faith communities. The relationship enjoyed with neighbouring schools is good. There is a sharing of resources and assessment information with the middle school and help is given with reading at the pre-school stage.

31. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Pupils are identified early and a structured work programme set up. Individual education plans are in place and the school works closely with outside agencies. Each half term the special needs co-ordinator, class teacher and classroom assistant meet to review the pupils' individual education plans and discuss the needs of other pupils within the class. The special needs co-ordinator meets regularly with parents of pupils at Stage 2 or above. Classroom assistants are very well informed, are involved with all stages of planning and are able to make good teaching points throughout lessons. They complete feedback sheets at the end of each lesson with comments about each child. Provision for the more able pupils is also good. For example there is weekly class for the Year 3 pupils achieving Level 3 in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 to support their further progress.

32. Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good and is one of the strengths of the school. The provision for spiritual development is good. The daily act of collective worship encourages the pupils to think about themselves, others and about the world around them. Year 3 pupils write their own prayers for a journey. One pupil wrote, "*Give us faith in ourselves, fill courage into our bodies and love in our hearts.*" Another wrote, "*Help us make our journey a good one, a caring and a safe one.*" The school provides many opportunities for pupils to share thoughts and feelings. During the planned discussion times in class, the pupils consider the values and beliefs of others and how they share many ideas and practices in common.

33. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Throughout school, the pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong, and encouraged to be self-disciplined. There is a mutual respect between the adults and pupils that allows an understanding of the values of honesty and fairness. In lessons, the school encourages the pupils to think through differences of opinion and accept that it is possible to respect points of view held by others. For instance, in one lesson the pupils shared their feelings and thoughts about destroying the natural world when considering the over-exploitation of trees in rainforests.

The pupils share in devising the class and school rules. This has raised the pupils' awareness of the importance of having rules that help them to work together.

34. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The pupils are encouraged to work together purposefully and to undertake some responsibilities. This is particularly evident in each classroom where the established rules and routines enable even the youngest members to cater for many of their own needs responsibly and independently. There is a School Council in which the pupils' views are taken into account and acted upon in a positive way. This clearly gives all pupils the knowledge that their ideas are valued and respected by the teachers. Initiatives include the setting up of a 'buddy' system where certain pupils help other pupils at playtime, another was to provide 'friendship seats', which have proved popular. The school has high expectation of good work and good behaviour and rewards these. The adults at the school provide very good role models for the pupils.

35. The provision for cultural development is good. The school places great importance on the arts. This can be very clearly seen in the high standard of artwork displayed around the school. Music, dance and art lessons are carefully planned and well taught. The pupils are encouraged to participate actively as performers and artists and to develop their ideas and feelings about the work of famous artists and composers. In music, the pupils listen to a rich variety of musical traditions. Visiting musicians contribute significantly to the enrichment of the provision. The curriculum provides good opportunities for the pupils to compare their own culture with other cultures. For example, the pupils share the celebrations associated with festivals from the Christian, Jewish and Sikh traditions in assemblies. The school has built up a useful collection of resources to support the pupils' cultural development. The school is very keen to involve pupils in visits to local places of interest and encourages their learning through a variety of visitors from different walks of life.

36. The school encourages the pupils to take part in a variety of clubs held out of normal lesson time. The number of activities offered has improved significantly since the previous inspection and there is now a very good range. The Year 3 pupils can learn the descant recorder or Years 1 and 2 can sing in the choir. Games skills are offered to Year 1 and football and country dancing to Years 2 and 3. There is sewing for Year 2 and salt dough modelling for Year 3. Chess for Year 3 and recently a computer club has been started for Year 2.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school's procedures for maintaining pupils' welfare and health and safety are very good, and this represents an improvement since the last inspection.

38. The teachers know their pupils well and provide a safe and secure environment. The pupils are well supervised at all times and good provision is made for supporting pupils who become ill. Procedures for child protection meet requirements and the staff are fully aware of the procedures that need to be followed. The school works closely with outside agencies for the benefit of pupils. For example, the school nurse and educational welfare officer are in regular contact with the school. Good personal records are kept for all pupils and these are updated regularly to ensure their accuracy. Good procedures are in place to monitor health and safety issues with risk assessments carried out in an appropriate manner. Good procedures are in place for first aid and fire drills.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. Staff monitor progress of pupils in their personal development and support them very well. There is a positive culture of praise and encouragement in all classes as well as at lunchtimes. Adults on duty nominate pupils who have behaved well and also deal effectively with any inappropriate behaviour they come across. Excellent procedures are in place to deal with bullying or other oppressive behaviour should it ever occur. The pupils know that they can speak to any adult and are confident that their concerns will be dealt with quickly and

effectively. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Unexplained absences are followed up on a daily basis and the benefits of regular and punctual attendance are continually reinforced with parents and pupils alike.

40. A key issue from the school's previous report was to ensure the teachers short term planning addressed the need of all pupils. This has been broadly but not wholly addressed. The school has been very successful in most subjects, particularly in literacy. However, the school has been less successful in numeracy where the pupils of average ability average are not consistently challenged in the work that is set for them.

41. The teachers work well with the classroom assistants to ensure special needs pupils have well matched activities. However, in some lessons these pupils are not given enough opportunities to work problems out for themselves. They do not always need the same level of adult supervision and may be capable of accessing the work of higher groups in some lessons. Above average pupils are set well planned work that is well matched to their abilities across the curriculum. In some areas of numeracy, expectations of the average pupils could be higher.

42. The school keeps comprehensive data on the level of ability for each pupil and tracks their progress well. There are satisfactory assessment procedures for pupils on entry to school, at the end of Key Stage 1, and optional national test papers are used at the end of Year 3. Standardised reading tests are given in Years 1, 2 and 3. The teachers use the pupils' unaided work to assess their levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science. There are focused assessment sheets for foundation subjects that contain many written comments about the pupils' progress in skills and subject knowledge. The pupils evaluate their own success and progress in their own end of year review booklets and have individual targets set at parents' evenings which can be shared between home and school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The parents view the school as a very good school. They are very happy with what the school provides and achieves. They feel their children make good progress, reach acceptable standards and behave well. The partnership that has been developed between the school and the parents continues to be a strength of the school.

44. There are a considerable number of parents who come into school to assist the children with cooking, reading and using the computers. These parents are prepared for their work by the headteacher and this is valuable and welcomed by all concerned.

45. At least 80 per cent of all parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning at home. By helping them with spellings, mathematics and listening to them read, there is a positive impact on the standards the children achieve.

46. The quantity and quality of information provided for parents are good. The school prospectus and the annual governors' report are both comprehensive and informative. A web site page has been designed for the Internet and parents and other interested parties are able to access a wide range of information about the school. The end of year academic reports are clear and contain targets for the pupils to achieve. The opportunity to discuss the contents of these reports with staff is welcomed by parents. Other opportunities are provided for parents to come to school and discuss their child's progress on both a formal and informal basis.

47. Good provision is made for parents to discuss the progress of children that have special needs. There are regular opportunities for the parents to discuss their children's individual education plans and to attend review meetings. Over 90 per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire find the staff of the school approachable and feel confident that any concerns that they may have will be listened to and acted upon. The induction

procedures when children start school are very good and help to ensure that children make an easy and enjoyable start to their educational careers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. Overall the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and with the effective support of key management staff and the governing body, gives a very clear direction for the development of the school. The very good improvement since the last inspection, which was critical of aspects of teaching and the accommodation, owes much to her leadership and to the effective support of a hard working and committed team of staff and governors. A learning environment has been developed where the pupils feel secure and their hard work is valued. The pupils behave very well and there are very strong links with parents and with the local community. The school has created a stimulating environment that reflects its high expectations and positive ethos.

49. The headteacher is very well informed. She has developed a very good balance between her strategic management and the pastoral elements of her role. Action taken since the last inspection has been effective in addressing the key issues and the school has made significant improvements in many areas. The school has been particularly successful in raising the pupils' standards in speaking and listening which are now above average. The quality of teaching has improved as the teachers now take much greater account of the pupils' level of understanding in most subjects when planning the work for different groups of pupils. The school has used test data and other assessment information effectively to build detailed profiles of the pupils' performance and to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. The school has ensured that the pupils have many opportunities to be involved in investigative work in science and mathematics. This has made a significant contribution to the stimulating curriculum provided by the school but it has not yet resulted in any significant improvement in the National Curriculum test results. However, the school has improved its capacity to teach information and communication technology and standards are now above average by the time the pupils leave school. Standards in art, design and technology, music, history, geography and religious education have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of eight since the last inspection.

50. Good use is made of teachers and very good use is made of support staff. Co-ordinator roles have been allocated appropriately. There is a good balance of teacher experience and subject knowledge and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning and attainment. The teaching staff have been set personal performance management targets which are discussed with the headteacher as part of their staff development review. The newer members of staff have been inducted into the school smoothly and received the necessary mentoring to help them settle quickly into the school routines. Students attend the school as part of their work experience programme and this is well supported by staff.

51. The school improvement plan covers three years and is a very useful working document that is based on a thorough audit of the school's needs. The involvement of both staff and governors in formulating the plan ensures that the educational priorities identified provide a shared vision for the school's development. For example, the school has recently invested heavily in additional adult support in each classroom and this is making a significant contribution to the quality of learning. The school has a policy that as much money as possible will be spent on the current pupils but has set aside approximately ten per cent of its funding for improvements to the accommodation. Targets are set and costed for each year and the school has procedures for monitoring and evaluating the extent to which priorities are achieved. As a result this improvement plan provides the school with a secure framework to improve provision, raise standards and judge value for money.

52. The school is mindful of equal opportunities in its decision making. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. The special needs co-

ordinator works hard to support teachers in their planning and there is good communication between the staff and parents. Those children who have English as an additional language are well integrated into the school and their needs are well addressed.

53. The contribution of the governing body to the effective running of the school is very good. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to raising standards in the school. They keep well informed and are committed to their individual and collective roles. They have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governors' committees have appropriate terms of reference. There are governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs, all of whom are supportive of the work in the school. The governing body regularly reviews curriculum policies and fulfils its statutory obligations.

54. Financial planning is very good and is simplified by the use of computers for administration. The office administration is effective in supporting the pupils' educational development appropriately. A financial audit has recently been carried out and the minor recommendations are being addressed. Day-to-day administrative procedures are unobtrusive and highly supportive of the work of the school. The school has been awarded the Investors in People standard. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services and the headteacher is effective in the way that she assesses the impact of spending on standards.

55. The range and quality of accommodation of the school are very good and enhance the quality of pupils' learning. The building is kept in very clean condition. Some external windows, however, need replacing to meet current safety standards and the building itself does not meet the needs of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Learning resources are very good in all subjects and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. In particular the provision of large play equipment and areas associated with the under fives are significantly better and impact positively on the learning by these children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. The school should continue to raise standards in mathematics by:

- Setting more challenging and varied activities for average pupils (paragraphs 23,79)
- Enriching the mathematics curriculum through links with other subjects (paragraph 29)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	46	29	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	370
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	105
Special educational needs	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	91
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	39	57	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	33	33
	Girls	54	56	50
	Total	84	89	83
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (95)	93 (98)	86 (94)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	31	33
	Girls	53	47	49
	Total	84	78	82
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (93)	81 (95)	85 (96)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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	3
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	276
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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 – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	296

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	678599
Total expenditure	675335
Expenditure per pupil	1836
Balance brought forward from previous year	58393
Balance carried forward to next year	61657

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	370
Number of questionnaires returned	123

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	33	1	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	61	37	2		1
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	38	1		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	45	6	3	2
The teaching is good.	59	39		1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	44	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	26	2	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	33	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	50	43	5		2
The school is well led and managed.	59	40		1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	44	2		1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	42	12	4	17

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

57. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five years of age. Pupils whose birthday falls after February of that year attend for mornings only during the autumn term and begin full time education in January. The children enter the school having attended a range of pre-school education; some have attended nursery schools, others local playgroups and some children have had no pre-school experience at all. Results of the baseline assessment, which is conducted within a few weeks of the children starting school, indicate that, whilst attainment on entry is broadly average, there are gaps in their mathematical development. Their speaking and listening skills are also below average.

58. The children respond well to the good teaching and make good progress in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. The three reception classes have very favourable staffing provision with a class teacher and a full-time classroom assistant in each room. The curriculum co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage gives a strong lead and all aspects of the academic and personal development of each child are carefully monitored. Staff work as a team to provide a curriculum that covers all of the areas of learning. They plan activities and experiences that motivate, enthuse and match the abilities of all pupils and enable them to make steady progress towards achieving the early learning goals. Teaching is shared fully with the classroom assistants, staff are consistent in their approach to children, relationships are good and the working environment is calm and harmonious.

59. The quality and quantity of resources provided for the foundation stage are very good. All three classrooms are large, airy and well equipped. There is ample storage space and good display facilities. Toilets and cloakrooms are adjacent to each classroom making it possible for children to become independent in this area of their physical development. The whole department is colourful, welcoming and secure.

Personal and social development

60. The children make good progress in their personal and social development. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff. Daily routines and rules form the basis for developing childrens' understanding of the organisation of the school and the wider community. They learn to hang their coats up on their own peg, to put lunch boxes in the correct place and to begin work quietly and without fuss. They are expected to answer politely during registration and enjoy being picked for the special duty of returning the class register to the school office. The routine of the school day helps the children to understand that there are certain times for play and others for work. They are expected to dress and undress for physical education lessons, learn to clear away after lessons, take care of school equipment and be prepared to share resources with others. The reception classes provide a secure and caring environment where the contributions of all children are valued. Staff give praise and encouragement which contributes to the growth of pupils' confidence and self esteem. The children quickly learn to listen to instructions or to the views of others. They develop positive attitudes to learning, show pleasure in their work and seek to please their teachers. Behaviour expectations are high and all staff are careful to apply the rules consistently, firmly and with kindness. The children's response to these expectations is excellent. They are able to walk in a safe, orderly way around the school, to line up for lunchtime, to sit quietly during school assemblies and to work in harmony during class activities.

Language and literacy

61. Because some children start school with below average skills in speaking and listening, there is a very clear emphasis on this area of learning in teachers' daily planning. Every opportunity is taken to encourage the children to listen and speak, both in more structured class discussion sessions and as they work in groups or during imaginative play. During the literacy hour, skilful questioning by the teacher helps the children to recall the sequence of events in the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and gives them confidence to explain the story in their own words. The teachers use good vocabulary and extend and reinforce pupils' language by the use of words like 'author' and 'illustrator'. All questions and answers from the children are given serious consideration and they are expected to listen carefully when others are speaking. Early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. When reading two different texts of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', the children demonstrate their ability to detect differences and similarities between the two versions. They show enthusiasm for reading and are eager to discuss the pictures and what might happen next. Work on letter sounds is imaginatively taught and the children respond with great enjoyment as they identify initial letter sounds from flash cards or help 'Teddy' to get his sounds right. Each classroom is equipped with an area where children are able to listen quietly to taped stories or to choose from a good selection of story books. Books are taken home to share with their families and careful reading records are kept of their progress. Good progress is also made in the early skills of writing. The children are able to make marks and draw pictures whilst some are able to recognise and write the letters of the alphabet and are beginning to construct simple sentences independently. A well equipped writing corner is frequently used by children who wish to write lists, letters and stories during the afternoon 'activities' session.

Mathematical development

62. The children are making good progress in the mathematical area of learning. Through regular counting activities in songs, stories and games they gain confidence in using numbers in everyday situations. They use a variety of apparatus to count to ten, most are able to recognise numbers to ten and some children are able to count and recognise numbers to twenty and beyond. They demonstrate the ability to count forwards and backwards from a given number on the 100 grid and are beginning to use this skill to add and take numbers away from each other. There are carefully planned, mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of all numeracy lessons which build on pupils' previous experience. The pace of these sessions, whilst suiting some of the children, is too slow to be sufficiently challenging for the higher attaining pupils. Teachers are careful to use correct mathematical vocabulary at all times and pupils have a sound understanding of terms such as 'counting on', 'counting back', 'adding on', 'taking away'. There are many opportunities for children to become familiar with the names of simple shapes, to estimate the number of bricks or beads and to classify objects by colour, shape and size. Many of the class displays strongly feature numeracy – for example, number squares, coins, language of maths – and there is a mathematics corner to which children can go during the 'activities' sessions.

Knowledge and understanding

63. Progress in the childrens' knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Much of the early work is based on helping them to make a good start in the school. They learn to find their way around the building, know where resources are located, the system for morning milk, where lunch is eaten and where assemblies take place. The school grounds are a rich source for learning. Outside the reception classrooms there are raised beds in which children are able to grow flowers and vegetables as part of their work in science and design and technology. They keep records of their gardening tasks, design seed packets, draw the plants as they emerge, learn what is necessary for the growth of healthy plants and finally harvest, cook and eat the produce. Through studying their own family and village, the children begin to acquire some understanding of time and a sense of history. They know that they are 'growing', that there are some children who are younger than they are, that some people are old and that there are different seasons in the year. The

computers which are based in the classroom are well used to practise basic keyboard skills and to provide programs which will enrich their learning.

Creative development

64. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good and there are many opportunities for the children to experiment with colour, texture and shape. During the 'activity' sessions, a group of children work with a classroom assistant on a huge collage 'giant' – so big, he has to be completed in separate parts. They pay careful attention to detail, decide that he must have trousers with holes at the knees and painstakingly paste small squares of material around the painted hole. Every child is given the opportunity to help with the collage and all are eager to talk about it. The school grounds again provide opportunities for the children to draw and paint leaves, flowers and trees. In music lessons, there are opportunities to play percussion instruments and to explore and recognise the way in which the sound of an instrument can be changed. They know the words of many songs and join in readily with singing in school assemblies. Independent role play forms an important part of the English curriculum as children act out the stories which they read in class and take turns at playing the different characters in the plot. A good supply of dressing-up clothes are available to them. There are opportunities to perform before a wider audience in school productions for parents and friends.

Physical development

65. The children make very good progress in the development of physical skills. They handle pencils, scissors and tools competently and, during play, move with increasing confidence and control. In their physical education lessons, the children are able to undress themselves and move in a quiet orderly line to the hall or the games field for the start of the lesson. They show a good awareness of space and are able to move safely without interfering with the work of other children. Ideas flow as the children move in different ways around the hall floor and they have the confidence to demonstrate good work to others. In their games lesson, children show a developing skill in throwing and catching a ball accurately. There has been a great improvement in the provision of outdoor facilities for the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and all classes now have access to a well equipped climbing area and plenty of wheeled toys, sand and water trays and a wooden play shed. These are well used and provide a rich variety of activities for the enhancement of pupils' physical development.

ENGLISH

66. Standards in speaking and listening have improved and the higher standards in reading and writing have been maintained since the last inspection. The results of the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds show that standards were above average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The results in reading and writing have risen over the last four years in line with the national trend. Both boys and girls achieve standards above the national average. Inspection evidence for seven-year-olds finds that standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average. Standards in writing are well above average. The inspection evidence for eight-year-olds indicates that the pupils attain above average standards in reading, speaking and listening skills and well above average standards in writing. Standards throughout the school in spelling are above average.

67. The pupils of all abilities make good progress, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The teachers plan the work carefully taking account of the individual action plans for those with special educational needs. This ensures that the work is appropriately focused and is well supported in lessons by teaching assistants.

68. The pupils are taught to listen carefully to the teacher and given many opportunities to respond to a wide range of discussions and texts, including stories, poems and non-fiction. The pupils speak with enthusiasm about what they are doing and as they get older they develop and use an increasingly wide and often impressive range of vocabulary. They are very keen to ask and answer questions and to contribute to class discussions. When they discuss the stories they read, the pupils talk animatedly about the characters and what happens to them. They use their language skills well in other subjects too. For example, they use appropriate terms when discussing work in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, music, and religious education. By the age of eight, the pupils express themselves clearly and in full sentences. They talk confidently and listen attentively when, in geography, they discuss issues related to deforestation in jungles. The pupils took turns to be the forester, whilst the other pupils took on roles of people and animals living in the forest. They developed their arguments, often persuasively, with the foresters having to think and respond quickly to their accusations.

69. Seven-year-old pupils read simple texts fluently and with good expression. They use initial letter sounds and their letter knowledge to help them read unfamiliar words. Many of them understand how word order affects meaning in English sentences. The pupils enjoy reading a wide range of story, poetry and non-fiction books. All of the pupils interviewed said that they enjoyed reading. Many are keen to express their responses to important events in the stories they read. Most of the pupils successfully read simple information texts well when they are working in other subjects. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson the pupils were extending their knowledge of snails. They read the snail questions and took turns to read out the glossary terms in the book on snails. One boy explained clearly the purpose of the contents, index and glossary. The pupils have used reference books to find out about different minibeasts. Eight-year-old pupils read with a good degree of expression, fluency, accuracy and understanding. They are beginning to think more carefully about what they are reading when attempting to make sense of what happens or might happen. They know the work of more than one author and express preferences for different types of books. Nearly all of the pupils, for example, are familiar with the work of Roald Dahl and J. K. Rowling and are able to discuss how these authors use humour in their stories. Many of the pupils have developed good reading habits and positive attitudes using a wide range of texts, including works of non-fiction.

70. By the age of seven, most pupils write stories or recount events that are familiar to them. When they write stories, they understand the need to plan them carefully and they make good use of support sheets to help them develop their stories. For example, Year 1 pupils wrote a story based upon the Farmer Duck big book they had been reading and took particular care with the structure of the story. The pupils write for a wide range of purposes and are beginning to understand how they are different. For example, they use lists and notes and write letters, postcards, poems and stories. Often, the pupils write poetry in which they explore elements of language and imagery. For example, in a Year 2 pupil's poem about a dragonfly, she wrote, "*Thin long, patterned body like an African mask.*" The pupils write in a legible, joined script. They spell simple words correctly and use basic punctuation marks accurately. More complex words or unfamiliar ones are usually spelt using their good understanding of letter sounds. In their language work, they show an awareness of word order and the correct use of nouns and verbs.

71. By the age of eight, most pupils write confidently for a range of purposes and write stories in a number of forms. For example, a group in one Year 3 class was working together producing a story opening with a tension and suspense; they wrote, "*As they entered the damp, dark forest, dappled light twinkled all around but it didn't go silent.*" They know how to use settings and atmosphere. The pupils make good use of planning and drafting in their writing. Their written work demonstrates a good awareness of spelling and punctuation. Handwriting is joined and legible. The lower attaining pupils tackle the full range of writing and make use of planning and drafting exercises to help them improve. They work hard to improve their work. One of the strengths of the pupils' writing is that most of the pupils have successfully produced pieces of more sustained writing, particularly

stories and poems and writing linked to their work in other subjects. They are beginning to write pieces that present more than one point of view. For example, in a literacy lesson linked to their work on rainforests, they write from different animals' points of view on the ethical questions about destroying trees in the rainforest and develop well-thought out questions linked to their viewpoint.

72. The quality of teaching is very good and ensures that the pupils make good progress by the time that they leave the school. The teachers have a very secure knowledge of teaching literacy skills both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. This accounts for the high standards in writing and the improvement in speaking and listening, which has improved significantly since the previous inspection. They use the National Literacy Strategy effectively. Greater breadth of opportunities, and the good interest level of the work, helps the pupils to learn more effectively because they feel confident when they contribute to class discussions. Another strength of the teaching is the high expectations of all of the pupils including those who have English as an additional language; irrespective of their level of attainment the work set is usually challenging. The teachers provide a wide range of activities that are relevant to the pupils, which helps their enthusiasm for their work. The pupils are taught well how to find information in books and they can use the contents, index and glossaries to help them. There is a good library system and the school is further extending the pupils' access by having introduced a computer system for the pupils to check out their own books. To make the best use of this, the teaching of library skills needs to be more structured to help the pupils locate books in the school library. The homework is set for all pupils and is extended for the older pupils. This is well thought out and makes a contribution to the pupils' progress. The reading homework record mostly lists books read. There is inconsistency between the classes as to how well these documents are used as a means of communication between school and the home.

73. The management of English is good. The literacy co-ordinator monitors standards and teaching and this is one factor in the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The school has risen to the challenge of improving the high standards. This is happening and is led by the headteacher and the English co-ordinator. Effective and comprehensive programmes of work have been established throughout the school and appropriate resources developed to support the literacy teaching. The pupils' progress is closely monitored and targets are set for every pupil. These are used to form teaching groups and to identify those pupils who need additional support. The special needs co-ordinator works closely with the teachers in supporting these pupils. The pupils' reading is regularly assessed and a carefully kept reading record charts each pupil's progress. The pupils write regularly in their *Special Books* and this work is evaluated and linked to National Curriculum levels of attainment.

MATHEMATICS

74. The results of the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that attainment is just below national expectations and below average compared to pupils from similar schools. A similar picture is indicated from results over the last three years. The inspection findings, however, indicate attainment is close to the national average. Unconfirmed results in the 2001 national tests indicate an improvement on the previous year and that the school has met its targets for that cohort of pupils. Attainment in Year 3 is in line with national expectations. The pupils' progress is generally satisfactory, but varies for different ability groups. The pupils with special educational needs receive much extra support from teachers and classroom assistants and consequently their progress is good. Similarly the most able pupils receive extra teacher support, particularly in Year 3, and their progress is good. The progress of some groups of pupils in the average range could be improved, particularly in areas of number work. This is because the work set for them in some lessons is too undemanding and there are low expectations of their skills of calculation.

75. Since the last inspection there has been significant improvement in the provision of investigational work for the pupils. Most lessons include opportunities for the pupils to address key questions and work collaboratively to solve open-ended problems. There is at least one investigation planned every two weeks. The pupils are adept at gathering data and asking their own questions. The standard of the pupils' independent inquiry recorded in books is particularly impressive. For example Year 2 pupils successfully used a limited budget to select a meal consisting of a hot snack, a sweet and a drink from a comprehensive menu. Each meal could not cost more than £2.

76. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils identify right-angled, equilateral and isosceles triangles. By the end of Year 3, the pupils are able to measure acute and obtuse angles with a protractor. They understand the terms universal sets and subsets. They recognise some patterns in number such as the relationship between $8+6=14$ and $800+600=1400$. Many pupils have difficulty, however, reading numbers over 1000 accurately. In another Year 3 class most of the pupils can identify multiples of 2 and 5. A few above average pupils can explain strategies to calculate how many fives there are in a multiple by doubling the number of tens. The pupils are much less secure, however, when working with larger numbers and no evidence was seen of very able pupils working with thousands. The most able pupils in Year 1 can insert numbers in the correct place on a blank 200 number square.

77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and some very good teaching was observed. In the most successful lesson the oral, mental session was brisk and the pupils were able to extend their mental agility. The tasks motivated the pupils by requiring them to chant, clap, whisper and cheer at appropriate times. The pupils' mistakes were immediately analysed and corrected. The pupils responded well and worked at pace. Many strategies to solve calculations have been taught and the pupils were able to recall and use them with confidence. The tasks set were well matched to the different ability levels so all pupils made good progress. This lesson was different to many other lessons observed because the teacher had a sharp learning focus which showed the pupils exactly what they would learn during the lesson. The plenary session was used to check how far the pupils had advanced in the acquisition of this objective. In the less effective lessons the pupils were unsure of the learning objectives. For example Year 1 pupils were told their learning objectives were to "explain methods and reasoning" and "explore reasoning about number". The plenary sessions in many lessons are merely repeats of the introductory activity. Furthermore, the initial mental sessions did not place sufficient emphasis on the pupils working out calculations in their heads. Standards can further be raised by more emphasis being placed on the teaching of computation strategies thus enabling pupils to work more confidently with numbers.

78. The process of independent investigation of key questions is now well developed throughout the school. It is not as effective as it could be as the teachers are not always clear about exactly what the pupils will learn and how they can draw together their conclusions with a statement to summarise their learning.

79. The pupils with special educational needs are most ably assisted by classroom assistants. Similarly the teacher supports the most able pupils well. As a result, however, in some lessons the average pupils are left alone to complete repetitive tasks with no challenge or pace. Further extension work is not always provided. The progress of these pupils is then adversely affected.

80. Opportunities are provided in the information technology suite for pupils to use computers to develop their data handling skills. This enables the pupils display information in a variety of charts. However, computers are underused to support the work in the classroom. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to practise their numerical skills in other subjects such as science and geography.

81. The teachers use both formal and informal assessments to monitor progress. The pupils have ongoing mathematical targets displayed on the classroom walls. Daily evaluations from classroom assistants ensure planning for special needs pupils is accurate. A good range of useful records is kept. The school recognises the need to use this data accurately to track the pupils' progress from year to year and to set more challenging targets for the average ability pupil.

82. The school is working hard to raise standards in mathematics. All staff are extensively trained in the Numeracy Strategy. The school benefits from advice from the local education authority numeracy advisor. There is a very good range of resources. The co-ordinator, headteacher and her deputy conduct many classroom observations to monitor standards of teaching and learning. There are encouraging signs that this process is impacting on standards.

SCIENCE

83. In 2000 the teachers assessed standards as just below average compared to those of other schools nationally. Inspection evidence, however, indicates satisfactory standards of attainment both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils' leave the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in scientific investigation.

84. There has been much improvement since the last inspection in the development of the pupils' investigational skills. The pupils are good at asking key questions and predicting results. They respond to suggestions and put forward their own ideas. Throughout the school they understand the concepts of a fair test, predicting and hypothesising and changing variables. All pupils co-operate well together and share roles within a group such as those testing spinners when one pupil did the dropping, another timed with the stopwatch and one recorded the time. The quantity and quality of work recorded by pupils is particularly impressive.

85. Year 1 pupils are able to list waterproof and non-waterproof materials. They know air in waterwings or lilos helps them float though they cannot explain why. They can list healthy and unhealthy foods and know electricity is dangerous. They know stronger pushes mean greater distance travelled but do not realise distance from an object affects the loudness of sound. In Year 2 the pupils positively bubble with enthusiasm as they make their "snaileries" and test which habitat the snails prefer. The conversation amongst pupils sparkled, the suggestions abounded resulting in a most animated and productive session. Pupils are able to define the meaning of habitat and give detail of similar investigations with mini-beasts such as worms. The whole investigation is enhanced by detailed observation of the snails as a drawing exercise in art. Year 3 pupils use spinners to investigate how air resistance and weight affect the distribution of sycamore seeds.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Lessons are well structured and teachers have secure subject knowledge. There are occasions, however, when the learning focus is lost during the investigation. The teachers do not consistently ensure that they help the pupils to draw conclusions and clarify the scientific principle; so that they increase their knowledge as well as their skills.

87. The co-ordinator monitors the teachers' planning. There is a policy and scheme of work which ensures all pupils cover a lively and progressive curriculum. Both formal and informal systems are in place to assess the pupils' skills and understanding. The results of these assessments, however, are not used consistently to track individual pupils and set ambitious targets. The science curriculum is enriched through links with other subjects such as the rainforests in geography, detailed drawings of plants in art, mini-beast poems in English and making material mini-beasts in Design & Technology.

88. The enthusiastic curriculum co-ordinator has initiated many developments within the school grounds. They now offer good facilities for environmental education. There is a

large pond and wetland habitat, wild life areas with long grass, slabs and logs, heath land, fruit trees, nettles for butterflies, and a multi-surface pathway. The scheme has benefited financially from links with industry and members of the local community have helped with planting. The school also takes part in the "Healthy Schools" award scheme. This raises the pupils' awareness of the habitat needs of wildlife, the plight of many endangered animals, the value of compost heaps to mini-beasts, saving water, recycling stamps and cans, saving electricity and conserving energy by walking to school. Visits are made annually to Canford Heath and the electrical museum in Christchurch. The Health Education bus visits the school with videos, models and activities for the pupils. The resources in the school are very good.

ART AND DESIGN

89. The pupils are making good progress overall and very good progress in their appreciation of the work and style of different artists. Standards are well above average by the time the pupils leave school and this is an improvement on the last inspection.

90. The pupils produce much work in the style of different artists. The range reads like a 'Who's Who' of the history of art with over twenty artists in evidence including Robert Delaney, Van Gogh, Mondrian, Gina Severini, Leonardo da Vinci, Ensor, Jackson Pollock and Klimt. The pupils create portraits in the style of Pablo Picasso using printing ink, sticks, sponges, fingers, card and rollers to create shape, patterns, line and texture or work in the style of Joan Miro with potato prints, lolly sticks, pipe cleaners and paint. There are many examples of the visual and tactile qualities of material being used for collage work such as the 'Kings and Queens' portrait gallery where the use of beads, sequins, paint, ribbon, fabrics, wool and sequin waste result in a visually stimulating display which links effectively with history. The pupil's drawing skills are well developed. Year 2 pupils work with confidence when using pencils to do a detailed observation of snails and are aware of shading, line, tone and pattern. Year 1 pupils make realistic clay models of animals. They know how to join pieces of clay together ready for firing, use tools to create texture and are beginning to evaluate their work and suggest improvements.

91. Art is further enriched by excellent links with other subjects. In the rainforest collages a wide variety of media are used to produce colourful, exciting centres of interest linking with geography, literature and science. The close observation of plants using water colours or the mini-beasts sewn from painted fabric and mounted on tie and dye material further enhance science. The batik Indian figures and appreciation of Cimabue's 'Madonna Enthroned' support the religious education and multi-cultural provision within the school.

92. The pupils enjoy art. They attack work with enthusiasm, work well collaboratively and follow instructions and advice carefully. The art co-ordinator has written a detailed scheme of work and ensures there is a very good range of resources ready for the start of each module. Much work develops from visits such as to Scaplens Court Museum or within the school's wild life areas. A demonstration from visiting Indian dancers stimulates further interest. The subject is well managed and is a strength throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Standards, which are above average, have been maintained since the previous inspection and the pupils are making good progress.

94. There is a strong emphasis on the design element of the subject and in the lessons observed in Year 2 and Year 3, it is evident that pupils are very familiar with the process. In Year 2, the pupils are absorbed in studying a selection of constructions that have winding mechanisms. In groups, they try to find out how the mechanism works and many interesting discussions are heard around the classroom. They listen politely to each other, consider the different possibilities and are confident to offer their ideas and suggestions. When agreement is reached, they are able to record their findings and begin work on their

own design. Year 3 pupils are at the beginning of a task to design and make a bag for collecting leaves. They demonstrate their ability to follow a design brief as they work out dimensions and special features prior to preparing a template from which to cut out their bag. They are able to select materials and use scissors with due consideration for health and safety. Children in the reception class are given many experiences in handling tools as they cut and stick in collage and modelling activities.

95. There is much good work on display around the school including models of the giant's castle in reception, hand puppets and sunglasses in Year 1, mini-beasts and moving vehicles in Year 2 and pneumatically controlled monsters from Year 3. The school has very good facilities for all pupils to gain experience of food preparation and there is a kiln where clay models are fired.

96. The teachers plan work carefully and a very good range of resources is available to support the requirements of the curriculum. Pupils show enormous enthusiasm for the subject and are willing to work in pairs or groups sharing their ideas and expertise. They show pride in their work and are happy to evaluate the finished product.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

97. It was not possible to see history being taught during the inspection but a lesson in each key stage was observed in geography. The evidence from these lessons, the scrutiny of pupils' previous and current work, the examination of the scheme of work and teachers' planning and discussion with the curriculum co-ordinator indicate that at both key stages standards of attainment exceed the national average and pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

98. In geography, the youngest pupils quickly learn to find their way about the school and are able to talk about their home and street. They learn the route to school and plot Jack's route to the giant's castle. Through lessons in the school grounds and walks in the locality they begin to have a wider understanding of their own environment. Year 1 pupils are observed learning how to read grids on a map and are given map references to locate various landmarks. Year 2 pupils study buildings, identify the materials used to build them and the purpose for which they are built. Skills in mapwork are developed further in their projects on India and Africa. An interesting lesson on conservation in the rainforests is observed in Year 3. During the initial discussion, pupils demonstrate a very good background knowledge of climatic conditions in the world and an understanding of what needs to be done to restore and conserve the rainforests.

99. A scrutiny of pupils' work in history indicates a broad and balanced curriculum. The youngest children are learning to distinguish between past and present, old and young. They write about their memories of playschool and study the way in which they have grown since their first baby photographs. Year 1 are able to compare toys from times past with those in use today. They study the way people go on holiday now and contrast it with customs in the past. Year 2 pupils study events much further back in history such as the Fire of London and the kings and queens of England and learn to place these events on a time line. They are beginning to distinguish fact from fiction. In Year 3, there is an in depth study of life in Victorian times which includes Victorian art, kitchens, schools and health. Good use is made of local museums to enhance pupils' learning in both history and geography.

100. The co-ordinators for history and geography lead the subjects effectively, ensuring that there are good links with other subjects. Each subject is taught in separate half-termly blocks and the work to be covered is both interesting and manageable. The schemes of work for both history and geography have been developed to include the Foundation Stage. There are very good resources to support teachers in their planned lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. The pupils' attainment is at the expected level for pupils aged seven and above expectations for those aged eight. The attainment for eight-year-olds is an improvement since the last inspection. The provision of a computer suite that is able to accommodate a whole class, the improvement in teachers' confidence and skills through staff training, the range of software for the pupils to use and the appointment of a technician to support teachers are all significant factors in enabling the pupils to make good progress.

102. By the age of seven, the pupils use the mouse and keyboard controls confidently, for example, to move screen objects such as tools in a research program. With some support, they log on and access menus to use the appropriate program for the lesson. The pupils use these skills to support work in other subjects. In one lesson, for example, the pupils used a program to research information on garden wildlife linked to their science and literacy work. The pupils know how to use simple word processing programs to make labels and write short sentences. Many of the pupils know how to change the size and colour of the fonts they use. The pupils save and print their own work. By the age of eight, the pupils are confident. They are familiar with e-mail and have begun to understand some of the conventions in composing and responding to e-mail messages. They have used e-mail to establish contact with another school and other places. The pupils have begun to understand how to use databases to locate, organise and display information in graphs and tables. The pupils make confident use of these programs. The pupils work well together, sharing their ideas.

103. The teaching is good overall. The teachers plan well, building on the pupils' previous knowledge, which in one Year 2 lesson allowed the pupils to log on using a given password using their previously learnt skills. The teachers gave clear explanations and the pupils were mostly attentive, as in a Year 3 lesson when they demonstrated that they had listened carefully by beginning to find out how to sort information. Through effective questioning and discussion the teachers demonstrate their secure subject knowledge and are able to help the pupils to use a database. The teachers extend the pupils' skills in other subjects effectively. In a lesson linked to their science topic on plants and flowers the pupils show their good knowledge and use this on a program to draw and label the main parts of a flowering plant. Good support is provided by the technician in setting up the suite ready for use, in giving support to teachers and in supporting the pupils' learning. Teaching assistants also provide effective support, for instance, when supporting pupils with special educational needs or those pupils with limited confidence. The use of support staff ensures that all pupils can make good progress during each lesson. The teaching makes good use of well-designed worksheets to guide the pupils' learning. The pupils have very good attitudes to learning because the teaching is interesting and well matched to their needs. All of the teachers make effective use of the available resources to support learning in other subjects.

104. The school is developing an appropriate curriculum. Progress in developing the subject has been good since the previous inspection. The school is aware that there are a number of areas for development. Procedures for assessing the pupils' progress are not yet in place. The computer suite is at present under-used. It is well used in the afternoons but for only limited periods in the mornings. The way the suite is arranged means that teachers have difficulty in effectively talking to the whole class. The computers in the classrooms are not always used effectively but satisfactory use is made of these for pupils with special educational needs. Plans to overcome some of these difficulties are well under way. There is a computer club run by the technician for Year 2 pupils that is well attended.

MUSIC

105. Attainment in music is above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils are provided with a wide range of well-planned experiences that enable them to

make good progress in music. Music and singing are enjoyed by the pupils and are very positive features of the provision.

106. The pupils listen carefully and explore sounds using simple body percussion, clapping and tapping. They use different percussion instruments and their voices well. They learn to identify and understand how sounds can have high and low pitch. Year 1 pupils use a range of percussion instruments to overlay rhythms to accompany simple poems. They distinguish between long and short sounds.

107. The very good behaviour of the pupils supports their learning. The pupils collaborate maturely when working in small groups and musical instruments are handled with respect. The pupils recognise the importance of not touching their instruments when it is not their turn to play. Almost all pupils have developed their listening skills sufficiently to start and stop on time when performing together. This is evident in Year 2 where the pupils enthusiastically compose a sound picture to depict the moods of the sea. Their interest is strongly promoted by the teacher who skilfully evokes images of the sea in different locations. The pupils persevere to create the right effects when working together on their compositions. They listen well when other pupils are playing instruments and respond thoughtfully when given the opportunity to evaluate performances.

108. In Year 3 the pupils continue to make good progress. They sing well unaccompanied. A few pupils can recognise the sound of orchestral instruments such as the flute and the violin when they listen to classical compositions. They are becoming familiar with formal musical notation and can define accurately technical terms such as “pulse”, “accompaniment” and “ostinato”.

109. The quality of teaching in Year 1, where the pupils are taught by their own class teachers, is satisfactory. In Years 2 and 3 the pupils are taught by the music co-ordinator and in these lessons the quality of teaching is very good. These lessons are defined by high expectations and very good pace. The co-ordinator provides a very good model of teaching and this gives her colleague teachers the opportunity to extend their knowledge, skills and confidence in teaching music. However, there is scope for them to become more involved in the teaching. The planning for lessons provides the pupils with a rich range of experience for performing and composing. Furthermore good links are made with other subjects such as information technology and science to support learning. Throughout the school, the pupils listen to a range of music from different cultures and musical traditions and this is helping to develop their listening and appraising skills. The pupils develop their sense of harmony sing a range of songs to support daily assemblies.

110. The pupils’ work in music makes a strong contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. The curriculum is enhanced by the variety of performers who are invited to present different musical traditions to the pupils. There is a very good range and number of percussion instruments available. These are well organised and readily accessible for the pupils’ use.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. The pupils attain standards in line with national expectations and make satisfactory progress throughout the school in those aspects of physical education seen during the inspection. This is similar to the previous inspection. During this term the pupils take part in games and athletics lessons. The programme of work includes gymnastics and dance in other terms. There are good links between dance and music.

112. A games lesson was observed in Year 1 and two athletics lessons were observed in Year 2. In the games lesson, the pupils worked hard to develop skills in ball handling. They improved their skills in throwing and catching a ball with a partner. In the athletics lessons, the pupils achieved satisfactory levels of skill. They began with an appropriate warm-up, which they enjoyed and understood its importance. In groups they worked hard at

developing their ability to throw bean bags over-arm in a straight line. Various activities were carried out to improve the pupils accuracy and ability to throw as far as possible. Their ability to work as a group and in sharing equipment was good.

113. The quality of teaching overall is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The teaching is successful, because the teachers have a clear understanding of improving the pupils' performance. They provide quality demonstrations and use pupils to do the same. They give clear explanations and challenge the pupils to improve their performance and set time limits to achieve specific tasks. The planning provides the pupils with good opportunities to explore and develop their own skills. Regular teaching points by the teacher remind the pupils of the purpose of the task and ensure a brisk pace to the lesson. Safety issues were important in all lessons.

114. The subject co-ordinator brings a high level of skill and understanding and is planning ways to improve the subject further. The school has a good programme of out-of-school activities for pupils of all abilities and gender. These include football, games skills and country dancing. The school is well resourced for games outside and the hall is large and well used. All outdoor surfaces are well maintained and are safe areas on which to perform.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. By the time they leave school the pupils achieve standards that are above the expectations of the agreed syllabus and the pupils are making good progress.

116. The pupils at both key stages are highly motivated by the study of different religions and are beginning to have a good understanding of faiths. This enables them to make comparisons and connections between religions and participate knowledgeably in class discussions. They understand that both Jews and Christians have special books that are important to their religion, and are successful in picking out similarities and differences in the same story. In a Year 1 lesson, the class teacher uses skilful questioning to probe the pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking about 'prayer'. The discussion is lively and many thoughtful answers are forthcoming from the pupils. This work is continued in Year 3, where pupils study the Sikh religion and draw comparisons between their religious festivals and those of the Christian church. A good lesson in Year 3, based on 'The Pilgrim's Progress', explores the fears that all people have as they go through life and how strong beliefs might help us to overcome them.

117. Themes for school assemblies strongly support the teaching of religious education and help to reinforce the pupils' understanding and knowledge of the Christian calendar. The major festivals of the church are celebrated as are the important days in other religions. There is a strong focus on moral issues and the pupils are encouraged to think of others as well as themselves.

118. The quality of teaching is good with very good features. The teachers plan their work carefully and build on previous learning. A strength of the teaching is the opportunity for pupils to share personal experiences openly, value different points of view and explore the importance of rituals. The pupils respond very well to teachers' expectations and behaviour is very good. In the work that is produced, there are many links with other subjects and good displays are seen in classrooms and around the school.

119. The curriculum co-ordinator and staff have been successful in drawing up a scheme of work for the children in the reception class, which dovetails into Key Stage 1 work and provides a very firm foundation for the whole school. Similarly, the work in Year 3 is planned to link with the middle school to which many of the pupils will go at the end of the school year. The subject is well supported by a very good supply of interesting resources and good use is made of visiting speakers and clergy to lead assemblies.