

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Newton Abbot

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113467

Headteacher: Mrs Andrea Medway

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward  
18605

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 July 2001

Inspection number: 195519

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Boys and girls
School address:	Coombeshead Road Newton Abbot Devon
Postcode:	TQ12 1PT
Telephone number:	01626 352559
Fax number:	01626 335079
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Mary Rowett
Date of previous inspection:	19 May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30695	Geraldine Dinan	Team inspector	Science Art Physical education Foundation Stage Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28132	Wendy Hiscock	Team inspector	English Design technology Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Quality School Management Limited

19 Meadow Close  
Downend  
South Gloucestershire  
BS16 6QS

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>33</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Number of full-time pupils	198	(just below average)
Pupils with English as an additional language	5	(above average)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	19	(9.6%) (below average)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	27	(13.5%)(below average)
Average class size	28.3	(average)

St Joseph's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary school serving the parishes of Newton Abbot, Chudleigh and Bovey Tracey. Pupils come from a broad mix of home backgrounds although there is a small number from low income families. All pupils have had some pre-school experience and enter at four-years-old with a wide but slightly above average range of attainment. Just over 40% of pupils are non-Catholics. The school has identified 4% as talented.

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

**St Joseph's is becoming a more effective school after an unsettled period following five changes of headship since 1994. Staff and governors, encouraged and supported by the current enthusiastic and inspiring headteacher, have started to tackle successfully significant areas of underachievement in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. 91% of the teaching is good or better. The school gives sound value for money.**

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

- Standards are well above average in English for seven-year-olds; they are above average in speaking and listening and reading for 11-year-olds and in art and design and technology at the end of both key stages.
- Pupils generally work hard, are interested in their learning and enthusiastic about school.
- Behaviour is generally good and pupils show compassion and concern for others.
- 91% of the teaching is good or better.
- Staff know pupils well and relationships are good.
- The curriculum has a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Provision for personal and health education is very good.
- The leadership and management successfully promote a caring Christian family atmosphere where pupils feel valued and secure.
- Parents are very appreciative and supportive of the school.

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

- Standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in writing and information and communication technology at Key Stage 2.
- Monitoring of and developing teaching strategies and pupils' learning.
- Use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning, provide extension work for more able pupils and inform parents of their children's progress.
- Measures by which staff and governors can check the effectiveness of their actions to raise standards.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, standards in reading, writing and science at Key Stage 1 have improved considerably since the previous inspection in May 1997; standards at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science have remained well below average until last year but are now improving. The key issues have only begun to be tackled effectively during the last six months:

- The planning of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. Is now detailed and secure.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably at Key Stage 2.
- Standards in science have risen in Key Stage 2.

However, the following area is still being developed:

- Standards in pupils' writing remains below average at Key Stage 2.

The school now has the potential and the will to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	E	E*	well above A average B
mathematics	D	E	E	E	above average C average D
science	E	C	E*	E*	below average E well below average E very low E*

Children at the Foundation Stage make good progress in the reception class and nearly all have exceeded the early learning goals. In 2000, assessment results for pupils aged seven were well above the national average in reading and writing in comparison with all and similar schools and in the top 5% for mathematics. Teachers' assessment in science indicated results were also in the top 5% in the country. The inspection found that standards in Key Stage 1 are still well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, average in science and information and communication technology but below in mathematics. National assessment results for 11-year-olds in 2000 were well below average in English and mathematics and in the bottom 5% in science when compared to all schools. The school reports that this was due to the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this age group and disruption to their learning during Key Stage 2 caused by several changes of class teachers other than at the end of year. Inspection findings confirm that standards are improving in Key Stage 2 and are now above average in speaking and listening and reading, average in mathematics and science but below in writing and information and communication technology. Nearly all pupils leaving school aged 11 swim 25 metres and are aware of water safety principles. The school has set



realistic targets to raise standards in English and mathematics by 2002; deficiencies in writing and information and communication technology are being tackled. Insufficient lessons could be seen during the inspection in other subjects to make secure judgements about standards. However in the work seen, pupils' attainment is generally as expected for their age, apart from in art and design and technology where attainment is above average.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and are interested and involved in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally good; a few pupils in Years 2 and 5 lack self control on occasions but respond positively when reminded.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Pupils show concern for each other and those less fortunate than themselves; they are developing an increasing sense of responsibility and personal initiative.
Attendance	Around the national average. No time is wasted and lessons start promptly.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The percentages of good or better teaching observed were 91% overall: Foundation Stage: 100%, Key Stage 1: 100% and Key Stage 2: 83%. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and one incident of excellent teaching. The strengths of the teaching are: teachers' planning interesting and varied learning activities, their good relationships with pupils, effective team work with learning support assistants and voluntary helpers and the use of homework. Across the school, some teachers lack confidence in information and communication technology and aspects of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Pupils generally achieve well as they make effective use of their time, work at a good pace and know what they need to do to improve. In Key Stage 2, some older pupils are not confident learners. However, they are being sensitively encouraged to take risks, particularly in mathematics and science, and are learning from their mistakes. Across the school, more able pupils sometimes find work too easy and do not have to make sufficient effort.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall with a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and personal and health development. There is a good range of additional opportunities beyond the classroom. Provision for information technology is unsatisfactory but being developed.

	Extension work for more able pupils is not always provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Staff and voluntary helpers work effectively together to ensure pupils with special educational needs are able to take a full part in school life. However sometimes, they are not always given sufficient support or time to finish recording their work. Talented pupils' achievements are shared and celebrated.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The small number of bilingual pupils entered school as confident users of English for their age and have made as good progress as others in their classes without requiring specialist support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A Christian ethos is apparent throughout the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Many and varied opportunities are provided in lessons and other activities to promote pupils' awareness and skills in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of pupils and provides effective guidance and personal support. Staff know their pupils well and assessment information is analysed to identify pupils' weaknesses to give individuals specific targets for improvement. Non-Catholic pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school

The school encourages, supports and appreciates the strong involvement of parents in their children's education at school and at home.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The head teacher is an enthusiastic and inspiring leader, well supported by senior staff. In a very short time, she has won the loyalty and commitment of the school community in the drive to improve pupils' education and raise standards. Most subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently confident in monitoring and developing teaching and learning but have started training in these skills.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are increasingly becoming more involved in helping to shape the direction of the school as they begin to tackle raising standards, particularly at Key Stage 2.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has recently identified appropriate priorities for development but has not yet agreed specific measures by which to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken to raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Governors and the head teacher have worked hard to establish firm control of finances and are now carefully allocating funding to appropriate priorities.

Generally, staffing accommodation and learning resources are good and well used. The library, information and communication technology facilities and special educational needs room are being refurbished.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school's high expectations</li><li>• Children like school</li><li>• The school is approachable</li><li>• The school is well led and managed</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range of activities outside of lessons</li><li>• Information about pupils' progress</li><li>• Use of homework</li><li>• Partnership with parents</li></ul>

The inspection supports all the parents' positive views. In addition, the inspection found that homework arrangements and the range of extra-curricular activities are good and the school generally works well with parents. However, some end of year reports on pupils' progress are not sufficiently helpful to show what needs to be improved.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The inspection found that standards for pupils aged eleven are above average in speaking and listening and reading, average in mathematics and science and below average in writing and information and communication technology. For pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well above average in English, average in science and information and communication technology and below average in mathematics. The youngest pupils make a good start to their schooling in the Foundation Stage and nearly all have exceeded the early learning goals. Insufficient lessons could be observed in other subjects to make a secure judgement about overall standards in these areas but from the limited evidence available, standards in art and design and technology are above average and in other subjects around average. Nearly all pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they are 11 years of age and are aware of the principles of water safety.
2. National assessment results in 2000 show standards at the end of Key Sage 1 are well above average in writing and mathematics when compared to all and similar schools, and in the top 5% of the country in writing when compared to similar schools. Results since 1996 have stayed above average and increased at a faster rate than the national trend. Teachers' assessment of science indicates that results are in the top 5% nationally.
3. In stark contrast, national test results in 2000 for 11 year-olds show that standards for mathematics are well below average when compared to all and similar schools and in the lowest 5% in English and science in comparison to similar schools. Results in these subjects since 1996 have varied but always been well below average. The school reports that these low results are a combination of teachers lacking subject knowledge and understanding and, for last year's oldest class, considerable disruption to their learning caused by several changes of teacher other than at the end of the school year. Since the recent appointment of the new headteacher, many effective actions have been taken to tackle this underachievement, involving intensive training and support, appointment of new staff and rigorous monitoring and development of teaching and learning. As a result, the school has set realistic targets for English and mathematics in 2002 for the oldest pupils in school.
4. Children start school at four years old with a broad but slightly above range of attainment as nearly all attend and receive a good grounding in the attached, but separately managed, pre-school unit. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the consistently good teaching they receive. As a result, nearly all pupils have exceeded the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literature, mathematical, creative and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
5. Currently in English, standards of speaking and listening are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Nearly all are confident speakers, listen attentively and talk animatedly with each other, staff and visitors. Standards in speaking and listening for eleven-year-olds are above average. The oldest pupils communicate clearly and are thoughtful and considered in their replies.

6. Standards of reading for pupils aged seven are well above average. Nearly all read appropriate texts competently. They make effective use of phonic skills in breaking down complex words and turn to other cues when meeting difficulties. They say what fiction they like and use non-fiction books for reference. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in reading are above average. Nearly all pupils analyse and interpret prose and poetry and most read widely for enjoyment and individual study. They locate and retrieve information from different reference sources, such as libraries, newspapers and magazines; while most know how to use the internet, opportunities in school are limited because, currently, there are insufficient resources.
7. Standards in writing are well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Nearly all pupils write confidently, using their knowledge of sounds when spelling more difficult words. They use simple punctuation correctly and express their ideas in short sentences. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are below average. Most pupils are not confident writers; they need plenty of encouragement to plan and organise their thoughts. Many pupils do not consistently apply spelling and punctuation rules and they have not had sufficient opportunities to write in a range of forms. As a result they do not always give enough thought to the audience they are writing for and their choice of words is not always imaginative or appropriately descriptive.
8. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. While most pupils can recall numbers facts to 20 mentally, they do not confidently apply these to problem solving. They understand place value to 100 and can explain simple calculations satisfactorily. Many competently count on and back in tens and units up to 100. They know the properties of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and are beginning to use basic standardised units of measurement appropriate for their age. They produce and interpret bar graphs of data they have collected and present their findings using new technologies.
9. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics are average; most pupils use mental methods competently, explaining what they have done in appropriate mathematical language. They are becoming more confident in applying these skills in real-life problems, exploring shape, pattern and relationships. They collect and interpret data, presenting it in appropriate graphical forms, sometimes using computer programs.
10. Standards in science are average at the end of both key stages. Nearly all pupils have a sound foundation in basic life processes and common living things, everyday materials and their properties and physical processes. With help, they undertake simple experiments, observe carefully and record their findings. By the end of Key Stage 2, nearly all pupils now have acquired a good grounding in science. As a result of the recent initiatives to improve teaching and learning, most of the gaps in their knowledge and understanding have been tackled. In particular, the focus on practical work has enabled them to carry out systematic investigations to test their ideas and present their findings clearly.
11. Overall, standards in information technology are average at the end of Key Stage 1. Nearly all pupils are confident users of new technologies in school and at home and are aware of the benefits this brings, particularly in saving them time and effort. Although there are insufficient opportunities throughout the school for pupils to use

information technology to support their learning across subjects, this has had a more significant effect at Key Stage 2. The demands of the curriculum are higher and this has resulted in many pupils not being as secure in their knowledge and understanding, particularly in data handling and controlling and modelling. As a result, standards for pupils aged 11 are below average. The school is aware of these deficiencies and improvement of teaching and learning is a development priority from September.

12. Inspection findings show that higher attaining pupils generally are achieving well. However, there are occasions when pupils finish appropriate tasks but there is no suitable extension work readily available. This is apparent when groups are working with voluntary helpers, who are not sure what to do and do not want to disturb the teacher, who is engaged with other pupils. Talented pupils are generally encouraged and their achievements celebrated. They are well supported in taking part in specialist events organised away from the school. However, apart from in music where pupils receive instrumental tuition, talented pupils do not have specialist provision.
13. The small number of bilingual pupils joined the school as confident users of English as a second language. They have not required additional support and achieve as well as other pupils of their age and aptitude
14. The attainment of the very small number of black pupils has been monitored carefully by the school and there has been no incidence of underachievement.
15. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They are identified early and helped to take a full part in learning activities. They make good progress in reading and science because of this support. However, they find writing and recording their learning difficult and work slowly. They are not always given sufficient help or time to complete activities, which are not broken down into small enough steps to build easily on previous experience.
16. While last year, the oldest boys performed significantly lower than girls in writing, mathematics and science, this was particular to this cohort as there was a larger proportion with special educational needs than average. The inspection found no such variation with the current school population.
17. Generally, standards in English, mathematics and science are improving at Key Stage 2 and the dip in standards of mathematics in Key Stage 1 is against the trend. Overall, the school has made a dramatic turn around in the last year and has the capacity to continue to improve.

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

18. Pupils have a good response to the school; they are interested and involved in their learning. Their attitudes to school, personal development and relationships are good. They show concern for each other, their school, the local community and those less fortunate than themselves; for their age, they demonstrate a good level of independence and are developing a sense of personal initiative and responsibility. Overall, behaviour is good; this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

19. Pupils have good attitudes to school. Almost all pupils are enthusiastic about learning and come happily to school. They show a high level of interest and are involved in the full range of activities provided. In a Year R creative development lesson, pupils listened attentively, sustained their concentration and tried hard to perform well when making seaside pictures as part of their topic. In a Year 5 personal, social and health education lesson focussing on the consequences of anti social behaviour, the teacher's direct, positive approach and very good questioning ensured that all the pupils were very attentive and eager to respond. The mature responses of the pupils indicated the depth of knowledge and understanding they are developing towards life skills and citizenship. However, a number of pupils with challenging behaviour sometimes lose concentration despite the sensitive support from staff. In classes, where there is a significant imbalance between boys and girls, teachers ensure the involvement of the minority group through positive questioning and checking to see they take an active part in classroom activities. Pupils' attitudes are good because of the generally good or better teaching, well-prepared, interesting lessons and the consistent high expectations of staff throughout the school.
20. In the very caring atmosphere, free from oppressive behaviour, nearly all pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and outside; a few pupils in Year 2 and 5 lack self-control on occasions but respond positively when requested. A concern was raised by parents about time lost in lessons due to poor behaviour. To a limited extent the inspection supports this view, as dealing with the challenging behaviour of these few pupils engages staff's attention but does not cause a significant effect on the learning of others in the class. The school functions as an orderly community. With very few exceptions, pupils respond very well to the school's clear routines when moving around. On the playground, the majority mix happily and play well together, showing respect for others. A few parents expressed concern about standards of behaviour on the playground. Inspection findings are unable to confirm this as during the inspection no examples of inappropriate behaviour were observed. The few instances of boisterous behaviour were dealt with quickly, sensitively and firmly. Adult helpers, staff and many parents commented on the care and affection shown by older pupils towards the youngest. One of many examples of their caring attitudes was seen at the end of a Year 1 lesson, when a boy stood quietly alongside a pupil who was feeling ill and gently stroked his head. Lunchtime supervisors report that pupils advise them if another child is hurt or upset. Overall, the standard of behaviour is good with few examples of unkind and inappropriate actions and many examples of very good, and sometimes excellent behaviour.
21. All pupils are very friendly and courteous to visitors and adults, and nearly always courteous to each other. Nearly all pupils are very confident, they introduce themselves politely and even the young pupils ask questions of visitors, such as "*Why are you visiting our school?*". A Year 1 pupil very politely greeted a visitor with "*Welcome to our school*". Pupils of all ages demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others. At the start of lunch, a Year R pupil, when asked where the spoons were, immediately fetched one and gave advice on the procedures for clearing away used cutlery and plates.
22. Pupils generally show respect for property and they handle resources with care. In a Year 4 art lesson linked to their Egyptian topic, they sensibly handled clay, scissors, tools and strips of balsa wood when making and decorating clay tablets and inscribing their names in hieroglyphics. From the earliest age, pupils put learning resources away tidily.



23. The personal development of the pupils is good. They are eager to volunteer for, and accept responsibility. They are fully involved in the daily routines of the school community and fulfil their duties with pride. There are many opportunities for pupils from both key stages to have monitor duties. There is an extensive range of positions of responsibility, including librarian, house captain, games' captain, lunch and hall monitors and operator of the overhead projector and music centre for assemblies. Very young pupils have areas of responsibility within the classroom, such as, keeping the book corner tidy. Pupils serve on the student council and take this role seriously. There are many informal opportunities provided by teachers in the course of the day when pupils are asked to help; for instance, they distribute and collect resources, tidy cupboards and put the class prayer table in place. Throughout the school, pupils show initiative by spontaneously helping each other and many demonstrate a high degree of maturity for their age. A Year 2 pupil confidently approached a visitor and apologised, in front of other adults, for behaving rudely during a talk earlier. They show a growing independence as they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by staff and the helpful posters in classrooms giving guidance on what to do if they have a problem or have finished their work.
24. Through assemblies, religious education and personal, social and health education and discussion times, pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own experiences, express their feelings and learn to respect, understand and empathise with the feelings and beliefs of others. This family atmosphere ensures minority groups are fully involved in the life of the school and relationships are good. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, a pupil had difficulty reading aloud but the class did not get restless. Younger pupils are helped and guided by the teacher to understand the impact of their actions on others. In a Year 1 personal, social and health education lesson, the teacher asked, "*What do you feel when some one is a good friend to you?*". A pupil replied, "*Makes you feel joy in your heart*". Pupils readily help and support each other's learning, collaboratively, in groups or in pairs. In a Year R knowledge and understanding lesson, pupils co-operated well when discussing how to shape plasticine to make it float.
25. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. This is a decline in standards since the previous inspection when it was above average. There has been one exclusion this year. Lessons begin promptly and no time is wasted.

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

26. Overall, teaching is good throughout the school with no unsatisfactory teaching. 91% of the teaching is good or better and 31% very good or better. This is a vast improvement since the last inspection when 18% of the teaching was unsatisfactory. In The Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, 100% of the teaching was good or better and sometimes very good. In Key Stage 2, 83% of the teaching was good or better, in one incident excellent and the rest satisfactory. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics is good.
27. The consistently good or better teaching in the Foundation Stage is as a result of the teacher's very effective planning, her very high expectations in all areas and her very good use of support staff, voluntary helpers and learning resources. There is a strong emphasis on teaching the basic skills and establishing and maintaining appropriate routines. As a result, pupils quickly settle, work very hard and are very

interested and involved in their learning, showing an increasing sense of maturity and independence.

28. Teaching across both key stages, has similar strengths as a result of the consistent messages given in professional discussions led by the headteacher. The focus has been on providing teachers with a range of teaching methods and they are now very adaptable at varying the pace and approaches to suit the situation. They also manage pupils very well, particularly the small number who exhibit challenging behaviour. Teachers work very well with learning support assistants and voluntary helpers, ensuring that individuals and groups nearly always have access to an adult. In addition, very good use is made of learning resources to make lessons interesting and develop specific skills. As a result, nearly all pupils respond enthusiastically, sustain their concentration and generally work hard. Throughout the school, independence is fostered and pupils are encouraged to take risks. For some pupils, this is a new experience and they still lack confidence in some areas, such as in writing and information technology in Year 6 and using number in problem solving in Year 2. The school has been tackling these shortcomings over the past six months but there has not been sufficient time to be effective in all areas.
29. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are increasingly being reinforced across subjects. Teachers give a high priority to discussion in introductory sessions but sometimes do not allow sufficient time at the ends of lessons to allow pupils to talk about their learning. Accurate measurement is encouraged and opportunities frequently appear in other subjects to develop mathematical skills. Teachers are introducing more opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology skills but they are limited by their own insecurity and the small number of computers. Pupils enjoy their short sessions using new technologies but express their frustration at not having longer or the chance to explore.
30. Teachers' planning is generally effective in providing an appropriate range of interesting learning opportunities for the range of pupils in each class. However, on occasions there is insufficient specific extension material for high attaining and talented pupils and then they do not achieve as well as they could. Moreover, while the level of understanding required in learning tasks for pupils who work at a slower pace is appropriate, they are not always given the support they need when recording their findings and work is sometimes not finished.
31. Teachers monitor pupils' understanding closely in lessons, using well-thought out questions to stimulate learning, particularly in class sessions. This ensures pupils remain interested, involved and generally know what is required of them. As a result, teachers know their pupils well and ensure that learning builds easily on previous experiences. There is a supportive atmosphere and good relationships. This gives pupils the confidence to begin trying out their ideas and take risks. This is having a positive effect on their learning, particularly in science in both key stages and in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
32. Homework is used very effectively and consistently by teachers to reinforce literacy and numeracy and through individual topic assignments in other subjects. Some parents were concerned that the quantity and range of homework was not appropriate. The inspection does not support this view.
33. As a result of consistently good or better teaching, pupils are now achieving well. The current Year 6 class has not had long enough to benefit from the improvements

in teaching and learning. As a result, they are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at 11 years old as they could be, particularly in writing and information and communication technology.

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

34. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all pupils including those in the Foundation Stage. There is a high level of focus on literacy and numeracy. There have been considerable improvements in the curriculum since the previous inspection and planning is now secure throughout the school. The emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong and the programme for personal and health education is very good. Religious education is being inspected separately.
35. The curriculum is planned systematically and there are detailed long, medium and short-term plans that take account of the varying abilities of pupils. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good in all subjects with the exception of music, which is satisfactory, and information and communication technology, where aspects are not covered in sufficient depth at Key Stage 2. The school has plans to develop these subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory with activities and resources well chosen to match their stage of development. However, pupils are not always given appropriate support when recording their work and as a result they do not complete it. Individual educational plans are detailed and realistic. There is an effective support and monitoring schedule in place. The plans are regularly reviewed in partnership with parents.
36. All pupils have good and equal access to learning opportunities in the classroom and beyond. There is a full and varied programme of after school activities. The school makes every effort to ensure all pupils are aware of what is offered and encourages full participation. For example on Tuesday evenings, there is a homework club, which provides art and crafts, dance or other pursuits, as well as helping with supervision of homework tasks. There is a gender imbalance in Years 2 and 4, which the school recognises and is supporting through ensuring all pupils have similar experiences.
37. The curriculum fully meets requirements and provides appropriately for sex, anti-drugs and health education. The school has introduced an exercise programme, in addition to physical education lessons. This encourages mental alertness and pupils report increased feelings of well being. This has attracted favourable local press and television coverage.
38. The contribution made by the community to pupils' learning is good and effectively enriches and supports the curriculum. The links with the parish church are particularly strong, The parish priest makes regular weekly visits and more frequently when requested. The school has a range of displays in the church. Parishioners are invited to open mornings at the school, and the head teacher is actively seeking to strengthen links with other Catholic parishes by inviting their parish priests to say mass. Although acts of worship are always Catholic, the school welcomes and encourages links with other religions and invitations have been made to a local Rabbi to share in their work.

39. Links with industry are not so well developed but help from a local quarry is helping development of the school grounds. During the inspection, a representative from a water company provided support for a Year 5/6 science topic. Large supermarket chains, a national book/stationary store, national banks, library and local shops have provided a range of resources, financial support, advice and help with topics.
40. The immediate school environment is used to support science topics, such as looking at soil samples and the study of mini beasts. Pupils benefit from visits to local museums and use is made of a swimming pool at a nearby leisure centre.
41. The expertise of parishioners and parents is effectively used to enrich the cultural development of the pupils. A parent ran a 'French' day for Year 6, deaf parents visited Years 4/5 to teach signing and a volunteer runs the chess club. The school is establishing links with sporting clubs within the area. Interested Key Stage 2 pupils receive cricket and football coaching and Year 6 pupils enjoyed a day at a golf club. Development of the internet is in early stages but is increasingly being used to support topic work.
42. Links with the wider community provide enriching experiences for the pupils. Their individual development is promoted through themes in assembly, which are reinforced consistently within lessons, and through the comprehensive programmes of personal, social and health education. In both key stages, pupils recognise the importance of caring for the environment. The awareness of older pupils extends to global issues, such as the effects of pollution. Younger pupils think that litter and graffiti make a place look untidy. Most understand the reason for rules in school; a Year 2 boy remarked, "*We would all run around being silly*". They recognise law breaking actions, such as robbery and murder, and think that there must be rules for adults, who should be punished if they do something wrong. Older pupils make links between the forming of class and school rules and the necessity for laws that govern society. They are aware that a General Election has recently taken place and understand the voting process. They have a clear understanding of the difference between fact and opinion and are aware that they have rights and responsibilities. They show a mature attitude towards the emotional and physical changes they are experiencing as they approach adolescence. They recognise that they are responsible for their own health and the health and safety of others and have a basic understanding about good and bad drugs and the dangers of addiction.
43. The school has good links with its partner institutions. Students from a local college spend time at the school. Links with local primaries come mainly through sporting activities. The Catholic primary school cluster group share special occasions, such as mass, and staff attend in-service training together.
44. A 'parent-and-toddler' group meet weekly in the school and there are very close links with the on-site pre-school unit. Throughout the year, children from the unit are regularly involved in the life of the school, taking the lead role, at least once a term, in Key Stage 1 assemblies. The pre-school unit teacher and the Year R teacher share planning, topics and visits. Nearly all pupils starting in Year R attend the pre-school unit, which helps ensure a smooth transition. Children attend part time for at least a term. Children joining the school other than in Year R have a 'buddy' from the same class to ease their entry.

45. There are strong links with local secondary schools and particularly effective links with the adjacent school. Regular use is made of their sports field, information and communications technology suite and the food technology laboratory. The secondary school also provides learning resources and each fortnight, a specialist teacher takes Year 6 for science. Many secondary school pupils do work experience in the school. Pupils transfer to four secondary schools. They benefit from well-organised and effective induction programmes, which ensure pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
46. The school very successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. The provision for moral and social development is very good and for spiritual and cultural development is good. This is an overall improvement since the previous inspection.
47. The promotion of spiritual development is good. Spirituality is effectively promoted through the strong Christian ethos, reinforced by contact with the parish church. Curriculum documents give clear guidance on how spiritual development is promoted. For example in mathematics, the policy states *“Real mathematical activity is creative, personal and enlightening; pupils are encouraged to be aware of the power and beauty of mathematics.”* There are opportunities within the curriculum, in assemblies and class prayers to promote knowledge and insights into values and beliefs and to allow quiet moments of reflection. Pupils wonder at growing and life processes and physical phenomenon in science. In English, poetry offers the pupils a chance to read about and express their own thoughts and feelings. A Year 4 girl wrote in her poem on beauty, *“I will put in my box - the purple crocodile with emerald and sapphire scales”*. Pupils are encouraged to respond sensitively and reflect on what they have heard or experienced. Such activities are appropriate to the pupils’ age and maturity and staff sensitively guide and encourage this reflection. The uniqueness of individuals and the promotion of their self-esteem are given a very high priority. In the Year 4 classroom pupils’ achievement certificates are prominently displayed. The consistent use of praise and other rewards is strongly promoted through policy statements and modelled by senior staff. The very many attractive displays of pupils’ work and the general use of plenary sessions reflect the value teachers have for pupils’ ideas and achievements.
48. Pupils’ moral development is very well promoted. Christian principles of recognition of right and wrong and living by the example of Jesus underpin the published code of conduct. Opportunities are frequently taken by staff to reinforce this message, fostering such values as caring and respect for each other, courtesy and fairness. At the beginning of each school year, pupils and class teachers discuss and form the rules for each class. The school’s clearly written mission statement and the application of Christian principles very effectively support moral development. The rules governing sporting activities give all pupils an understanding of fair play. There are very good opportunities for pupils from both key stages to develop and express moral values and extend their social and personal understanding. Pupils are taught to respect themselves, each other and to show concern for living creatures. A group of older pupils were concerned about the safety of a moth on the floor and were relieved when it was guided to safety. The expression of moral values can be seen in the range of charities that pupils enthusiastically support within the school and by their own efforts.
49. There are very good arrangements for promoting pupils’ social development. Pupils are expected to take on responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. The head teacher, staff and other adults report that after

several disruptive years during which morale was generally low, there is now a shared sense of purpose. Relationships have improved significantly and all staff and voluntary helpers provide very good role models, treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect. Throughout the curriculum and across key stages, pupils have many opportunities to learn how to relate to each other by working in pairs and in small and large groups. In a Year R communications, language and literacy lesson, pupils discussed sociably and respectfully with each other, taking turns and showing an appreciation of fairness as they played in their “magic castle”. Pupils are reminded to co-operate by attractively displayed posters; In the Year 2 class, there is a “*Have you shared today?*” sign.

50. The school provides a wide range of other activities to promote social development. A varied and enriching programme of sporting activities, including football, tag rugby, cricket, cross-country and swimming encourages team-work, competition and fair play. Book sharing between older and younger pupils during a special activity week fosters mixed age relationships. School productions, assemblies, entertainment evenings, student council meetings, links with the local and parish community and visits help pupils develop social skills when working with large numbers of people. Annually, Year 6 pupils take part in a residential experience, where the emphasis is on personal and social development through a wide range of activities. The school helps all pupils to take responsibility by expecting them to undertake duties within class and around the school. Pupils are able to voice their opinions through discussions in lessons and through the student council and see positive results. As a result of discussion, girls will be allowed to wear trousers in the winter.
51. The promotion of pupils’ cultural development is good. The school actively supports and teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through curricular provision and a wide range of additional activities. The provision for the appreciation of the richness and diversity of other cultures has improved since the previous inspection. Positive contributions to pupils’ cultural development come from aspects of English, geography, history, art, physical education, music and information and communication technology and assemblies; there are appropriate opportunities to compare aspects of other religions.
52. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the contributions of individuals and different peoples to current society. Topic work provides a range of cross curricular links. For example this term, pupils in Years 3/4 are studying ancient Egypt looking at historical and geographical aspects, and in art have created two and three dimensional work in the Egyptian style. Years 5/6 are studying life in Victorian times. In history in Year 1, pupils looked at toys from the past, whilst in geography, they went round the world with “Barnaby Bear” and studied transport in St. Lucia. In geography, Year 2 have contrasted localities by comparing life in Tocuaro, Mexico, with their own experiences.
53. Pupils’ cultural experiences are enriched by many visits in support of topics. Years R and 2 visited the seaside in support of science, history, art and mathematics topics. Years 3 and 4 visited Exeter museum and ‘mummified’ several children as part of their Egyptian investigation. Year 5 visited the local museum to further their studies on the Victorians. Visitors have added to the wide programme provided by the school. These include theatre groups, peripatetic music teachers, a French parent and a local artist and weaver.

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

54. The school provides good care for its pupils. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The health, safety, care and protection of all pupils is given a high priority and the school is doing all it reasonably can to protect them from harm.
55. Good relationships have been developed between staff and pupils, and the needs of the pupils are put first. This has created a happy, friendly and caring 'family' community. The head teacher's and class teachers' knowledge of pupils is very good. They are aware of their pupils' various needs and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Prompt informal support is given to children showing distress during daily routines and lessons. Consequently, pupils feel they are well cared for and have confidence in adults in the school community for advice and support. The school takes good care of all pupils with particular special educational needs and works closely with parents, and other agencies, when appropriate, to ensure they are fully included in the life of the school.
56. Satisfactory child protection measures are in place and procedures are discussed at staff meetings to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Personal, social and health education is seen as an essential part of the curriculum and is also covered in science and religious education. The day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision and awareness of hazards within and beyond school, shows a good level of responsibility for the health and safety of pupils.
57. Regular health and safety inspections of the buildings and grounds are carried out. Staff stress safe working practices to children in order to avoid hazards, and they remind pupils of the need to be careful when handling tools, such as scissors. Pupils are not allowed to use certain equipment without appropriate adult supervision. For example in a Year 2 art lesson, a support assistant dispensed low melt glue from a gun at a safety station. Health and safety folders, including fire procedures and accident forms, have been prepared for visitors and temporary teachers.
58. The registers are accurately kept and monitored weekly by the administrator. The school prospectus and the home/school agreement advise that holidays should not be taken in term time. The home/school agreement also reminds parents of the importance of regular attendance and to ensure that pupils arrive on time for the start of lessons.
59. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Pupils know very clearly what is expected of them. There is a climate of good behaviour in this orderly community with clear routines and class rules agreed between pupils and teachers. Class teachers regularly give praise and thanks to pupils for their response. Each class has a range of reward systems to encourage positive behaviour, personal development and good work habits. The head teacher uses assemblies to give out a range of reward certificates and the 'House Cup' in recognition of pupils who behave well, are helpful, show kindness and caring. Incidents of bullying are isolated and dealt with sensitively but firmly; there are effective procedures to follow up any incidents. Year 6 have a box for anonymous concerns which the teacher resolves at an appropriate time. Parents expressed a view that teachers are sometimes too busy to listen to pupils' concerns. The inspection found that the school provides a well-publicised confidential 'listening service' for pupils and parents, provided by a designated staff member. There have

- been two reports of isolated racist incidents that were immediately followed up and dealt with sensitively and effectively.
60. When attending mass, non-Catholic pupils may choose to play an active part in the service. Non-Catholic parents appreciate the very strong Christian family atmosphere and feel that the school ensures their children do not feel left out of specifically Catholic activities.
  61. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. The school believes that personal development is as important as academic progress and therefore both are given equal importance. Pupils' achievements for effort, attitude and behaviour are acknowledged and celebrated. Pupils who experience difficulties with a specific area of personal development, are encouraged to improve and rewarded when they are successful. Teachers and assistants effectively support these pupils.
  62. The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance in mathematics and science; they are good in English and sound in other subjects, apart from in information and communication technology, where they are unsatisfactory. All teachers are well aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses, through day-to-day assessment of their work. Teachers use assessment information, sufficiently well to inform planning. Some teachers do not always provide appropriately difficult extension work for the more able pupils.
  63. The results of optional and statutory national assessment tests are thoroughly analysed. This information forms the basis for action planning to correct imbalance in attainment in different groups of pupils in both English and mathematics.
  64. All pupils have individual targets for improvement, in both academic work and personal development. These targets are regularly reviewed by teachers, with pupils and new targets identified and agreed. This enables pupils to have clearer understanding of their own knowledge and skills, particularly at Key Stage 2.
  65. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is regularly assessed through careful monitoring of individual education plans, which are used effectively by class teachers. This is carried out in effective partnership with parents and the appropriate outside agencies.

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

66. The school has good links with parents. Their involvement in the work of the school has a positive effect on pupils' learning. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
67. Nearly all parents are very supportive of the school and very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. They find the school very approachable, feel welcomed and appreciated.
68. The quality of the information provided by the school is satisfactory. Parents raised a concern about not receiving sufficient information on staff appointments; inspection findings do not support this view as appropriate procedures are followed. There are now regular weekly newsletters from the head teacher and parents particularly value the termly letter from class teachers, outlining topics to be studied. The school is very active in seeking parents' views. Results of a recent



questionnaire have been analysed and used to inform the school's improvement plan. Some suggestions, such as the termly letter from class teachers about topics to be studied, have already been implemented.

69. The school prospectus is well-presented, comprehensive and provides useful information for parents. The governors' annual report to parents is informative. These documents are currently under review as both have minor omissions. Appropriate curriculum meetings are held.
70. Generally, the school and home work effectively in partnership, sharing information about pupils, their learning and how they feel. The partnership starts with good induction procedures that are very much appreciated by parents. There are many formal and informal arrangements for sharing helpful information to support pupils' learning. This exchange is effective because parents find the school approachable and know that concerns will be dealt with without delay. The complaints' procedure is in place and meets requirements. A concern was raised by a few parents that the correct procedures were not being followed; during the inspection no evidence was found to support this view.
71. This year, there have been limited opportunities for parents to meet formally to discuss their children's progress and the end of year pupils' reports do not identify individuals' strengths and areas for development in all subjects. These findings support those parents who felt they were not given helpful enough information on their children's progress. However, the open door policy and the many informal opportunities to talk to staff are valued by parents.
72. The school has a very good range of productive links with parents. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is actively sought and welcomed. Many parents contribute directly by helping in classrooms, hearing readers or accompanying school trips. Parent helpers report that they are well prepared by teachers to give effective support to pupils. This additional voluntary help is a significant factor in raising standards and much appreciated.
73. Parents support their children's learning at home, with reading in the early years and with increasingly more difficult homework as pupils get older. The reading record and homework books are well used and form an effective two-way communication between staff and home, keeping parents actively involved in their children's learning.
74. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to be involved fully in the drawing up of individual education plans and annual reviews. They are invited to make informal contact and report that they value the advice and support they receive. They appreciate the quick response of the school when a specific concern arises.
75. The parents' support group makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school and pupils' learning. Members of the committee are committed to improving the quality of the learning environment; they have provided a range of resources; and helped fund special events, such as the Arts Week. They see their role as being mainly to raise funds but they also try to provide good social opportunities for parents and staff. They value their role as another link between the school and parents and actively seek and pass on the views of parents.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

76. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher, with the support of an active governing body and appreciative parents, are very good.
77. The headteacher is an enthusiastic and inspiring leader, highly committed to raising standards. She has a clear vision of the school and its future, which she has communicated to the governors, staff and parents. There have been five headteachers since 1994 and this disruption had an adverse effect on staff morale. Since her appointment nine months ago, the headteacher has begun effectively to tackle a significant number of shortcomings identified in the previous inspection and to build staff confidence.
78. Christian values and principles are at the heart of the school. This is creating a trusting climate where pupils and staff are valued, appreciated and supported. Staff and governors report that there has been a significant improvement in relationships over the past year; teamwork is now actively encouraged and everyone feels confident to discuss professional issues. Continuous improvement and professional development are now accepted as the way to achieve higher standards throughout the school, particularly at Key Stage 2.
79. Parents have been consulted through a questionnaire and their views have been taken into account, for example, with regard to a review of the homework policy. Inspection findings confirmed that parents now feel well-informed about important changes effecting their children's education.
80. In the absence of a deputy headteacher, a decision was taken to establish a management group consisting of the headteacher and the co-ordinators for Key Stage 1 and 2. This has been effective in involving experienced staff in making decisions and developing effective strategies teaching and learning. A deputy head has been appointed and will take up his post from next September. Currently the headteacher has effectively introduced procedures for performance management but has also planned to involve the new deputy in order to implement arrangements fully.
81. On her appointment, the headteacher saw the development of subject co-ordinators as a priority. She clarified their roles, delegated responsibilities and identified professional development needs.. Currently, they have all carried out audits of their subjects, identified shortcomings and drawn up realistic action plans to tackle deficiencies. It was recognised that co-ordinators were not confident in monitoring and developing teaching and learning and a training programme has started to improve co-ordinators' skills and competence. As a consequence, only in mathematics, where the headteacher is co-ordinator, and in English, has there been rigorous observation of teaching and pupils' learning. There has been little systematic monitoring of teaching and learning in other subjects. This is a development priority in the next school year.
82. The governing body, while mainly inexperienced, is active and fully involved in considering how to improve the school further. There is an effective structure for meetings and governors are well-informed, as many of them are parents. In addition, they receive regular and clear reports from the headteacher and some have undertaken classroom observations to increase their understanding of how

subjects are taught. As a result, they are becoming more fully aware of specific strengths and weaknesses in aspects of teaching and pupils' learning.

83. The school is putting in place suitable arrangements to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its actions as part of an appropriate performance management strategy. A systematic and thorough analysis of assessment data is carried out and areas of weakness have been identified. These have resulted in appropriate priorities for improvement to which all partners in the school community have contributed. Development plans are realistic and provide clear guidance to the school about what needs to be done. However, these plans do not include sufficiently specific measures by which staff can judge the effectiveness of their actions and governors evaluate their spending decisions.
84. All teachers have an annual performance management meeting with the headteacher when objectives linked to the school improvement plan are set. They are given good support for their professional development. They have attended literacy and numeracy courses provided by the local education authority and had a wide range of training activities during closure days and after school staff meetings. These initiatives are having a significant effect on improving the quality of teaching, which is now good overall.
85. Classroom assistants are deployed well and are fully involved in the life of the school. They are invited to all staff meetings and training days alongside teaching staff. Their professional development is well supported; two classroom assistants are undertaking a two-year course working towards a higher certificate for special educational needs. There is a strong partnership between class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and classroom assistants. Consequently, there is a shared understanding of what has to be done to meet pupils' needs effectively.
86. There are no newly qualified teachers; however, the school has adopted the local education authority procedures for induction, which ensure non-contact time and monitoring by an experienced member of staff.
87. The school is beginning to introduce and use new technologies but because there are insufficient resources, development is restricted. Detailed plans are in place to improve school facilities as well as to establish an information and communication technology suite and for staff training.
88. Funds for special educational needs are well targeted and the appropriate level of high quality support provided by classroom assistants has a positive effect on the progress of identified pupils.
89. Effective use is made of staffing, accommodation and resources. Some recent teaching appointments and redeployment of teachers have helped to raise standards in Key Stage 2. However, there is a lack of teacher expertise in information and communication technology and music. The governing body considering ways to remedy these deficiencies.
90. The school environment is welcoming and is well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Accommodation is good overall. A room has been identified for the information and communication technology suite; the library has been relocated to the same area, which has sufficient space. Resources are of good quality overall

and generally sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The exception is information and communication technology, where resources are inadequate, but will be improved in the near future.

91. The headteacher and governors are aware of the principles of best value and apply them rigorously. They compare the standards of the school with others through benchmarking data provided nationally and by the local education authority. Financial planning is focused in support of relevant priorities and controls and administration are efficient. This allows the headteacher to carry out her everyday duties in developing teaching and learning. The school uses funds wisely and gives satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and senior staff should:

- Raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1 by helping pupils become more efficient in using number facts when solving problems. (para's 1, 8, 119, 122)
- Raise standards in writing at Key Stage 2 by providing pupils with more opportunities to plan, organise and express their thoughts in continuous writing in a range of forms. (para's 1, 7, 100, 103, 104, 111)
- Raise standards in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 by increasing the use of new technologies, particularly for handling data and in controlling and modelling. (para's 1, 11, 35, 89, 156, 170, 172, 175)
- Monitor and develop teaching strategies by helping teachers with management responsibilities to acquire rigorous evaluative skills and provide them with sufficient opportunities to carry out this role effectively. (para's 81, 157, 168)
- Help teachers use assessment information to amend their planing and tackle identified shortcomings in pupils' learning as well as providing more able pupils with appropriately difficult work and informing parents of the specific strengths and weaknesses of their children's achievements. (para's 30, 71, 103, 124, 128)
- Be specific about what the school wants to achieve in terms of raising standards and apply appropriate measures to check the effectiveness of decisions. (para 83)

In addition, the governing body may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan:

- Support for pupils with special educational needs recording their work. (para's 15, 30, 35, 115, 124, 142)
- Contents of prospectus and governors annual report. (para 69)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	3

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	28	60	9	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**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	198
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	22

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	24

#### **English as an additional language**

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

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.2

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	17	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	26	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (93)	100 (90)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	14	17
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	30	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	83 (87)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	9	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	8	6
	Girls	7	7	6
	Total	12	15	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (61)	75 (52)	60 (87)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	8	5
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	13	16	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (65)	80 (52)	65 (48)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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



**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	163
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.3
Average class size	28.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	116

**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	7	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.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	380677
Total expenditure	383025
Expenditure per pupil	1800
Balance brought forward from previous year	5064
Balance carried forward to next year	2716

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

192
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Number of questionnaires returned

110
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### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	44	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	56	6	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	46	17	2	1
The teaching is good.	47	39	8	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	35	22	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	25	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	41	13	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	61	29	5	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	34	7	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	27	37	10	7

## **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**

92 The 29 children in the Foundation Stage are accommodated in the reception class. They make a good start to school through an effective induction programme. Most benefit from an initial period in the pre-school group that meets in rooms next to the reception class. This helps to ensure children are fully conversant with appropriate routines, before starting school. There are good liaison opportunities provided, where groups of children spend short but increasing amounts of time in reception prior to transfer in September. Children enter school with the majority having slightly above average attainment levels. During the first year in school they achieve well because of the consistently good teaching they receive. The majority of children have already reached the nationally recommended early learning goals in the last few weeks before they move to Year 1 and nearly all the rest are well on their way to doing so. Children are confident, caring of each other and co-operative. They show respect to adults and listen well to each other. They are keen to tackle new tasks and are enthusiastic learners.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development.**

93 Children develop their personal, social and emotional skills effectively through a broad range of opportunities provided by their teacher and learning support assistant. Staff know their children very well and successfully encourage and help them gain a good level of confidence and self-esteem. Children's efforts are praised and rewarded through stickers, smiley faces and stars. Children enjoy good relationships with each other and the adults in class. They develop good levels of independence by taking responsibility for classroom resources; for example, each day a different child is chosen to arrange the candle, flowers and other artefacts in readiness for morning prayers. Children take pride and develop self-confidence. All children know and conform to the social conventions of the daily routines of school life. They respond obediently and willingly when asked by teachers to form an orderly line, choose partners, sit in a circle or form teams for group activities.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

94 Children make a good start in communication, language and literacy. They respond well to the emphasis which adults place on speaking clearly and listening carefully and readily interact with adults in conversations about their views or events relating to themselves. Children respond well to the structured and targeted questioning which adults use and this helps them to share ideas and answer further questions. They enjoy books, handle them carefully and know that print as well as pictures, carries meaning. They are enthusiastic in their reading and enjoy a wide range of books and texts appropriate to their age. Parents reading with them at home, further develops this enjoyment. Children read well, sounding out difficult or new words with increasing confidence. They are happy to share their ideas with others and express preferences in the kinds of stories and poems they have read in class. The majority recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts. This provides a good foundation for their literacy development as they move into Key Stage 1. During a shared reading of the book "Who sank the boat?" children listened attentively and joined in with enthusiasm because of the teacher's interesting and expressive reading and explanations of the text. Children

demonstrated good levels of imagination, interest and forecasting skills when asked to compose different ideas for the endings of some sentences in the story. Many thought of exotic destinations for the boat journey. The teacher helped children to feel that their contributions were valued, by writing each sentence clearly on the whiteboard for all to see. In writing tasks, children generally have well formed handwriting and take care to be accurate in letter formation and spellings. They approach language skills with increasing confidence because of their teacher's high expectations and constant encouragement and well-placed praise. The environment in the reception class is very well organised and changed regularly to provide a rich, stimulating and educational space where children's written, spoken and reading achievements are fostered, valued and celebrated.

### **Mathematical development**

- 95 Mathematics is a daily focus for all children and routines are regularly used to reinforce this understanding. All children count confidently up to 10, the majority can count up to 20 with help. For example, the teacher uses interesting counting games, where children tap out rhythmic chains of numbers with their hands. This helps them to count in 2's. Children also enjoy counting even or odd numbers aloud. They find this easier when they place a finger on their lips when the odd numbers appear in the sequence. Older children use a number line effectively, to work out simple additions. Younger children are developing these skills well at a rate commensurate with time spent in school. The teacher uses stimulating and original visual materials to help children develop mathematical concepts. Children were fascinated to discover and name shapes and colours, which they found in pictures of national costumes of African women. They also noticed that shapes, used in Islamic countries to decorate buildings with ceramic tiles or stained glass, fit together with no gaps. Children took turns patiently when seated in a circle, to name and describe the characteristics of three-dimensional objects. They knew the names for cuboids, hexagonal prisms, triangles, cylinders and rectangles and used them appropriately.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

- 96 Children are given a good range of rich, first-hand experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They begin to understand scientific ideas by asking questions such as "*Why do some things sink in water?*" They attempt to find answers to their questions by investigating different materials and shapes and recording the results of their trials. They check their initial predictions, by making prototypes from malleable material. They also discover inadvertently, that water passes through woven fabric, when a few boys decide covertly, to sit on wet shapes they had made to flatten them, proving that scientific discovery can be great fun, if a little uncomfortable at times. Teachers encourage children to learn and use specific vocabulary to reinforce scientific concepts. This was used to very good effect by a group of children who made posters with carefully thought out slogans to warn of the dangers attached to playing near water, effectively linking their language and literacy skills with science.

### **Physical development**

- 97 Teachers make optimum use of space available to encourage children's physical development within the classroom, during hall times and in the playground. During the inspection, no physical development lessons could be seen in reception. From

teacher's planning, looking at play spaces and the range of large toys, which are shared with the pre-school unit and evidence in other lessons, it is clear that the children experience appropriate opportunities for physical development. During a creative activity, children handling fabrics and threads were developing skills of dexterity and control very effectively. They develop good manipulative skills and this helps them to carry out precise movements and actions. They make good physical and mental efforts to sit still and concentrate for extended periods of time. They are learning to think before they act. They also develop good levels of ability through activities such as cutting, sticking and drawing, using utensils such as pencils, brushes and glue.

### **Creative development**

- 98 Children benefit from a wide range of creative development opportunities. They usually arise from cross-curricular themes, as when they composed short musical phrases using 'low' sounds to represent the different characteristics of the animals from their literacy text "Who sank the boat?" They showed independent thinking when choosing and handling instruments. They did so with care and respect. Children worked on their seaside theme when making woven pictures by threading strips of colourful fabrics across looms to replicate the sand, waves and sky. Children chose and matched colours and textures to re-create the physical features of the seaside. Working in pairs, they exchanged ideas sensibly, took turns amicably and offered each other encouragement and praise.

### **Teaching**

- 99 The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good and often very good. The teacher and learning assistant, work very well together as a strong professional team. The school welcomes students from secondary schools and vocational training establishments. These students are well instructed, monitored and appropriately employed to support children in their learning. The classroom organisation is particularly effective and contributes to the children's progress and attainment. Planning is very good, makes good use of published resources and sessions are well designed to match the early learning goals. Children's progress is monitored efficiently, good records are kept on pupils and reported appropriately to parents. This stage of education is very well led. Standards have been well maintained since the previous inspection.

### **ENGLISH**

- 100 Since the previous inspection standards have improved considerably at Key Stage 1 and are now well above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Whilst there has been some improvement at Key Stage 2, standards still remain below average overall, especially in writing, but are above average in speaking and listening and reading.
- 101 National assessment results for 7 year olds between 1996 and 2000 are better than the national trend. Whilst in the 2000 tests for seven year olds, standards in reading dipped slightly; in reading and writing they are well above average when compared with all and similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in tests is well above the national average for both reading and writing.

- 102 While assessment results for 11 year olds between 1996 and 2000 show a steady rise overall in line with the national trend, they still remain below average. However, standards fell sharply in 2000. The school reports that this is because there was a large proportion of Year 6 pupils with special educational needs, some with very challenging behaviour. In addition, all pupils were affected by considerable disruption to their teaching and learning caused by several changes of teacher other than at the end of the school year. Girls consistently perform better than boys in line with the national trend.
- 103 Inspection evidence confirms that standards remain well above average at the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average but writing is still below. However standards are improving. While appropriate actions have taken place and more are planned to tackle identified weaknesses in writing, these have not yet had time to take effect in Year 6. The school has set realistic targets to raise standards in literacy by 2002. Although these are based on a detailed analysis of pupils' performance, the information is not yet used consistently to inform curriculum planning for groups or classes of pupils. This shortcoming has been recognised by the school and is a development priority. However, throughout the school pupils have specific individual targets, which are effective in reminding them what they need to do to improve.
- 104 The quality of English teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1 it is consistently good and at Key Stage 2 it is never less than satisfactory with a significant amount of good teaching. The National Literacy Strategy has, overall, helped teachers to become secure in many aspects of English. However there is some lack of confidence in teaching shared writing. For example, in some lessons teachers did not demonstrate and explain how to apply new writing skills before asking pupils to do so independently.
- 105 By the time they are seven, nearly all pupils express themselves confidently and join in discussions. They listen carefully to others and respond enthusiastically. This is because a rich and stimulating curriculum based on first hand experiences is provided. Following a trip to the seaside, Year 2 pupils set up an activity area creating a 'seaside experience'. Pupils explored shells, sand and water and used an increasingly wide vocabulary to talk about them. They listened well to seaside music, enjoyed playing with rhyming words and singing a seaside rap. They are encouraged to use appropriate technical vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum. Two Year 2 boys explained carefully how they made model lighthouses in science: *"We joined the wires to the battery to make a circuit and then it lights up"*.
- 106 Similarly by the end of Key Stage 2, nearly all pupils express themselves well, explain their ideas clearly and clarify their points of view. The two national strategies for literacy and numeracy have supported this. Pupils are used to explaining their thinking and methods of calculating in mathematics. They discuss texts confidently justifying their preferences; a Year 6 boy said *"I like invented words, not too much description, I prefer action"*.
- 107 Year 5 pupils successfully presented a poem in assembly about good neighbours: they spoke with expression and confidence showing a well-developed awareness of the listeners' needs, and consequently the audience was totally involved in the performance. Throughout the school in all subjects, pupils are supported in becoming increasingly more confident communicators. This is a strength of the

teaching. For example, Year 3 pupils in a history lesson were given the opportunity to turn to a partner and discuss what they knew about Egyptians. Pupils are consistently encouraged to express their views orally knowing that their contributions will be valued and appreciated.

- 108 Standards of reading are well above average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. The school provides a stimulating environment for literacy where pupils are encouraged to read for a range of purposes. Nearly all pupils in Key Stage 1 are confident readers by the time they are seven and many can explain the strategies they use when they are reading. A seven year old explained *"You can use sounds or read the whole sentence and work it out or you can look at the illustrations"*. Pupils are developing skills for reading information books and know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. A Year 1 pupil said, *"instead of telling a story, it tells you information, it doesn't have 'once upon a time'"*. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can use contents pages and high attaining pupils can use an index and a glossary. Pupils are taught in an enjoyable and systematic way through well-planned literacy hours. Classroom assistants and volunteers play an essential and effective part in ensuring that pupils have plenty of practice in reading. Parents generally provide good support in hearing children read regularly at home. It is because of this strong teamwork that nearly all pupils have a firm foundation in reading skills.
- 109 Similar attention is given to developing reading skills throughout Key Stage 2 and nearly all pupils enjoy reading. They read a wide range of materials and confidently express preferences and discuss the characteristics of different types of texts such as mystery, adventure and humorous. Pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are developing a good level of understanding because teachers question them well, challenging them to make deductions from their reading. Year 5 pupils were asked what they thought the author's reason for writing 'Black Beauty' were, one responded, *"She felt strongly about horses being treated badly"*. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about the strategies they use for selecting books including looking at the illustration, the synopsis and familiarity with named authors. They are keen to keep reading journals and are beginning to develop critical skills to evaluate books read in a variety of ways. These include book reviews and writing to the author about why they enjoyed the book. Nearly all pupils can explain how to use the library classification system and can locate and retrieve the information they need from reference books when studying topics in other subjects.
- 110 Writing standards are well above average at Key Stage 1. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and makes effective use of national guidance. As a result, pupils very soon develop confidence in writing because teachers place a strong emphasis on the systematic teaching of handwriting and spelling skills. They also provide rich experiences for pupils to write about. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils are taught to choose words for effect and to write in different forms, including poetry. For example, after going outside on a sunny day a Year 1 pupil wrote, *"The sun is like a shining star, the sun is like a golden jewel"*. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils can write simple sentences and are beginning to join their writing.
- 111 Whilst writing standards are below average at Key Stage 2, they are improving. The recent nationally initiated "grammar for writing" training is beginning to have a positive effect on teaching. Teachers are now placing greater emphasis on teaching basic skills, including grammar. Consequently, pupils are making good progress in learning how to write interesting and varied sentences and in using more

interesting vocabulary. However, lessons are not well sequenced across a week and there are insufficient planned opportunities to demonstrate to pupils, through shared writing, ways to apply newly acquired skills imaginatively in their independent work. Pupils are now writing for a wider range of purposes and have an increased awareness of audience; each class has produced attractive illustrated books, which have been placed in the library for all to read. Good progress in writing is made when pupils explore the language and style of different texts in class reading sessions. In a Year 5 class studying persuasive writing, the teacher effectively introduced letters published in a local newspaper about a proposal to close a local leisure facility. Pupils successfully used these as a model for their own letters. One boy wrote, *"I have reason to believe that you want to demolish our leisure centre. Why? A shocking, outrageous fact is..."* Similarly a Year 6 high attaining girl having read 'Zlata's Diary', made her own diary entry: *"Dear Diary, we are moving in two days now. I am so sad and fed up. Why do we have to move anyway?"* This way of working is helping pupils make better progress in the quality of their writing. However, some aspects of writing remain unsatisfactory. Pupils do not consistently apply spelling and punctuation rules and a significant number have not developed a fluent joined handwriting style.

- 112 Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' productivity, concentration and behaviour in literacy lessons and gently, yet firmly, reinforce these for those who become less attentive. Although there are gaps in pupils' knowledge of writing skills, the majority are trying hard and achieving well. All staff and voluntary helpers have very good relationships with pupils. This enables them to contribute confidently in lessons in the knowledge that they will be encouraged and supported. As a result, pupils are learning from their mistakes and are helped to make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and elements of writing
- 113 Pupils generally enjoy their work because teachers plan interesting and varied activities, which ensure all are actively involved. For example, a Year 4 class was challenged to identify exciting words in a text, they quickly recorded their answers on individual white boards and showed them to the teacher enabling her to quickly assess learning. Most pupils concentrate well because they are told how much time is available for tasks and consequently good pace is maintained. However, too many pupils do not take enough care over the presentation of their work. Pupils are mainly independent in group work because teachers encourage them to solve problems themselves using the resources and writing aids available in the classroom.
- 114 Teachers know their pupils very well and their achievements are regularly recorded. Assessment is systematic and good use is made of valid and reliable tests. Writing progress books have been introduced in which pupils produce a half-termly sample of unaided writing. This is marked against clear objectives and individual targets are set for improvement. All work is marked, often with encouraging comments, which are helpful in giving pupils further guidance on areas to develop.
- 115 Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they are well supported by classroom assistants. They are often taught in small groups and whilst sometimes they are provided with activities well matched to their stage and rate of learning, too often they have the same task as the rest of the class and are required to respond at their own level. On occasions, some pupils are not given sufficient explanation and help in understanding their work. Consequently, they are not able to complete it in the available time.



- 116 English is very well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is well supported by a specified governor. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards and has a detailed and very appropriate action plan to improve teaching and pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is gaining confidence in monitoring teaching and learning and has recently observed lessons. As a consequence, teachers are open and willing to discuss what they need to do to improve and there is a shared commitment to raising standards.
- 117 Resources for teaching the literacy hour are good, overall. However, the school has identified the need for a wider selection of guided reading books for early Key Stage 1. The number and quality of dictionaries and thesaurus is also under review, to ensure that pupils have continuous and easy access to them. The Devon library service is well used and there is a reasonable range of fiction and non-fiction available in the library. Whilst there is some evidence of the use of new technologies to support English, this is underdeveloped as there are insufficient computers available. The school has identified this and there are plans to establish information and communication technology resources in the same area as the newly relocated library.
- 118 The school has been identified for additional literacy support from the local education authority from September. It is in a strong position to tackle identified weaknesses, particularly in Key Stage 2, and has the capacity for further improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 119 Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. Since the previous inspection in 1997, standards for seven-year-olds have been generally above average, until this year. The school reports this fall in standards is because the current Year 2 class had significant disruption to their learning when in Year 1 caused by staff changes and challenging behaviour by a few pupils. While achievement has improved this year, many pupils are still not sufficiently confident in their recall and use of addition and subtraction facts to do mental calculations efficiently and solve problems. Standards for 11-year-olds since the previous inspection have remained well below average until this year since when there has been rapid improvement. The school reports that this is because intensive support and training as part of the National Numeracy Strategy have been effective in developing teaching and learning.
- 120 National test results in 2000 for seven-year-olds were well above average in comparison to all and similar schools for both boys and girls. For 11-year-olds, national test results were well below average, with boys performing particularly badly and the proportion of the class reaching the higher level 5 was very low in comparison to all and similar schools. The school reports that this year group had a significant number of pupils with special educational needs, including some with particularly challenging behaviour. In addition during their time in Key Stage 2, their learning was disrupted by several changes of class teacher other than at the end of the school year.
- 121 Inspection findings confirm the positive effects of the training and support to implement the National Numeracy Strategy as nearly all the teaching at both key stages is good or better and in one instance excellent. Teachers plan interesting

- lessons, use a variety of approaches, manage pupils very well and make very effective use of learning support assistants and voluntary helpers. Learning objectives are made explicit to the pupils and they clearly understand the purpose of numeracy lessons. As a result, they generally work hard, particularly in the introductory oral sessions, show interest in the learning activities and know what they have to do to improve. Overall, there is a good level of achievement.
- 122 While most of the current pupils aged seven use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to 20, they often need help when applying these skills to problem solving. They have acquired an appropriate knowledge of place value of digits to 100. Many competently count on and back in tens and units up to 100. They know the basic properties of simple two and three-dimensional shapes and use measurement of length, capacity, weight and time appropriately for their age. They collect data and present and interpret bar graphs. They are acquiring and using an appropriate mathematical language.
- 123 By the time they are 11-years old, most pupils use a range of strategies to calculate quickly and accurately in their heads and carry out more complex number operations using these skills. They employ standard written methods efficiently and accurately. They identify and use appropriate combinations of operations to solve problems and explain methods and reasoning. They know the properties of two and three-dimensional geometric shapes and recognise different forms of symmetry. They can read and plot co-ordinates accurately. They collect data and select the appropriate graphical presentation.
- 124 While teachers' planning takes account of the full ability range, there is not always appropriate extension work readily available for the most able mathematicians. In a Year 2 lesson on estimating and sorting different coloured sweets, high attaining pupils realised that making sets of ten was an efficient way of calculating totals and completed the task quickly. They were not challenged to take this work further. However, teachers work effectively with learning support assistants and voluntary helpers to ensure low attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are fully involved in activities. In a Year 4 lesson on money and giving change, a helper sensitively explained to a pupil with emotional and behavioural difficulties what the teacher was saying to the class; as a result he was able to contribute an appropriate answer and was obviously pleased by the praise he received. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs do not have appropriate help when recording their mathematical thinking and work is not finished. Overall, these pupils make satisfactory progress.
- 125 Teachers use introductory sessions in lessons effectively to preview the learning objectives and make appropriate links to work previously covered. They use well-targeted questions to reinforce recently acquired knowledge and understanding, encouraging pupils to explain their mathematical thinking. In Year 5 lesson doubling numbers, the teacher carefully matched the level of challenge as she directed questions at individuals. She allowed thinking time but kept up the pace by moving on to the next question with another pupil and then returning for the first answer. Pupils enjoyed the excitement created by the fast questioning and vied to come up quickly with their response.
- 126 Generally, teachers make an effective link between the introductory oral session and the main teaching focus of the lesson. This ensures skills, knowledge and understanding are reinforced and then developed appropriately. In a Year 6 lesson

on solving measurement problems, the opening oral and mental work involved converting length in to metres, centimetres and millimetres and the teacher emphasised the importance of ensuring the decimal point was in the correct place. This was developed further in the class session, when recording the numerical calculations in solving written problems to ensure there was no mix up with place values. As a result, high and average attaining pupils, who demonstrated their calculations on the board, made no mistakes.

- 127 Teachers generally plan interesting and varied learning activities for individuals, paired and group work; these tasks are mostly appropriately matched to the stage and rate of learning of pupils. Tasks provide an appropriate level of challenge to each ability group and pupils are well supported by teachers, classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. As a result, pupils engage in their learning, persevere and achieve well. In a Year 1 lesson on adding together three numbers under 10, each ability group had a similar task but the resources and support varied according to their stage of learning. The low attaining pupils worked counting three sets of beans with the classroom assistant, average attaining pupils used cubes and the high attainers worked independently referring to a number strip.
- 128 On occasions in Key Stage 2, teachers are not always confident with the strategies they use and do not plan carefully enough to ensure that the work they set is appropriate to a particular ability group. Consequently, pupils find the work too difficult and waste time. In a Year 4 class on solving money problems, two high attaining girls did not attempt the first question on calculating the individual price of a chocolate bar given the cost of 10; they spent five minutes doing very little and when asked said they did not know what to do.
- 129 Plenary sessions are sometimes too short and, while they enable teachers to review with their class the learning objectives, not enough time is allowed for errors and misconceptions to be explored. However in the Year 6 lesson on measurement, the teacher very creatively demonstrated the application of mathematics in industry for her concluding session. She used a vernier micrometer to check the thickness of a single sheet of tissue paper and found that pupils' result, first measuring 100 sheets, was within 0.02 mm of the true reading.
- 130 Teachers know their pupils well and carry out regular and ongoing assessment of their progress. They make good use of national and other standardised tests to identify individuals' weaknesses and set appropriate targets in mathematics; nearly all pupils are well aware of what they need to do to improve and have written reminders on their desks.
- 131 Homework is used effectively to reinforce learning and parents have been given written guidance on how they can help their children be more numerate.
- 132 The school is not well resourced with new technologies. However, all pupils are given regular but limited access to computers and calculators are used to support teaching of mathematics, where appropriate. Year 2 pupils entered data on a computer program about on what breakfast cereals the class preferred and low attaining pupils in Year 6 found calculators were the most efficient way to handle large numbers when calculating how many minutes they had been alive.
- 133 Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In design technology in Year 1, position words, such as "over" and "under"

were used in making large displays of woven strips of coloured card; in Year 2 science, plants were sorted in to sets by location; in Year 3 history, the Egyptian topic display was mounted above a time line from 3000 – 30 BC; in Year 5 physical education, pupils measured their personal fitness by how far they could jump and throw a ball.

- 134 The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has worked hard in the short time since her appointment to tackle underachievement in mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 2. She has a clear action plan based on a thorough and rigorous analysis of assessment information and her own systematic classroom observation. There has been a programme of professional development using local authority resources and staff have dedicated considerable time and effort in discussing and trying out new approaches. These initiatives have raised staff confidence and have had a significant effect on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Resources for teaching mathematics are good and well used.
- 135 In a very short time, the school has made good progress in mathematics and has the capacity for further improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

- 136 Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are now average. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen in Key Stage 1 but deteriorated in Key Stage 2. However, the school reports that the very recent improvement in Key Stage 2 is as a result of appropriate training, employment of new staff, local authority advisory support and effective support from a specialist science teacher from the adjacent secondary school. The recent lowering of standards at Key Stage 1, is reported as being because of disruption to the teaching and learning of the present Year 2 when in Year 1, caused by staff changes and the challenging behaviour of a few pupils.
- 137 In 2000, teachers' assessment of nationally set tasks showed standards for pupils aged seven to be in the highest 5% in the country when compared to all and similar schools. Overall since 1996, standards have always been above average and have generally been improved faster than the national trend. The situation has been very different in national assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2000, standards were amongst the lowest 5% in the country in comparison to all and similar schools. Standards have been well below average since 1996 although there was some improvement in 1999. The school reports that these low standards were a result of teachers' insecurity with practical experimental investigations and their unsatisfactory knowledge and understanding of science.
- 138 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of science. This is because teachers' well-designed plans ensure lessons have a good range of practical activities that are well suited to the stage and rate of learning of all pupils. Because of this, pupils find science very enjoyable, interesting and demanding. They participate enthusiastically in all aspects of lessons, including involvement in demonstrations, sharing resources, making predictions and checking and discussing results. Pupils in Year 2 made models of lighthouses to find out more about electrical circuits. They discussed their ideas sensibly and compared stages of development in their own models with others. The majority of pupils persevered, trying a variety of ways to connect batteries, wires and bulbs, before successfully lighting the lamp. A small minority gave up and benefited from

additional adult support but most enjoyed the problem solving and met the challenges of the activity, showing they were capable of reaching their own solutions.

- 139 Pupils in Key Stage 2 also achieve average standards for their age and this is an improvement on recent years. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress because of the variety of ways in which teachers demonstrate, discuss and give clear explanations of what is expected of them. This is particularly helpful to pupils for whom reading presents difficulty. Teachers use very visual and practical ways of encouraging pupils' natural curiosity; this enables them to participate fully and develops good skills of investigation and recording as well as improving their knowledge and understanding.
- 140 Pupils in Year 6 made thorough investigations of different kinds of soil to find out how plants and animals are affected by their composition and the nutrients they contain. The teacher's own very good subject knowledge and skilful use of questioning, enabled pupils to extend their thinking by first imagining what life on earth would be like without soil. Pupils offered intelligent replies including lack of oxygen and the barren nature of landscape. They quickly absorbed new words such as microbes and humus into their working vocabulary and this helped to develop new concepts and understanding.
- 141 Pupils in Year 5 showed unusual levels of maturity for their age during a lesson on human reproduction. Following earlier lessons on how plants reproduce, they studied small mammals in preparation for their work on the life cycle of humans. All pupils had a very clear understanding of how a human embryo develops, is born and grows through identifiable stages of dependency to adulthood. Pupils know that the cycle of life is continuous. They were also astute in relating the associated problems of dependency in old age to their theme for the week in assemblies: being a good neighbour. Pupils were empathetic to all stages of development, many being quite surprised and chastened when challenged by the teacher about their own levels of dependency.
- 142 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good, sometimes very good. The better teaching is exemplified by the effectiveness of a wide variety of teaching skills and very good use of time and resources, which teachers use to motivate pupils, focus attention and extend concentration. Teachers provide good levels of oral feedback during lessons. They also use good levels of challenge to encourage pupils to work harder. Some teachers do not always remember to allow extra time for slower workers to finish recording tasks and this interrupts the continuity of written exercises for those pupils. Teachers know their children very well and provide just the right level of structured activities to move them forward in their thinking, scientifically. Pupils are well motivated: they know what they are doing and why; they ask questions and listen attentively to the response of others. Homework is used very well to reinforce learning through carrying out simple investigations, such as in Year 6 on the uses of water in the home, and carrying out independent research.
- 143 The subject is managed very well; the co-ordinator has very clear objectives and ideas for improvement and is a very good role model. In a short time, the co-ordinator has undertaken rigorous training and consulted with appropriate outside agencies to ensure development in the teaching and learning. This training has been shared, effectively with all teachers. Monitoring of some teaching has already

taken place and feedback received by those teachers. Pupils' progress is regularly checked through careful and systematic examination of their work and analysis of national tests and tasks. This has proved to be beneficial to identifying areas for development.

- 144 Resources for the subject are good, overall. This is partly because the school has developed very useful links in the past few years, with the adjacent secondary school, which provides some specialist teaching and loans high quality scientific models and other very good visual and practical resources. As yet, new technologies do not feature much in lessons.
- 145 As a result of the effective support and training, the quality of teaching has improved considerably, particularly at Key Stage 2 and the school now has the capacity to improve standards overall in science.

## ART AND DESIGN

- 146 Judgements have been made on the basis of two lessons seen, examination of pupils' work in displays, folders, photographs, sketchbooks and discussions with pupils and teachers.
- 147 Standards of work have been maintained at Key Stage 1 and improved at Key Stage 2. Currently, standards of work seen across both key stages are above that which is expected nationally and this is satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. By the time pupils leave the school at eleven, they have experienced a broad range of challenging work, including two and three-dimensional art and design in a range of appropriate media.
- 148 Teachers successfully encourage pupils to express themselves through drawing, painting, model-making and sculptural work. Pupils in Year 2 made sculptures from objects found along the seashore as part of their topic about the seaside. To enrich this collection of seaweed, cork and driftwood, the teacher provided a wide range of seashells, sponges and other natural objects for pupils to use. Prior to making their own sculptures, pupils enjoyed looking at pictures of the works of Andy Goldsworthy. They worked in a similar style, to produce and photograph sculptures made from biodegradable materials such as slices of bread, pasta shapes, leaves, grasses, twigs and vegetables. Pupils also benefited from a visit by a local crafts worker, who demonstrated the art of weaving and basket making, using hedgerow materials. In response to the teacher's well-structured questioning regarding their choice of materials and techniques, pupils gave informed reasons for their selections and arrangements, using good levels of specific vocabulary when referring to textural qualities, shape, colour, size and form. Pupils named each component of their work, such as "cockle", "mussel" and "crab shells", making meaningful links with science.
- 149 Pupils in Year 4 designed and made clay cartouches with hieroglyphs of their names to support work about ancient Egypt in history. The teacher effectively demonstrated how to make clay pliable and how to use balsa strips as guidelines when rolling clay into slabs of even thickness. This enabled pupils to have a clear idea what was expected before starting the task. Pupils handled resources with care and skill: scissors, clay cutter and balsa wood. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, participated fully because of constant support and positive reinforcement from the class teacher.
- 150 Pupils throughout the school mix their own colours to the correct consistency. They blend pastels and chalks well to create desired effects. In discussions, older pupils were enthusiastic when talking about their experiences in art lessons. They were able to describe their preferences for works of artists they had studied, such as Monet, Matisse and Paul Klee. They were less confident when questioned about colour theory and unable to remember simple terms like primary and secondary colours when asked about colour mixing. Work in pupils' sketchbooks generally lacks purpose. There is little evidence of direct skills teaching or practise such as shading techniques, exploring the different kinds of marks made by a range of drawing materials or exercises to show how light and dark can create interesting and realistic tonal effects. The quality of paper is insufficiently matched to the tasks required; it does not support wet media and restricts use to dry graphic media only.

- 151 Monitoring of pupils' work and of teachers' planning is undertaken at regular intervals. Pupils receive good levels of oral feedback and support in lessons. The subject co-ordinator has very clear ideas for development in the subject. No recent training has been provided because of national priorities in other subject areas. Resources are generally good, plentiful and of satisfactory quality with the exception of pupils' sketchbooks. The contribution made by classroom assistants has a very positive effect on pupils' learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 152 No lessons of design and technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made following discussions with pupils and teachers, examination of pupils' displayed work and curriculum plans. This evidence indicates that pupil attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is above that expected for their age. Whilst this is in line with findings in the previous inspection at Key Stage 1, it is an improvement at Key Stage 2, which was found to be average.
- 153 Projects are appropriately planned following national guidance. Pupils are provided with a wide range of challenging learning opportunities, which build appropriately on their developing knowledge skills and understanding. Good links are made with other subjects, as in Year 3 and 4, where pupils made torches and applied their scientific skills in making them light up.
- 154 Pupils can refine and develop their design and making skills through a range of topics. Year 1 pupils have illustrated nursery rhymes for a class book using their knowledge of simple levers and sliding mechanisms to make parts move, such as a pop-up "Mary, Mary Quite Contrary". Year 2 pupils used appropriate techniques to make glove puppets, starting by producing detailed, labelled plans. They were proud of their finished products and could identify ways of improving them. Year 6 pupils made Macbeth masks developing, expanding and testing their ideas as work progressed. They demonstrated a high level of understanding of the design process from research through development to the finished products.
- 155 Generally, pupils are very aware that the design process requires careful planning before beginning to make things. They are developing a wide range of craft skills and are refining these as they approach more challenging instructions. Pupils enjoy their work and are well motivated. They make good use of an appropriate range of resources.
- 156 There are some opportunities for pupils to use new technologies in design and technology, for example, taking photographs of their work using the digital camera. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use control technology. This has been identified by the co-ordinator as a priority for development.
- 157 The co-ordinator provides good support for design and technology including some specialist teaching. However as the subject is not a school development priority, there have not been opportunities to observe design and technology in classrooms in order to monitor and develop teaching and learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

- 158 During the inspection only one geography and two history lessons were observed. Judgements have been made on these observations, examining pupils' work,



- talking to pupils, discussions with the co-ordinator, looking at teachers' planning and from displays around the school. This evidence indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 is generally around that expected for their age in both geography and history.
- 159 In geography, pupils in Key Stage 1 talk enthusiastically about their work. They are progressively building their knowledge about the British Isles, Europe and the wider world through a topic based on a bear, that is taken on journeys with parents, children or staff. As a result of this topic, pupils learn relevant geographical vocabulary, such as, travel, distance, near, far and types of weather. They can identify a variety of places around Great Britain and the world and locate them on a globe or map. Valuable and effective displays further support pupils' learning and maintain their interest in appropriate projects.
- 160 In the Year 1 geography lesson, pupils were successfully investigating the differences between Newton Abbot and St Lucia. The lesson was well planned with a clear focus on the teacher demonstrating to pupils how to find information in a reference book. She then showed them how to tabulate findings on a chart. Within the class session, there were opportunities for all pupils to be involved. They were asked a question and then turned to their 'talk partners' to discuss their responses. Pupils' behaviour was particularly well managed by the classroom assistant who worked alongside the teacher and recorded names on a small whiteboard of those who were concentrating well. These were shown to the class and as a consequence all were keen to be added to the list.
- 161 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop a satisfactory range of geographical skills including an understanding of human and environmental factors. Teachers' effective use of the school's schemes of work and detailed planning ensures that pupils understand geographical features in Britain and other parts of the world.
- 162 In Years 5 and 6 pupils can explain where water is found in the world. They can successfully record their findings on graphs and identify places with high/low rainfall. Teachers encourage pupils to identify their own areas for further research. For example, a parent representing a national water company visited the pupils to answer their prepared questions about the water cycle and the use of water.
- 163 At both key stages, the curriculum is enriched by a range of field trips. For example at Key Stage 1, pupils explore Newton Abbot and visit Goodrington Sands and Key Stage 2 pupils visit and study the local River Teign.
- 164 In history, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are developing a sense of sequence and chronology. They know that history is about the past and understand the principles of "then" and "now" using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils are developing their knowledge of how historical information can be discovered through looking at photographs, videos, books and artefacts. Year 1 pupils enjoyed comparing toys from the past with toys today and confidently discussed the differences.
- 165 In a Year 2 lesson, pupils watched well-chosen video clips to find out how people enjoyed themselves at the seaside today compared with the 1900s and 1950s. Through the teacher's very good use of questioning, most were able to identify key similarities and differences. Very good links to English were made as children recorded main points in note form. Throughout the lesson, key vocabulary was displayed to assist spelling. They were very well supported by classroom assistants and volunteer helpers. An excellent range of resources was available to support

and stimulate learning, including photographs, books, Victorian bathing costumes, which the pupils put on, and “Punch and Judy” puppets. Pupils achieved well as the teaching was lively, interactive and well matched to their age and stage of learning.

- 166 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have studied a range of historical periods including Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Vikings, Tudors and Victorians. They know that they can discover information about periods of history through researching primary and secondary sources such as artefacts, reference books and photographs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 talked enthusiastically about their visit to Coldharbour Mill which provided a ‘Victorian Experience’. Their written work shows empathy with the plight of Victorians: *“I get the impression that working in a factory was very hard because if girls did not have their hair tied back it would get caught in machines ... you would have to get up at 5 am and go to bed very late at night. The bosses were very strict and firm”*. There are some opportunities for pupils to use new technologies to support their research; however as yet, this is under-developed through lack of access to computers.
- 167 Thorough planning and perceptive questioning supported pupils learning in a Year 3 lesson on Egyptians. Pupils talked enthusiastically about their visit to the Egyptian Museum, which was very successful in stimulating and motivating their enquiry skills. Within the lesson, the majority of pupils made satisfactory progress and learned to make deductions from pictures. However, a pupil joining the class after receiving reading support was unsure of the task as he had missed the teacher’s explanation. As a consequence, he did not complete his work. Overall, pupils were supported appropriately with their independent work because the teacher had provided different activities well-matched to their abilities.
- 168 The co-ordinator provides good support for history and geography, including some specialist teaching. She has been effective in ensuring the subject is well resourced. She has successfully monitored teachers’ planning and evaluations and has produced a detailed assessment record for both subjects. Neither subject has been the focus of school development plans. Therefore, there have been no opportunities for the co-ordinator to observe and support the development of teaching and learning in geography and history.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 169 Only one short lesson and two group sessions of information and communication technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made based upon these observations, discussions with pupils, interviews with teachers and examination of curriculum plans and pupils’ work.
- 170 There has been a decline in standards in information technology at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. Hardware has only partially been updated and the number of computers is limited, with most classes having only one machine. More appropriate learning resources are being acquired as information and communication technology will be a development priority for the school from next September. During this year, the focus has been on raising teachers’ awareness about the possibilities opened up by using new technologies and considerable training has taken place. While teachers are becoming more secure in their personal knowledge and understanding of the subject, as yet, this has only had a significant effect on the provision in Key Stage 1, where the co-ordinator teaches. As a result, standards for pupils aged seven are around the national average.

However, older pupils have not yet had sufficient opportunities to develop their information and communication technology skills and currently standards for 11-year-olds are below average.

- 171 In the Year 1 class, the teacher takes a short lesson each week to introduce a new skill and discuss uses of new technologies affecting pupils in their every day life. Each day, different pupils take their turn to practise and reinforce their learning by completing a task based upon this introductory lesson. In the session observed, pupils were introduced to a computer program for helping them construct simple sentences using a range of appropriate words pre-selected by the teacher. A pupil with English as an additional language confidently demonstrated to the class how to access the drop-down menu and find the word bank. In the subsequent discussion, a more able girl put forward sensible reasons why using a computer could be useful; she said, *"It helps you spell words correctly and is much easier to use if you find writing difficult."*
- 172 Older pupils do not have sufficient understanding of controlling and modelling, although a group of Year 6 pupils could remember programming a four-wheeled vehicle to carry out a series of set moves through a maze when they were younger. However, by the time they are 11-years-old, nearly all pupils have appropriate word processing skills as required for their age. There are examples of their work in books and on displays in the classroom. They have had some experience of communicating information graphically and using spreadsheets. In a recent geography project, they produced pictures of fish and also represented data they had collected on budgeting for a holiday as bar graphs.
- 173 Most Year 6 pupils have a wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of the use of new technologies in modern society and the effects on their lives. They confidently use a range of equipment, such as microwaves, digital and video cameras, DVD and CD players and know how to program video recorders. Nearly all have access to computers at home and have acquired most of their skills from using them. When the group of Year 6 pupils was asked how they would improve the school, all agreed with a boy who said, *"Have a special room with enough computers so that we can use them for more than 10 minutes a week."*
- 174 Most pupils are confident users and quick learners, which shows in the way individuals have mastered only recently introduced new challenges, such as using the Internet for research and communicating by emails. All pupils enjoy using new technologies and they work well individually and in pairs. One Year 5 boy has a particular talent for information and communication technology. The school has been very supportive in encouraging him to develop his skills and the co-ordinator ensures he is given appropriate extension work.
- 175 As a result of recent training, teachers are beginning to be more confident in their knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology, particularly of word processing. Classroom displays, notices and work sheets are well presented using a range of desk-top publishing techniques; these give positive messages to pupils about the value and uses of new technologies. However, the use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory but the school is about to embark on a nationally funded project to tackle this deficiency.

- 176 The co-ordinator has produced an interim policy and guidelines that are appropriate for the current level of staff confidence. She helps colleagues choose appropriate activities that can be undertaken with the limited resources available. She has a clear vision of what needs to be done and the development priorities identified are realistic and appropriate. A new deputy head has been appointed from September who has expertise in information and communication technology; he has experience of setting up a computer suite and in training staff.
- 177 As a consequence of these planned changes and the effective preparatory work, the school is well placed to improve information and communication technology facilities, develop and support staff and raise standards.

## **MUSIC**

- 178 Only two lessons of music could be seen during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, assemblies and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that attainment in singing is as expected.
- 179 While the school has an appropriate policy, it is over due for review but the published scheme in use meets requirements. Generally, staff lack confidence in their knowledge and understanding of music and they find the resources and guidance in the scheme helpful. In addition, there is no music specialist and the school relies on the co-ordinator to accompany singing, where possible supported by voluntary helpers, particularly on special occasions such as concerts and musical events. As a consequence, most pupils generally do not extend their musical skills to any degree. Talented pupils, who receive instrumental tuition, are the exception; they achieve well and their performance at assemblies and school events is much appreciated.
- 180 The co-ordinator is the reception teacher and she has worked hard to ensure staff are familiar with the published scheme. She has also effectively ensured that there are sufficient high quality resources available and taught recorder groups.
- 181 In a Year 2 lesson on the music and sounds of the seaside, the pupils listened attentively to the recorded lesson and joined in enthusiastically singing familiar songs, such as “ I do like to be beside the seaside” and “Sailing”. The teacher ensured they were able to follow the words using a pointer and an attractive poster displaying the songs. They also confidently distinguished between different seaside sounds and discussed which untuned and tuned percussion instruments would best replicate them. The teacher had prepared the lesson well. There were sufficient instruments readily available, the music was appropriate and she varied the pace well to suit the different practical learning activities that followed the recorded session. As a result, pupils enjoyed the experience and their understanding and appreciation of different sounds were developed.
- 182 In a Year 3 lesson exploring sounds, pupils showed appropriate respect in handling the different percussion instruments and worked well in small groups. Their interest was maintained in the introductory session by playing a game where one pupil was blindfolded and had to guess who was playing an instrument. Only two pupils were able to take part and they were restricted in moving around as all the instruments were on the floor in the middle of the circle of children. However, in the group activity, everyone was engaged in composing a rhythmic accompaniment to a rap based on “the princess and the pea” tale. The first rehearsal went well and the class

gained satisfaction from their performance, showing they were able to listen to others and follow guidance from the teacher, who was conducting.

- 183 In assemblies, pupils sing hymns with enthusiasm and generally follow the melody and respond appropriately to the meaning of words. Recorded music is often played to create a suitable atmosphere for collective worship.
- 184 The school provides a good range of opportunities to raise pupils' awareness of the way music enriches life. There are at least two musical productions each year, musicians come to the school and lead workshops and classes visit local and regional musical events, such as the "Sing 200 project" in Exeter cathedral.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 185 Only four lessons were seen of physical education during the inspection. Judgements have been made on these observations, talking to pupils, discussions with teachers and looking at their plans. This evidence indicates that currently, attainment by pupils is around average by the time they leave the school at eleven and this is the same as in the previous inspection.
- 186 Swimming is taught in Year 5. Almost all pupils achieve 25 metres. A significant number exceed this and some swim competitively against other schools.
- 187 The school has hard playground surfaces but no playing field facilities of its own. A working agreement exists with the adjacent secondary school, which allows full use of its field and outdoor tracks for one afternoon each week. Weather permitting, all Key Stage 2 classes take advantage of these arrangements. Pupils in Year 6 clearly demonstrated their skills in throwing and jumping, by developing consistency in their actions through practice. They increased the distance of their throwing and long jumping and increased the height of their high jumping. Pupils measured each attempt accurately, in order to reflect on technique, before taking further attempts to better their scores. Pupils worked well in pairs, to record and analyse each other's efforts.
- 188 The school is rightly proud of its use of dance as an integral component in the physical education programme and teaches it very well. Often dance is used to reinforce or extend ideas in other subjects, using topic approaches to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 5 rehearsed then performed an original dance adaptation of "Another Day In Paradise" by Phil Collins. They responded expressively to the music, synchronizing their actions to work in time with the rhythms. They used great care and concentration whilst expressing the emotive storyline, describing by gesture, how boy meets girl and then loses her. All boys as well as girls participated fully, showing maturity in their interpretation and demonstrating precision and awareness of each other's performance.
- 189 There is a full programme of team games on offer. The school takes part in inter-schools competitions in such games as tag rugby, and soccer. The school has no facilities for outdoor education. Older pupils have attended a residential outdoor education course, activities included abseiling and wall climbing. Girls as well as boys enjoy playing cricket and tag rugby. Pupils know the importance of regular exercise to good physical health and mental well-being.

- 190** The school has a balanced programme of activities, covering athletics, dance, games and swimming. The subject is very well managed by the co-ordinator. In the lessons seen, teachers used appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities and pupils know the importance of heart rates, circulation and breathing techniques to maintaining good health.