

INSPECTION REPORT

POMPHELETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Plymstock

LEA area: Plymouth

Unique reference number: 113317

Headteacher: David Angell

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward
18605

Dates of inspection: 8 - 12 July 2002

Inspection number: 195761

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: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11 Years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Howard Rd
Plymstock
Plymouth

Postcode: PL9 7ES

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Fax number: 01752 482987

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Tim Squires

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	English Music Religious education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19716	Katy Blake	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
21818	Tony Parker	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
14511	Philip Whitehead	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art Design and technology Physical Education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pomphlett is an average sized primary school attended by 204 pupils. Boys outnumber girls two to one in Year 2; and two-thirds of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have spent one less term in school than the rest of their class as they were born in the summer. Most of the pupils come from fairly typical backgrounds and enter the reception class at four-years-old with a wide range of abilities but overall their attainment is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is around the national average (22%); two have statements (below average). The number eligible for free school meals is below average (7.8%) and falling. Nearly all children are white British. The number of gifted/talented pupils is small.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pomphlett is an effective school as the headteacher, governors and staff are committed to raising standards higher and are taking appropriate action to ensure this happens. Teaching is generally good and, overall, pupils achieve well. As a result, the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science, geography and information and communication technology for 11-year-olds.
- Children make a good start in the reception class.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils like school, behave well and show increasing maturity.
- Three quarters of the teaching is good or better.
- The curriculum is rich and varied in and beyond the classroom.
- Pupils are very well cared for and relationships are very good.
- The school has effective links with the community and works extremely well with partner institutions.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and senior staff are good.

What could be improved

- The achievement of more able pupils in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science in the infants and in writing in the juniors.
- Assessing pupils' work, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Checking the quality of teaching and developing pupils' learning, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June 1997 and has successfully tackled nearly all of the key issues:

- standards have risen in science, information and communication technology and music;
- the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant;
- there is an appropriate curriculum for the under fives;
- pupils' personal and social development is well provided for;
- assessment procedures are effective in English and mathematics.

While the school gives careful consideration to most of its actions, there is still work to do on checking and developing teaching and pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	C	C	C	well above A average above B average
mathematics	C	A	C	C	average C below average D
science	C	C	D	D	well below E average E* very low

Children in the reception class make good progress and most will reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. In 2001 national assessments for seven-year-olds, standards in reading and writing were well below the national average and below average in mathematics. Teachers' assessment of Year 2 pupils in science was well above the national average. Currently, most pupils reach the level expected for seven-year-olds in reading, writing, mathematics and science but well below average attain the higher levels. Standards for pupils aged 11 in mathematics and science are above average and average in English, confirming provisional national assessment results for 2002. All pupils swim 25 metres and are aware of water safety principles by the time they leave school. On the limited evidence available during the inspection, standards of work seen in other subjects are generally as expected for seven and 11-year-olds and above in geography and information and communication technology for pupils aged 11. The school has set very challenging targets to raise standards in English and mathematics. Pupils are generally interested in their learning, work hard and achieve well. Those with special educational needs make good progress. The disproportionate number of boys in Year 2 does not affect the overall attainment of pupils in this class; the few summer born pupils spending one term less in the reception catch up with their class mates by the time they start Year 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils generally like school, try hard to do their best and are fully involved in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave well, are courteous and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are responsible and show initiative. Relationships are very good and pupils show consideration and support each other well.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teachers place a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy not only in English and mathematics lessons but in other subjects. The best teaching occurs when teachers with secure subject knowledge and understanding plan interesting lessons, manage and organise learning activities very well and work very effectively with assistants. In these lessons, pupils are learning the right things, work hard for most of the time and enjoy learning. Areas for development in teaching are mainly concerned with teachers not giving more able pupils hard enough work and not providing enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in different situations and work independently. In these lessons, pupils find work too easy, lose interest and are not very good at dealing with problems on their own.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall good. The curriculum covers the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and offers rich, interesting and relevant opportunities in other subjects and areas of learning. Links with partner institutions are excellent. However, work is not always hard enough for more able pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Early identification and effective teamwork by teachers and assistants ensures pupils have appropriate learning opportunities.
Provision for	Overall good. Opportunities to help pupils' develop

pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	socially are very good; the provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of pupils, providing effective guidance, personal support and protection. Assessment information is not available or used effectively in all subjects, and pupils, particularly the more able, are not always given the right work or know what they need to do to improve.

The school keeps parents and carers well informed and most actively help reinforce their children's learning at home, particularly in reading.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is challenging and enthusiastic. He is working effectively with senior staff to raise standards higher. Co-ordinators are being trained to be more active in developing teaching and pupils' learning but, as yet, are not fully effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed and supportive, know what needs to be done to raise standards and regularly check on the performance of the school
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has set very challenging targets over the next four years and has drawn up clear and realistic plans to raise standards with appropriate ways of checking that agreed improvements are taking place. However, these are not yet fully in place.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body has good control of finances and operates within the principles of best value.

Learning resources, including new technologies, are generally good and used effectively; there are deficiencies in music and fiction books that are being tackled. The accommodation is good and while the library is small, adequate books supplies are in each classroom. The outdoor area for the youngest children is in need of improvement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children make good progress • Children like school • Teaching is good • Children expected to work hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of activities outside of lessons • Links with parents • Amount of homework • Information on children's progress.

Inspection findings agree with all the parents' positive views; additional activities are very good, links with parents are good, the amount of homework is appropriate and information of children's progress is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards are above average in reading, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and geography for pupils aged 11; more able pupils underachieve in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science in the infants and in writing in the juniors.

- 1 While the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the level expected for their age in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science is around the national average, not enough attain higher levels. In the juniors, pupils' achievement in reading, mathematics and science varies but overall is better than expected, mainly because of the consistently good or better teaching they receive in Year 6. However, the more able also underachieve with their writing and the proportion reaching the higher level five is below the national average.
- 2 Insufficient lessons were observed in other subjects to make a secure judgement about overall standards in these areas but, on the limited evidence available, most pupils' attainment is as expected for their age and above average in geography and information and communication technology for Year 6 pupils. All pupils can swim 25 metres and know the principles of water safety when they leave at 11-years-old. Overall, this is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were as expected in nearly all subjects and below in information and communication technology and music.
- 3 Pupils' attainment on entry at four is around the national average and has been for a number of years. Children achieve well in the reception class because of the generally very good teaching they receive. However two thirds of the class have only spent two terms in school as they were born in the summer. So despite this good start to their schooling, by the time they start Year 1, few children exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals in the six areas of learning but most attain them comfortably. This is as a result of staff planning a rich, interesting and relevant curriculum from which children gain much; a shortcoming and key issue at the previous inspection.
- 4 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 acquire a firm foundation in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy but do not have sufficient opportunities to apply themselves in different ways to broaden or extend their learning. Activities are not always interesting or purposeful and some pupils, particularly in Year 2, do not work hard enough and are over dependent on adults for help when they encounter problems. However, summer born pupils tend to catch up in Year 1 and their levels of attainment match that of the class by the time they start Year 2. The higher proportion of boys in the current Year 2 has no affect on the overall achievement of either girls or boys.
- 5 Pupils in Years 3 - 5 achieve well when lessons are interesting and they are given time to develop their own ideas. However, sometimes activities are too easy and more able pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their learning. On occasions, particularly

in Year 5, many pupils do not take enough care; they persist in making avoidable mistakes and their recorded work is poorly presented. In Year 6, pupils' learning accelerates as a result of the teacher's high expectations. They work hard, are productive and conscientious. However, many are not very confident in trying to sort out difficulties for themselves or follow-up their own lines of inquiry.

- 6 Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and benefit from the individual and group support given by assistants and teachers. They are generally fully involved in lessons and overall they make good progress.
- 7 Test results in 2001 for seven year olds in reading and writing were well below the national average and below in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were well below average in all three areas. Pupils' learning was disrupted last year by a change of teachers at a crucial time but overall, more able pupils did not achieve well enough. Teachers' assessments in science show standards were very high when compared to all and similar schools. Teacher assessments generally under-estimated the proportion expected to reach the level expected for their age in English and mathematics. Provisional test results for 2002 show there has been an improvement but still not enough more able pupils are reaching the higher level 3.
- 8 For pupils aged 11, 2001 test results show that standards in English and mathematics were around the national average in comparison to all and similar schools. Standards in science were below overall. Provisional test results for 2002 show a significant improvement in all three subjects.
- 9 Results in reading for seven-year-olds between 1997 and 1999 rose rapidly to well above average and then plummeted to well below average in 2001. Standards in writing followed the national trend and were generally around average but again fell from 1999 to 2001. Standards in mathematics rose swiftly from a low start in 1997 to stay around the national average but fell from 2000 to 2001.
- 10 Standards for 11-year-olds in English and science have tended to follow the national trend but standards in mathematics have been more variable, although they have stayed above average until 2001.
- 11 The fall in overall standards for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics over the past two years and the lack of significant progress in raising standards in writing for 11-year-olds is primarily due to the more able pupils not reaching their potential. While they make satisfactory progress, they are not given sufficiently challenging work to extend their learning. Year 2 boys have tended to do better than girls but this is more a reflection of the number of lower attaining girls in these classes rather than shortcomings in teaching and pupils' learning.
- 12 The school has set particularly challenging targets over the next two years to raise standards higher in English and mathematics and recognises that the key to success is to tackle the under-achievement of more able pupils.

- 13 Currently, standards of speaking and listening are below average for pupils aged seven and above average for those aged 11. Pupils in Years 2 are confident speakers and have an appropriate vocabulary but they do not always listen attentively to each other. They make good progress in Years 3 - 6, as there are many opportunities for speaking, with staff concentrating on helping pupils to acquire good listening skills.
- 14 Standards of reading are below average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds. Most pupils in Year 2 read simple texts accurately but do not confidently use letter sounds to help them work out new words. In Years 3 -6, pupils develop their fiction reading well but are less secure in using books for personal study.
- 15 Standards in writing are below average for seven and 11-year-olds. Year 2 pupils do not find writing easy or enjoyable. Year 6 pupils write appropriately for their age but few have the confidence to use writing to express their ideas and explain their thinking to any degree. The majority of pupils in the school write legibly and take care; a joined handwriting style is developed effectively from Year 3 but is not consistently used by pupils in Year 5.
- 16 Standards in mathematics are average for seven-year-olds and above average for 11-year-olds. Most Year 2 pupils carry out simple mental calculations appropriately but are not always secure with subtraction. Pupils in Year 6 confidently explain their mathematical thinking and are interested and enthusiastic when completing increasingly challenging tasks and solving problems.
- 17 Standards in science are average for pupils aged seven and above average for 11-year-olds. Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of science but are not always careful enough when observing and recording in investigations. By the time they are 11, most pupils have good scientific knowledge and understanding and carry out systematic lines of inquiry confidently with due regard to ensuring tests are fair.
- 18 Standards in information and communication technology are average for pupils aged seven and above for 11-year-olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as more appropriate resources are available and staff are more confident.
- 19 Standards in geography for older pupils are higher than expected because of the effective residential fieldwork Years 5 and 6 undertake separately. As a result, they have considerable practical experience at applying their knowledge and understanding of two contrasting localities.
- 20 The school has identified a few gifted and talented pupils and is beginning to provide more opportunities for them to work at an appropriate level. These pupils, mainly in music and physical education, generally receive tuition outside school. There was insufficient evidence available to make secure judgements on the effects of the newly introduced support provided by the school.

21 Standards have improved for older pupils and the school has the capability to raise them higher in Year 2 and for the more able pupils across the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils enjoy school, behave well, are responsible and show initiative. Relationships are very good. Attendance is well above average.

22 Pupils respond well to their school experiences. Their attitudes to school, behaviour and personal development are good. Relationships and attendance are very good. These findings are an improvement on previous inspection findings for personal development, relationships and attendance and the same with regard to pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

23 The majority of pupils are enthusiastic about school and are keen and eager to learn. Pupils are interested in their work, attentive and are keen participants. In a Year 1 physical education lesson, pairs enthusiastically demonstrated their ball skills to the rest of the class.

24 The higher proportion of boys in Year 2 has little affect on pupils' attitudes in the class. While generally good, on occasions when completing uninteresting worksheets in English, both boys and girls become inattentive. Pupils have particularly good attitudes in Year 6 due to consistently good teaching and interesting well-prepared lessons. In science, these pupils were excited as they watched how burning candles were affected by the amount of air available and in English they responded enthusiastically to the challenge of comparing two of Ted Hughes' poems.

25 Pupils show interest in school life and are involved in the rich range of activities provided. Members of the choir were clearly enthusiastic as they sang well with expression and office monitors appreciate the responsibilities they have been given.

26 Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and on the playground. The school functions as an orderly community. Pupils respond well to the school's clear routines, such as movement from playground to class. On the playground, girls and boys play both skipping and football well with each other. In classrooms, pupils' behaviour is generally good which helps their learning. In a Year 3 English lesson about using direct speech in story writing, pupils behaved very well because of the high expectations and very good management of the class teacher.

27 Pupils are courteous, polite and respectful to each other and to adults. Children in the reception class politely thanked the police officer for her visit, and pupils in Year 2 showed respect to the visiting Hindu priest. Pupils respect the school's property and use things carefully. The atmosphere is generally caring and free from oppressive behaviour.

28 The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils are willing to take responsibility as a variety of monitors, peer mediators or as representatives on the School Council. They are aware of the impact

that they have on other pupils. They can inspire each other, as did a Year 5 boy when helping a friend to learn to play the guitar.

29 Throughout the school, pupils show initiative by helping to care for each other. On the playground an older girl comforted a youngster who had hurt herself. Most pupils do not show sufficient initiative and responsibility in learning due to insufficient independent study skills.

30 Pupils generally form very constructive relationships with each other and with adults and this creates a positive and caring family atmosphere. The youngest children enjoy being supported by older pupils on the playground and in paired reading. The Year 6 class teacher warmly told pupils, '*I like it when your brains hurt*', inspiring concentration and hard work. In Year 5, there are occasions when relationships between one or two pupils and the class teacher are not constructive due to the teacher's well-meaning but assertive approach.

31 Attendance is very good. The most recent figures indicate that attendance is well above the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

Overall, teaching is good, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. However, not all teachers provide the more able with hard enough work and some lessons do not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to practise their literacy skills.

32 During the inspection, 75% of the teaching was good or better and 28% very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when the amount of very good or better teaching was only 8%. The teaching in the reception class was consistently good or better. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching overall was satisfactory with good teaching in nearly half the lessons observed. In Years 3 - 6, the teaching was very good in four lessons, good in seven, satisfactory in four and unsatisfactory on one occasion. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics was good.

33 The consistently good or better teaching in the reception class comes about because the teacher is very secure in her knowledge and understanding of this stage of education. As a result, she plans very interesting and appropriate lessons, working very effectively with staff to establish very good relationships so the needs of each child are met. Children quickly become confident learners, developing independence and making good progress in their personal development.

34 Teachers in Years 1 and 2 place an appropriate emphasis on helping pupils acquire basic skills in literacy and numeracy. However, activities are usually planned to suit the majority of pupils in the class. Pupils who learn at a slower rate are given effective individual and group support from teachers and assistants and, therefore, are able to cope. However, more able pupils often find activities too easy and tend not to make much effort; their recorded work is often untidy and not developed. In the infants, there are

also not enough opportunities planned in lessons other than English for pupils to apply their literacy skills.

35 Some teachers in the juniors also do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do and more able pupils are not working hard enough, particularly with their writing. However in Year 6, teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is generally good or better, with a strong focus on encouraging pupils do their best but not to be afraid of making and learning from their mistakes.

36 Teachers throughout the school are making more use of new technologies to support their teaching and pupils' learning in all subjects but this development is at an early stage.

37 When teaching is very good, teachers ensure that new learning builds easily on previous lessons and activities are interesting but sufficiently challenging to stretch pupils' thinking. In a Year 6 science lesson, the practical activity to investigate the amount of air needed to keep a candle alight was well structured to develop pupils' understanding of materials and combustion but also consolidate their skills of enquiry. The teacher's questions to individuals were at just the right level to extend their scientific thinking and asked in such a supportive way that they felt able to share their emerging ideas.

38 Teaching that has significant shortcomings occurs when too much time is spent on one aspect of a lesson, particularly class sessions introducing new learning. Not enough thought is given to checking that the ideas being presented are at the right level and, consequently, many pupils have difficulties following the teacher. Explanations become involved, confusing pupils and a few become inattentive, behaving inappropriately, as they did in a Year 5 English lesson.

39 Teachers and assistants work well in their identification and support of pupils with special educational needs. Effective use is made of individual education plans to ensure pupils make progress in specified areas. While work set is sometimes too hard, the individual and group support pupils receive enables them to complete tasks and feel fully involved in lessons. The short, intensive sessions for a group of Year 1 pupils was particularly effective in developing understanding and use of letter sounds.

40 Marking has been a development priority this year and staff training has resulted in a generally consistent approach being followed throughout the school. Work is regularly marked and teachers usually provide appropriate guidance as to how pupils can learn from their mistakes, although not always in mathematics. However, because teachers are under-estimating the capabilities of more able pupils, not enough extension activities are suggested or given in the marking. This is also apparent in some lessons, where teachers are not recognising in their day-to-day checking of pupils' work that more able pupils are not working as hard as they could.

41 Homework is used to reinforce learning, particularly in reading, spelling and the learning of multiplication facts for younger pupils. Some parents felt there was too much and others too little homework; inspection findings confirm the amount is appropriate.

However, older pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their study skills through following up individual topics at home, involving reading and research.

42 As a result of the good or better teaching, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave at 11 years old.

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

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils both within and beyond the school day. There is very good provision in the reception class and for out of school activities. Links with partner institutions are excellent. Pupils' personal development is well provided for. Work is not always hard enough for more able pupils.

- 43 The school now provides a generally broad and balanced curriculum that meets requirements; a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the nursery and reception classes have been significantly improved and is now very good. In Years 1-6, schemes of work have been completed and appropriate amounts of time allocated to each subject. The quality and range of learning opportunities are now satisfactory in the infants and good in Years 3-6, particularly in English, mathematics, science, geography, history, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for more able pupils to be challenged, particularly in Year 2, and for pupils to develop independent study skills.
- 44 There is a strong focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills throughout the school but opportunities for pupils to develop their writing outside structured exercises are limited. Teachers have found guidance from the National Numeracy Strategy especially helpful in planning.
- 45 Clear, concise long-term curriculum plans ensure that pupils study a broad range of interesting and relevant topics and develop skills progressively. Termly plans give sufficient detail to help teachers plan lessons, apart from in infant music. Non-specialists teachers find the published scheme of work too technical to be helpful and the school is exploring ways of improving guidance in this area. The time allocated to each subject is appropriate for pupils throughout the school but the total teaching time for juniors is less than the recommended minimum.
- 46 Provision for pupils with special educational need is good throughout the school. Teachers and assistants work well together to plan individual and small group activities that are interesting and well matched to the learning styles and needs of the pupils. This is supplemented by effective sessions in the well-organised group teaching area.
- 47 The school works hard to ensure that every pupil is able to take part in all learning opportunities and the inspection found many positive examples. Overall, the ethos of fairness and equality is a strong feature of the school, apart from in not always providing hard enough work for more able pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- 48 The provision for sex, drug and health education is good and the school meets the requirements for a daily act of collective worship. There is very good provision for activities in addition to lessons, including a wide range of sporting and musical activities, visits and visitors.

- 49 The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school's links with its partner institutions are excellent. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
- 50 Ladybirds pre-school is on the school site and the majority of children transfer to the school. The large number and high quality of liaison activities play an extremely valuable part in providing a smooth start for the youngest pupils at the school.
- 51 The school has very good links with other primary schools and a wide variety of inter school events and competitions take place. Links with the partner secondary school, to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6, are also excellent. Visits from secondary school staff and induction visits for pupils help ensure a smooth transfer to the next stage of their education.
- 52 There are also very rich curriculum links with the secondary school that strongly enhance pupils' learning experiences. For instance, a modern foreign language teacher provides lessons for Year 6 and the librarian teaches library skills. The facilities of the secondary school are used to support physical education, information and communication technology and design technology. Work experience students from the secondary school also make a good contribution to the learning of pupils.
- 53 The school successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. It provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop socially, and good opportunities are provided for spiritual, moral and cultural development. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
- 54 Religious education provides good opportunities for pupils to explore different values and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and empathise with the feelings of others, in lessons, in collective worship and in peer mediation. For example in Year 4 history, pupils were able to empathise with the thoughts and feelings of evacuees in World War II. In collective worship, younger pupils regularly discuss their feelings and emotions and relate these to their personal experiences and older pupils are encouraged to express appreciation of the intangible, such as love and caring.
- 55 The school provides an ethos in which all pupils can grow and flourish. Pupils' self esteem is consistently promoted throughout the school by the use of praise and other rewards. The attractive displays of pupils' work and the general use of plenary sessions reflect the value teachers show for pupils' ideas across the curriculum.
- 56 Pupils are made aware of what is expected of them and the difference between right and wrong through informal daily routines and good staff interventions. The school fosters values of caring, honesty, and respect for each other well, with staff providing good role models. Pupils are given opportunities to explore and develop moral concepts and values. For example in Year 4 geography, pupils considered issues of recycling. The school strongly emphasises the value of each individual and promotes equality of opportunity well. In a Year 2 class assembly, the story of a little girl emphasised that everyone is able to achieve.

- 57 The school has created a safe and open environment in which pupils can express their views, not only through discussions in class but in the School Council and in peer mediation. The generous support of charities reflects the school's promotion of responsibility for caring in the wider community.
- 58 Rich and varied opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility and develop an understanding of living in a community. Staff set a good example by treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect. Throughout the curriculum and across all year groups, staff ensure pupils learn to relate to each other by working in pairs and groups. In Year 4 English, pupils worked well in pairs discussing texts and, in Year 5 physical education, the class co-operated as one large group to control movement of a ball on a parachute.
- 59 A wide variety of extra curricular activities and inter schools events, such as cricket, encourage teamwork, competition and fair play. The school helps pupils take responsibility by giving them a wide variety of duties in class and around the school. Pupils in all year groups participate in the democratic process of electing representatives to the well-established School Council. Pupils from Year 4 have regular paired reading times with the reception class and pupils in Year 6 act as infant monitors. This fosters mixed age relationships very well.
- 60 Peer mediators have been trained to resolve conflicts. School productions help pupils develop their social skills when working with large numbers of people and the Year 5 tea dance for the elderly helps pupils develop their organisational and leadership skills. Residential visits for both Year 5 and Year 6 are a very good opportunity for social development.
- 61 The school teaches pupils to appreciate a variety of cultural traditions through a good range of curricular activities. Positive contributions particularly come from history, geography, religious education, physical education, art and music. The youngest pupils have participated in maypole dancing and country dancing. The recent visit of the Birmingham Royal Ballet Company for a dance workshop and subsequent visit to the theatre gave pupils in Years 3 and 4 enriching cultural experiences.
- 62 Extra curricular activities such as choir, drumming club, art club and cricket club all make good contributions to cultural development. Pupils are given good opportunities to participate in cultural enterprises such as the 'Young Musician of the Year' and 'Expressive Artist of the Year' school events. Multi cultural education is satisfactory but is not as richly developed as other aspects of cultural provision.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils. Staff know pupils very well but do not always use assessment information effectively to help pupils know what they need to do to improve.

- 63 The school ensures the health safety and care of all pupils, doing all that reasonably can be done to protect them from harm. The

youngest pupils are well looked after on the playground by older pupils. This has created a friendly, caring school community.

- 64 The head teacher, teachers and support staff know their pupils very well, are well aware of their various needs and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Pupils generally feel that they are cared for and have confidence in staff for advice and support. The school takes particular care of pupils with medical problems or difficult home circumstances. Child protection procedures are in place and the curriculum is used to help pupils protect themselves, for example through the contribution of the police. The school pays particular attention to the promotion of healthy and safe living. It has a strong personal and social education programme which includes use of the 'Plymouth Life Education Centre' caravan. The recent 'health week' emphasised healthy eating.
- 65 The school has good effective measures to promote, monitor and improve attendance. The school works very closely with the education welfare officer to raise levels of attendance for individuals.
- 66 The school has very effective measures to promote and monitor good behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. All staff consistently use stickers, team points, cups and certificates to encourage good behaviour and these are appreciated by pupils. Most teachers have high expectations of discipline and good behaviour and minimise disruption through their skilful handling of pupils in lessons. Where pupils become involved in disputes with each other on the playground, the peer mediation system encourages resolution. A high profile is given to intolerance of bullying and this is well communicated to pupils through assemblies, personal and social education and special events, such as a visiting drama presentation. The head teacher monitors serious incidents of misbehaviour, keeps the governing body well informed and is proactive in considering ways of further reducing such incidents.
- 67 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school is keen to make all pupils feel a valued part of the school family and celebrates far more than solely academic achievement. It greatly values pupils' achievements for effort, good attitudes and behaviour and also pupils' successes outside school. The school community celebrates all of these achievements through praise and the comprehensive reward system.
- 68 The school has established good procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. In other subjects, arrangements are not yet as thorough. This issue is a school development priority.
- 69 A range of appropriate tests and assessments are used effectively to measure pupils' progress in the reception class and in English and mathematics. The school makes very good use of this information, analysing it carefully to establish the level of attainment of individual pupils and to look for any patterns of differences between boys' and girls' achievement. The results of this analysis are used to set targets for improvement for each class, which are then checked throughout the year. Currently, the progress of summer

born pupils in the infants and the few gifted/talented pupils is being followed but these are recent initiatives.

70 Assessment is used effectively to support curriculum planning for reception pupils but not always in other classes. This means that more able pupils in the infants and juniors are sometimes given work that is too easy.

71 Pupils are beginning to be involved in assessing their own learning and how to improve. In the juniors, pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy is recorded in the front of their exercise books. Year 6 pupils talk positively about the learning they have marked as being completed. However in Years 3-5, these individual targets have less effect on helping pupils because they are not regularly reviewed and kept up to date.

72 Class teachers and assistants work well together to assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are kept up to date and used effectively to set targets for learning, to record progress and the involvement of outside specialists. As well as annual reviews, more frequent meetings are held to share information with parents and discuss progress and further support.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Parents are very supportive of the school and are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves.

73 Parents find the school approachable and feel encouraged to be involved. A very small number of parents expressed some concerns. None of these concerns were justified, as there is a very good range of extra curricular activities; liaison with parents is good; the amount of homework is appropriate; and, information on each child's progress is good.

74 The school's links with parents are effective as evidenced by the high degree of satisfaction expressed by parents both in the parents' meeting, in the questionnaire and during the inspection. The quality of information provided by the school is good. There are very regular newsletters for parents that provide helpful and relevant general information.

75 Parents are well informed about their child's progress in the annual written report. These reports are of a high quality and make clear to parents what their children can do and what they need to do to improve. There are two formal opportunities for parents to meet teachers to discuss their child's progress. In addition, the school has an open door policy and good informal opportunities exist for parents to speak to teachers. For example in the reception class and in Year 1, parents have a good opportunity to exchange information with the class teacher when they bring their child into the school. There are limited opportunities for parents to be informed about the curriculum.

76 Parents make a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. Parents' involvement in the life and work of the school is encouraged, and makes a good start with the induction process.

Parents often provide effective help with special events, such as the art week or school trips, but very few parents are able to help in classrooms regularly. There is a very active parent teacher association that raises funds to support pupils' learning.

- 77 The school makes a great effort to work closely with parents and consults them every year as part of the school development plan process. The school is ready to listen to parents and takes action where appropriate. For example after parents met with governors, the school changed its way of telling parents about their child's behavioural problems.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The headteacher provides very good leadership. Co-ordinators are not yet fully effective in developing teaching and pupils' learning. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have good control of finances. All partners are committed to raising standards higher and there are clear and realistic plans to do so.

- 78 The school is very well led by the dedicated and committed headteacher supported by an effective governing body and management team. Together, they have successfully created a friendly climate in which pupils, parents and staff feel valued, appreciated and welcomed. In addition, they have set themselves and pupils challenging targets to raise standards higher, by committing themselves to achieve the Basic Skills Primary Quality Mark.

- 79 However, leadership and management have not been effective in ensuring more able pupils reach the higher levels in national tests in English, mathematics and science for seven-years-old and in writing for 11-years-old. Also, not enough accurate information on pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and information and communication technology is readily available to inform teachers' planning and let pupils know what they need to do to improve further.

- 80 The headteacher and deputy work effectively together as they have a long established professional relationship and make the best use of each other's strengths. The deputy sets a very good example as lead teacher and plays an important role in ensuring the school runs as an orderly community.

- 81 The senior management team of headteacher, deputy, literacy co-ordinator and special educational needs co-ordinator meet fortnightly and follow an agenda linked to the annual school improvement cycle. This has been most effective in ensuring that assessment analysis and performance management are fully integrated into development planning and training programmes for staff and governors.

- 82 The team of special educational needs co-ordinator, assistant and teacher from the local academic council of partner schools is particularly effective in managing good support and provision for low attaining pupils.

- 83 Staff with management responsibilities have a clear idea on what needs to be done to improve their subjects and aspects. The focus is

clearly and unequivocally directed at raising achievement by developing teaching and providing a rich, varied, relevant and well-resourced curriculum. Key co-ordinators have been trained in school evaluation based on first-hand observation of teaching and pupils' learning but, as yet, only the headteacher and deputy have carried these out. Plans are in place for other co-ordinators to benefit from this training and begin to develop teaching and pupils' learning more effectively in their subjects.

- 84 The long- term absence of the mathematics and geography co-ordinator is temporarily being covered by the headteacher. However, this places additional pressure on his time and he has not always been able to provide as effective support as he would have liked for these subjects. More permanent arrangements are planned from this September when these responsibilities will be shared by other staff.
- 85 The governing body operates with an efficient committee structure. Nearly all requirements are fulfilled and the minor shortcomings are being tackled. They are particularly adept at managing finances to ensure that educational priorities are sufficiently funded. Governors consult widely before shaping the direction of the school, using annual questionnaires for staff, parents and pupils. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and keep the headteacher accountable.
- 86 Leadership and management are generally effective at monitoring and evaluating performance in English and mathematics but are aware that processes need to be more focused on the progress of individual pupils and their contribution to the targets for improvement of year groups and the school. This is especially important in tackling the under-achievement of more able pupils.
- 87 Performance management is coming to the end of the second cycle and has been most effective in helping staff develop their management roles but has been less successful in measuring the effects of changes to their teaching on pupils' achievement, particularly the more able.
- 88 Other staff have benefited from discussions with senior managers and have undertaken appropriate training as a result, particularly in supporting literacy, the use of new technologies and behaviour management. The successful award of the national 'Investors in People' standard confirms the school's commitment to staff development and shared values.
- 89 The school's development plan comprises a detailed improvement plan for the current year and a challenging four-year overview of the future. There is a strong and well-reasoned statement of intent and plans clearly show what needs to be done to raise standards further. All partners in the school community, governors, staff, parents and pupils, are involved in the review and discussions of perceived strengths and weaknesses as part of the annual performance cycle. Their views are considered along side a detailed and thorough analysis of assessment information to identify priorities that need tackling. There is a climate in the school where staff are keen to discuss openly what needs to be done to improve teaching and pupils' learning and they have the capability to do so.

- 90 Financial planning is well controlled and administered, confirmed by the external audit in March this year; the few recommendations have been fully implemented. Specific funds are appropriately targeted, such as in support of pupils with special educational needs and staff training. The projected under-spend in this year's budget was very small but subsequent revision gives a more healthy reserve of around £8,000.
- 91 Assistants are deployed effectively and are fully involved in the life of the school, being particularly helpful in support of low attaining pupils and those with emotional and behaviour difficulties. Induction of new staff, including the recently qualified teacher, is very well organised with effective support provided by an experienced member of staff.
- 92 The school is beginning to make more use of new technologies as staff become more confident and better equipment and resources are available. Teachers make good use of new technologies to support their lesson preparation and in the production of learning resources. The recording and analysis of assessment information are helping teachers track the progress of individuals more efficiently.
- 93 There has been some reduction in the amount of administration required in the school but there is still some duplication in the request for information from outside agencies. In particular, the headteacher finds that evaluation and interpretation of information about the school's performance are not sufficiently detailed or specific to be helpful.
- 94 The school is well looked after by the site manager and cleaning staff. The new computer suite is being developed appropriately and used effectively. The library is satisfactory but is rather small and is not used much for private study. The grounds are extensive, well maintained and include a flat, grassed area, two paved playgrounds and a wild area and attractive gardens. These facilities are very well used in support of pupils' learning. The outdoor play area for the reception class is small and needs improvement.
- 95 Resources are generally of good quality and sufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and of the youngest children in the reception class. There are shortcomings in the range of fiction books outside of reading schemes and in the quantity of musical instruments.
- 96 The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value when making major spending decisions, such as increasing support from assistants and developing the new computer suite. They endeavour to collect and compare information on alternatives and find out from other schools what is most effective and gives the best value.
- 97 Taking into account the average attainment of pupils on entry, the maturity and above average standards achieved by 11-year-olds as a result of the generally good teaching they receive, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and deputy should:

1. Raise the achievement of more able pupils in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics in the infants and in writing in the juniors by
 - providing appropriately challenging activities suitable to the rate, stage and style of learning of these pupils;
 - helping all teachers, and those in the infants particularly, to develop teaching methods that inspire higher attaining pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in support of their learning in all subjects..(Paras: 1, 4, 5, 7, 11 - 15, 34, 35, 38, 43, 47, 79, 105, 108, 110-112, 114, 124, 125, 131, 132)

2. Develop assessment procedures, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics, and use the information collected more effectively to
 - identify when work is not at an appropriate level in lessons;
 - diagnose and tackle individual and common weaknesses in pupils' learning;
 - plan appropriate activities to tackle these shortcomings.(Paras: 40, 68, 70, 79, 127, 136, 149, 155, 161, 174, 179, 184)

3. Establish more effective ways of checking the quality of teaching and developing pupils' learning in subjects other than English and mathematics by
 - building on the experience and training of key staff to help other co-ordinators acquire similar skills;
 - drawing up and implementing a programme of checking developments in all subjects;
 - including ways of tackling identified shortcomings in the school's improvement plan.(Paras: 87, 129, 143, 149, 155, 161, 169, 174, 179, 184)

The governing body may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan:

Study skills (Paras: 5, 41, 43, 109, 119, 160)

Teaching time in the juniors (Para: 45)

Music instruments and fiction books (Paras: 95, 117, 171)

Outdoor play area for reception pupils (Paras: 94, 98)

Computers in classroom (Para: 168)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	20	10	1	0	0
%	0	28	47	23	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

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)	NA	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of	5

leaving	
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Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.9
National comparative data	93.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	15
	Girls	10	10	12
	Total	21	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (86)	76 (82)	93 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	10	11	14
	Total	24	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (89)	83 (96)	100 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	15	17
	Girls	11	9	12
	Total	27	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (83)	73 (93)	88 (90)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	16
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	25	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (83)	79 (80)	82 (77)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black - Caribbean heritage	0
Black - African heritage	0
Black - other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	203

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	1	0

Any other minority ethnic group	0
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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)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	29.1

Education support staff: YR - Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	NA
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	NA
Total number of education support staff	NA
Total aggregate hours worked per week	NA
Number of pupils per FTE adult	NA

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Other minority ethnic groups	0	0
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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	2001/02
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	£
Total income	457,996
Total expenditure	469,543
Expenditure per pupil	2,366
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,800
Balance carried forward to next year	11,599

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	62	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	63	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	77	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	74	6	3	1
The teaching is good.	62	53	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	57	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	45	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	46	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	46	57	10	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	54	55	4	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	52	1	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	51	17	0	6

**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

98 Since the previous inspection, there have been considerable improvements in the provision for the 22 children in the reception class when the curriculum was found to be unsatisfactory. Children now experience a rich and varied range of learning opportunities across a well-planned and very well organised curriculum. The overall very good teaching and improvement in the use of assistants and resources are having a positive effect on children's learning. The lack of a safer, attractive and better-developed outside play area is still an outstanding issue and limits learning opportunities for children. Most four-year-olds enter reception with average skills in personal, social and emotional areas of development, mathematics and language and literacy, confirmed by initial assessment. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children achieve well and attain all of the early learning goals set out for this stage. This good achievement is despite most of the class experiencing just two terms of reception teaching due to their birth dates being in the summer. As a result, a minority of the youngest children does not reach the early learning goals and need to continue working on aspects of each area as they progress into Year 1.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

99 Nearly all children enter the reception class with average skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave, they are achieving the early learning goals in this area. This good achievement is a reflection of the positive learning environment in the class. The teacher, supported by the classroom assistant, has developed well-established routines and a welcoming atmosphere, ensuring that children settle in quickly, are keen to learn and develop confidence. They are interested and excited by the activities provided. They are able to work together well in small groups, whether discussing a train journey story by sharing a toy train set or re-enacting a train journey in the outside area using pop-up tents. The adults, through the positive role models they provide, ensure that the children develop respect for each other and for different groups in society. During a story about the Masai from Africa, a child commented on the black faces of the children. The teacher, briefly and sensitively, was able to emphasise notions of difference and how it made our world more interesting. Children develop a good level of independence during their time in class, responding well to established routines and high adults' expectations.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

100 By the time they leave the reception class, most of the children have achieved the early learning goals in this area. They particularly enjoy listening to stories and can pay attention for ten minutes or more during these times. They interact well with each other in speaking and listening, such as when discussing what their puppets are going to say or what job they will have on the play train, a guard or the driver. They are comfortable talking one to

one with adults and are able to explain, for example how they use their reading folders and what is their latest news. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are well used by the teacher for linking what is taught in reception to Year 1. Children are introduced to using sounds and how they relate to building words. They readily use this knowledge of phonics to help them in their reading. They are also able to read an increasing number of key words and show an understanding of other ways of helping make sense of text, such as using clues from book illustrations. The best readers are able to check what they have read makes sense and draw on their increasing knowledge of language and literacy to predict what will happen next. Many children are supported at home with their reading, parents recording in the home school diary supportive comments, and they achieve well. A minority of the youngest children does not achieve key aspects of this area such as, breaking words down into identifiable sounds, increasing their knowledge of common words and reading simple sentences independently. The teacher keeps very good records of children's achievements and uses these effectively to help guide the children on to the next steps. Good examples of this are in the phonics records kept and the samples of children's writing that identify what the children can do and what they need to concentrate on next. The examples of children's writing show clearly how they have moved on from making marks on paper to writing recognisable sentences in just a matter of months for many. The teacher has identified ways of improving children's learning further in this area, for example by introducing group reading into literacy sessions. This helps children prepare for more formal literacy lessons in Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

101 Challenging teaching in this area of learning means that by the end of the reception class most children achieve the early learning goals and have begun to work on the early stages of the National Curriculum. All children enjoy learning and thinking mathematically and are familiar with number activities linked to class themes, such as using a dice to choose the number of passengers to board the train. Most can count objects up to ten, some can count to twenty and beyond. They use mathematical language confidently, grouping sets of objects and identifying 'more or less' on a graph of the different kinds of transport they have used. Most children can recognise and draw regular shapes, such as triangles, circles and squares. They are effectively encouraged to develop their mathematical thinking when engaged in other activities, for example counting the number of children present at the start of the day and how many are absent. They know and enjoy singing counting songs and rhymes that staff frequently introduce to round off sessions in an enjoyable fashion.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

102 Children enter reception class with a basic general knowledge. They extend this knowledge by learning more about where they live and the places they can visit, such as a wildlife park. They learn about the different kinds of jobs their parents and other adults do. Visitors help the children gain a deeper understanding, as have policemen, firemen and a photographer. A parent, who dressed up as 'Bob the Builder', and the subsequent reading of a book led the children on

to a discussion about the different parts of a house. A mother with a new baby visited, causing much discussion about birthdays. A birthday chart helps children to develop a concept of time passing. Effective use is made of the school grounds and local area as groups of children often explore and investigate the natural world. The school has a well-designed and safe wild life area, enabling children to recognise the changing face of nature over the year. Children have regular opportunities to use new technologies, particularly now that the new computer suite is operating. They also use telephones in role-play. These experiences help children to develop a good awareness of their world and, as a consequence, nearly all reach the early learning goals in this area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

103 Although the outdoor area is small, staff make efficient use of the available space to give children opportunities to develop their awareness of each other and control their movements when playing on large equipment and wheeled toys. Good use is also made of the adjacent field in fine weather, where children have the open space to run and play safely. They also have regular set times in the school hall and develop good co-ordination by handling small equipment, such as balls and bean bags. In the classroom, there are many activities where children develop control and precision when using scissors, pencils and paint brushes. There are also a good range of games and toys requiring fine movements, such as jigsaws and construction toys. Children move around the classroom in an orderly fashion, showing due care and attention. They also have an appropriate awareness of the need for hygiene, particularly after using the toilet and before eating. As a result of these activities, nearly all children reach the early learning goals in physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

104 Children enjoy a rich and stimulating environment where the results of their creative work are attractively displayed and celebrated, such as the collage of undersea creatures. They experience handling a range of different material, including clay, dough, cloth, paper, paint, junk, which they use to create models and pictures. They sing familiar songs with enthusiasm and make music with pitched and un-tuned percussion instruments. As part of their physical development, they take part in music and movement and also have many opportunities for playing creatively with puppets and in the role-play areas, for example currently including a travel agency. Much of their creative work is based on interesting and well-planned topics covering other areas of learning. In this way their learning is reinforced in an enjoyable way and they achieve well. Consequently, nearly all reach the early learning goal in this area.

ENGLISH

105 Standards in English are the same as in the previous inspection for pupils aged 11 but have fallen for seven-years-olds to below average. This is mainly because not enough more able younger pupils reach the higher level three in reading and writing. While older pupils make good progress in reading, the more able still

underachieve in writing. Provisional national tests results for 2002 reflect these inspection findings.

106 Pupils learn an appropriate range of new words in the infants because teachers ensure the correct vocabulary is introduced when new ideas are being presented, not only in English but in other subjects. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use these words in paired, group or class discussions. By Year 2, many pupils are not very good listeners, often interrupting or becoming inattentive as others try to explain their ideas. As a result, standards in speaking and listening are below average. Summer born pupils entering Year 1 quickly catch up and their levels of attainment match those of their class by the time they start Year 2.

107 Overall, pupils make good progress in the juniors as discussion has an important place in many lessons. In Year 4 and Year 6 particularly, pairs and small groups are frequently asked to develop ideas and then feedback to the class, as did younger pupils when deciding the purpose of different texts. 11-year-olds are confident communicators, putting forward their views and responding to others with questions and well-argued points. Standards, as a consequence, are above average.

108 The early stages of reading are introduced systematically and thoroughly and pupils in the infants recognise and read correctly an appropriate range of basic words and phrases. Good support from home also contributes positively to pupils' progress in reading. Nearly all read at a level expected for their age but few are acquiring more advanced skills as they do not read a wide enough range of fiction or confidently use books to locate information. Therefore, standards in reading for seven-year-olds are below average.

109 In the juniors, pupils acquire fluency and accuracy, employing a range of strategies to establish meaning. They enjoy talking about books they have read and nearly all are able to recap and explain how plots and characters develop. 11-year-olds are adept at identifying key points when putting forward their opinions about what they have read. However, while older pupils are able to find information from a range of print sources, skimming and scanning texts, they do not use these skills often in personal study. However, standards in reading for Year 6 are above average.

110 Standards in writing are below average for both seven and 11-year-olds. The younger pupils are able to construct simple sentences accurately but they are not encouraged sufficiently to develop their own ideas when writing for different purposes and audiences. Much of their writing is in response to worksheet exercises and lacks interest and variety. In the juniors, there is still an overemphasis on structured exercises but more opportunities in some classes to use writing to communicate views and findings in other subjects. In Year 6, pupils wrote enthusiastically in diaries about their recent residential experience. However, generally pupils do not find writing an easy form of communication.

111 Pupils generally know how to write neatly and legibly with an appropriate style, as they do when completing handwriting exercises. However, standards vary considerably throughout the school when they

are writing freely. On too many occasions, written work is poorly presented and older pupils, particularly in Year 5, do not take sufficient care.

- 112 Overall, teaching of English is good, with the stronger teaching in the juniors. Two thirds of the teaching was good or better and on one occasion unsatisfactory. Generally, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy strategy and, as a consequence, place a strong emphasis on helping pupils acquire the essential basic skills in reading and writing. The general weakness concerns the lack of opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to develop and extend these skills when working on ideas of their own. Too much work is based around exercises and pitched at a level for the majority of the class. Pupils are generally conscientious but are not motivated by these activities and there is little evidence of enjoyment and interest shown. This is particularly evident in written work that is generally confined to exercise books with little being displayed around classrooms, apart from in Years 1, Year 3 and Year 6.
- 113 A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the importance given to extending pupils' knowledge and use of new words. There is also an appropriate focus on sentence construction, grammar and punctuation. In a Year 3 lesson on using direct speech, pupils quickly grasped how they could make stories they were preparing to read to younger class more interesting in this way.
- 114 When not enough thought is given to planning activities to ensure new ideas build easily on previous learning, pupils become confused. In some cases, too much time is taken going over the same points rather than breaking the learning down into more manageable steps. This happened in a Year 5 lesson on rewriting traditional stories in different styles. So much time was spent on comparing two texts that only just over 10 minutes was left for pupils to compose their own versions. In the class session, many pupils lost interest and a few behaved inappropriately.
- 115 Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in class and in small groups. While they often initially find work hard, the help and guidance from teachers and assistants effectively enables them to complete tasks and they generally make good progress. This was evident in a Year 1 support group consolidating pupils' understanding and use of vowel sounds. The assistant made the short session interesting by the use of a puppet 'Jake' and effectively encouraged individuals to say and write letter sounds correctly.
- 116 The subject is managed very well by the reception teacher. She is very aware of the strengths and shortcomings in teaching and pupils' learning. The underachievement in writing is a development priority. She recognises that teachers do not use assessment information from tests and their everyday checking of pupils' progress effectively to plan more appropriate activities to tackle this issue. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons and support the development of teaching and pupils' learning to any degree.
- 117 New technologies are beginning to be used more, especially word processing and the internet, in developing pupils' communication

skills but the potential for extending their study and research skills has not yet been fully exploited. Resources are generally good but the range and quality of fiction books, outside of reading schemes, is limited. The library is small and not used extensively for personal study.

MATHEMATICS

- 118 Standards in mathematics for seven-year-olds are around the national average. Satisfactory progress has been made in raising the attainment of seven-year-olds since the previous inspection in 1997 when standards were average. However, teachers do not expect enough of more able pupils and some underachieve. Standards for 11-year-olds are now above average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were average.
- 119 Generally, pupils achieve well throughout the school but their independent learning skills and understanding of what they should do next to improve their own learning remain underdeveloped. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, benefiting from the individual and small group support they receive, especially from assistants, who are deployed well in lessons. The few summer born pupils starting Year 1 with below average attainment catch up by the time they start Year 2.
- 120 By the age of seven, most pupils can count from 1 to 100 and recall addition facts to 10. Their recall and understanding of subtraction facts are however much less secure. Most pupils can add two 2-digit numbers but the majority of pupils use simple methods of counting in ones to do so and this hinders their speed and progress when trying to calculate mentally. Most pupils can tell whether numbers are odd or even and order numbers by their value. Many can tell the time using 'o'clock' and 'half past' and use measuring instruments accurately. Most pupils recognise and understand coin values and can carry out calculations using money. Two and three-dimensional shapes are recognised but not always named correctly. More able pupils can collect and interpret data using block graphs, Carroll and Venn diagrams
- 121 Pupils in Year 6 use a range of strategies when carrying out mental calculations. They use written methods competently to solve problems requiring addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They convert fractions to decimals and understand percentages. Most recognise reflective and rotational symmetry. Higher attaining pupils are able to accurately plot rotations of geometric shapes using all four quadrants. They name regular and irregular two and three-dimensional shapes and can describe some of their properties. They have a sound understanding of perimeter and area. Most pupils competently collect, organise and interpret data using appropriate graphical representation.
- 122 The quality of teaching and pupils' learning varies from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. In the five lessons observed, teaching was very good in two, good in one and satisfactory in the others. The teaching in Year 1 provides a good start for pupils and the very good teaching in Year 6 challenges

pupils of all abilities so that they attain high standards and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- 123 In the very good lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics and plan carefully for the needs of all pupils, building in sufficient challenge for more able pupils. As a result, pupils have the skills to enjoy thinking mathematical and work hard to complete activities. In a Year 6 lesson on capacity, the teacher developed questions in the introductory part of the lesson that became progressively harder. All pupils were encouraged to join in, knowing that if they made mistakes they would be supported to understand where they had gone wrong.
- 124 Where teachers' knowledge and understanding is less secure, they do not use a sufficient range of strategies and methods to match the needs of all abilities in the class. Pupils who learn at a slower rate are given effective support from assistants but more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and do not make enough progress. In a Year 2 lesson on number problems, more able pupils were not encouraged to use strategies other than counting on in ones when completing additions and found the work too easy. Most pupils can explain their mathematical thinking but do not easily use appropriate mathematical vocabulary because, although new words are explained, their use is not emphasised sufficiently by teachers.
- 125 Teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they generally apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is well established and planning is good. Identifying what is to be learnt is clearly set out in teachers' plans and shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. The oral and mental sessions are taught with pace and enthusiasm, pupils learn quickly and show good mental agility. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils counted confidently in tens from different starting points and identifying missing numbers in a number line. The main teaching activities are appropriate, although too often there is a reliance on the same activities or worksheet for a wide range of abilities, giving little opportunity for extension or enrichment. The end of sessions is used to celebrate successes but sometimes fails to focus sufficiently on what pupils have understood and what they need to go on to do next.
- 126 Numeracy sessions are sometimes extended to fit into longer time periods. Where this is the case the sessions lack pace and pupils' attention declines, as happened in a Year 3 lesson when the whole session lasted 70 minutes. In other cases, for example in a Year 4 class, the lesson was brought to a close and the remaining 10 minutes used effectively for an additional mental mathematics session, resulting in sustained attention and enthusiastic responses from pupils.
- 127 Standardised tests are regularly used to check pupils' progress. The information is analysed carefully and used to set class targets. Pupils' work is regularly marked for accuracy and supportive and encouraging comments are made but marking seldom provides guidance to help pupils know what they need to do to improve. For example in a Year 5 pupil's book, repeated errors were marked incorrect but support to understand the errors and provide strategies to overcome them in the future was not provided. Systems for developing

individual pupil targets are being developed but are not yet fully in place.

- 128 Mathematical skills support pupils' learning in other subjects, for instance in geography in Year 6, accurate river cross-sections were produced from first hand measurements. Information and communications technology is used appropriately to develop pupils' mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding. A programmable floor robot was used effectively in Year 1 to consolidate pupils' understanding of quarter and half turns and estimates of distance.
- 129 Mathematics is currently co-ordinated by the headteacher as an interim measure until the newly appointed co-ordinator takes over in September. There is a good range of resources, which are used effectively. In Year 1 and 2, the main things to be learnt for the year are displayed in classrooms but, throughout the school, there are few displays of pupils' work to celebrate their achievements and raise the profile of mathematics. Mathematical dictionaries are not available in the classrooms and the number of books on mathematics in the library is limited so that pupils do not generally use these to support their learning through individual study.
- 130 There is a very strong commitment from staff to improve and further develop teaching and pupils' learning in order to continue to raise standards.

SCIENCE

- 131 Overall, standards in science for seven-year-olds are below the national average and above for 11-year-olds. More able younger pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not attain as well as they could. On the other hand, older pupils are given many opportunities to extend and apply their scientific knowledge and understanding and nearly half attain above the level expected for their age. This is because of the consistently good teaching they receive in Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and on last year's national tests.
- 132 Pupils in Year 1 are given a firm foundation in scientific facts and in Year 2 they undertake an increasing range of simple investigations. However, they do not observe sufficiently carefully and too much of their recorded work is presented unsatisfactorily, making it difficult to interpret. While they are acquiring appropriate knowledge and understanding about living things, the properties of common materials and simple electrical circuits, there are few opportunities to develop these ideas and investigate further. The class is generally given the same task and more able pupils quickly finish their work and are not given enough activities to extend their scientific thinking.
- 133 Pupils make steady progress through Years 3 to 5 as the curriculum is planned to cover an appropriate range of activities and topics that introduce and develop new scientific knowledge in the right place. The school recognised that pupils were not confident in carrying out investigations systematically but, following staff training, this shortcoming has been effectively tackled. As a result, pupils aged 11 are enthusiastic about science and enjoy the very appropriate challenges they are set, confidently putting

forward ways of testing their ideas fairly. For example, pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of materials and their properties enabled them to predict accurately the time a lighted candle would burn before extinguishing in different volumes of air. Pupils with special educational needs are able to benefit fully from investigative work as they are given sensitive and appropriate support from staff and as a consequence make good progress.

134 Only one lesson of science was seen in the infants, insufficient to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching. However in the juniors, all teachers were observed and the quality of teaching overall was sound, with very good teaching in Year 6.

135 The strengths of the teaching are: the very effective planning and organisation of practical activities that enable pupils to engage fully in challenging investigations; the secure subject knowledge of the co-ordinator and his help and advice to colleagues and his Year 6 class; the teacher's careful attention to detail when guiding pupils to identify and control experimental conditions; and the application and consolidation of basic skills of literacy and numeracy seen, for example, in the Year 6 lesson on calculating the volume of air in containers from knowing how to determine the capacity of irregular shaped glass jars using water and measuring jugs.

136 While results from national tasks and tests for pupils aged seven and 11 have been analysed, not all shortcomings have been tackled. The under-performance of more able seven-year-olds has occurred over the last two years and some teachers of other age groups are still planning work that is not at the right level for higher attaining pupils. However, the school is looking at ways of making teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science more reliable so that they plan more appropriate learning activities.

137 Co-ordination of science by the deputy head is good as he has ensured the curriculum provides more opportunities for investigative work and there are sufficient resources to support practical investigations. He has been able to observe teaching in the juniors and help colleagues improve pupils' learning. However, similar support of science teaching in the infants has not yet taken place. New technologies are beginning to be used to record observations and results from scientific experiments and to research topics but not to a great degree.

ART AND DESIGN

138 During the inspection only one lesson of art could be observed. Judgements have been made based on this Year 5 lesson, an examination of displays around the school, curriculum plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. Based on this evidence, standards of work seen are as expected. This is the same as in the previous inspection for the oldest pupils in the school. No judgements were made about standards in art at the time for seven-year-olds as insufficient evidence was available.

139 All classrooms have artwork linked to topics being studied in other subjects. This gives pupils a relevant focus for their creative thinking and provides a starting point from which to develop their

own ideas. However, there is insufficient variety in the work displayed with pupils not being encouraged to experiment for themselves. In addition, pupils are introduced to a range of well-known artists, such as Andy Warhol in Year 2 and Cezanne in Year 5, to further extend their understanding of how various media can be used to create images in different styles.

140 Seven-year-olds enjoy art and design and like talking about their work. They know how to mix primary colours and use paint and crayons to create images that give different messages, as Year 2 pupils did in making scary monsters. They have experience of choosing and cutting different textured and coloured materials to make collage pictures of varying sizes.

141 11-year-olds express themselves appropriately using different media having experienced, printing, clay modelling, making mosaics and using different types of paints. When encouraged and supported, they show satisfactory observational skills in their pencil and black ink sketching. They have used pastels to produce work in the style of artists, such as Paul Klee.

142 Pupils' achievement in art varies, with some very good examples of what can be achieved when individuals are inspired and helped to acquire appropriate skills and techniques. In Year 1, a more able boy was intrigued by the shape and texture of a pineapple and produced a very detailed and colourful observational drawing. Sketchbooks have recently been introduced but are not used consistently throughout the school to help pupils develop their skills. However, where good teaching guides pupils to concentrate on refining a particular technique, they are capable of producing work of a high standard. This occurred with the headteacher and Year 5 pupils, recording observational sketches of flowers growing in the school's wild area.

143 The confidence of staff in art and design varies but they find the guidance notes provided by the co-ordinator helpful. The co-ordinator has not yet undertaken a systematic check of the quality of pupils' learning throughout the school and does not have a clear picture of where there are shortcomings in art and design. As a result, little development of teaching has taken place to tackle some teachers' insecurity and raise their expectations of what pupils' capability.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

144 During the inspection no lessons of design and technology could be observed. Judgements have been made based upon an examination of pupils' models on display and in photographs, curriculum plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. This evidence shows that standards of work seen are as expected for the age of pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection as there are more opportunities for designing and making and an appropriate range of tools and materials.

145 Pupils experience an appropriate range of designing and construction activities in Year 1 when completing tasks linked to topics, such as looking at how to make two-dimensional toys with movable joints. Seven year-olds recall with evident enjoyment making puppets from a

range of flexible materials. They found how durable their finished products were when acting out stories to develop language and imaginative skills. In this way, they are learning the importance of cutting material correctly and being careful when joining edges together to make them secure. As a result of these practical activities, most pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of design and technology for their age.

146 In the juniors, designing and making activities are again linked to topics in other subjects, helping pupils apply their newly acquired knowledge. For instance in Year 3, their understanding of mechanisms was developed through making moving monsters linked to a science project on forces and magnets. However, pupils' evaluative skills are not refined sufficiently and many of their models are not finished to a high enough standard. In Year 4, pupils designed sweet boxes, applying their mathematical understanding of three-dimensional nets. While the construction and decoration met the design brief, they were too fragile to hold much weight and not colourful enough to attract potential buyers. By 11-years-old, most pupils have appropriate craft skills for their age and make a range of products, such as four-wheeled vehicles powered by battery motors, money containers from sewing and decorating different materials and shelters as part of their residential trip to Dartmoor.

147 Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in practical designing and making activities as staff ensure they are given appropriate help to complete work and gain satisfaction for their efforts.

148 Not all staff are confident with design and technology but find national guidance, appropriately adapted by the co-ordinator, helpful. Pupils have also gained from support from the local secondary school and visits by different classes to use specialist facilities, such as Year 5 making and baking bread, have effectively extended their experiences.

149 There is little direct checking of the quality of pupils' learning and assessment procedures are not consistent throughout the school. As a result, pupils are not always aware of what they need to do to refine their designing, making and evaluative skills. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to use new technologies more to support teaching and pupils' learning.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

150 Only one lesson of geography could be seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made on this observation, discussions with pupils and examining their work, looking at curriculum plans and talking with teachers. This evidence shows that the standards in geography for seven-year-olds are as expected but for 11-year-olds are above average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards overall were average.

151 There is a good overall curriculum plan for geography that clearly identifies the main topics to be taught. Pupils are gaining a good knowledge of places and developing their map work skills

appropriately. However, understanding how places change over time and conservation issues are weaker areas of study.

- 152 Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are building their knowledge about local places and beginning to learn about the position of places in relation to each other. They make visits within the local area and talk about the shops and locate these and features, such as parks, on maps. They can plot routes to get to familiar places. They are beginning to have an understanding of places in the wider world, for example through the study of the places that a school 'Teddy Bear' has been taken to, which are located on a world map in the school hall.
- 153 In the juniors, pupils continue to develop their map work skills, and knowledge and understanding of places both near and far away, for example, through a study of a village in India in Year 4. Very good use is made of visits to develop pupils' enquiry skills. In Year 5, pupils visit the coast to study processes, which affect the beach, and in Year 6, pupils make extensive use of a visit to Dartmoor to study river processes. Very good displays related to these visits, including pupils' work, reveal above average standards of attainment
- 154 Pupils are beginning to use computers and particularly the internet to find out about places, as Year 6 pupils did when researching information about different rivers throughout the world. Work in geography contributes effectively to other subjects, especially mathematics. In a Year 3 lesson on map work, pupils developed their understanding of co-ordinates.
- 155 Geography is managed effectively by the co-ordinator, who has ensured appropriate resources are readily available. Assessment and recording of pupils' learning in geography remain the responsibility of individual class teachers and are not sufficiently rigorous or detailed to inform the next stage in pupils' learning. The co-ordinator's role in supporting staff to improve the quality of teaching in geography through checking planning and analysing pupils' work has not been developed.
- 156 Only two lessons of history could be observed during the inspection. Judgements have been made based on discussions with pupils and looking at their recorded work, talking with teachers and examining their plans. This evidence shows that standards in history are as expected. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
- 157 There is a good overall curriculum plan for history that clearly sets out the main topics to be taught and ensures pupils are gaining an appropriate knowledge and understanding of events and people in the past from a range of sources. However, pupils' experience and understanding of how history is interpreted are weaker areas of work.
- 158 Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are building a sense of chronology through an understanding of their own life and that of their immediate family. Teachers use photographs, other artefacts and personal experiences effectively to encourage pupils to make comparisons between 'then' and 'now'. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, when a visitor

described her experiences of a working holiday picking hops as a child. Children responded enthusiastically, asking questions about transport, food and games, linking this to their own lives.

- 159 Pupils in the juniors study a variety of topics that enable them to develop their sense of chronology, knowledge of people and places and ability to select and organise historical information. They are able to recall facts and make comparisons between now and the past. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils explored the differences between the way of life of rich and poor people in Tudor Britain. However, pupils are less clear about sources of evidence and interpreting information. For example, Year 6 pupils could describe aspects of the way of life in Ancient Greece, particularly education and leisure activities, but were confused about the difference between facts, myths and legends.
- 160 Pupils use computers to support their work in history, such as when the Year 2 class typed up their questions about the past in preparation for a visitor. However, the internet is under-used for research and personal study.
- 161 History is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator but she does not have an overview of the strengths and shortcomings in teaching and pupils' learning. Assessment of pupils' learning and the progress they are making remain the responsibility of individual class teachers and are not always used effectively to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- 162 Resources for history are satisfactory. In addition, good use is made of the local library and museum services and nearby historical sites. Pupils share and celebrate their achievements in history through attractive displays, for example of life in Tudor Britain in Year 4.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 163 Only one lesson of information and communication technology and pairs and individuals working in class could be seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made based on these observations, talking to pupils and looking at their recorded work, discussions with teachers and examining their plans. This evidence indicates that standards for seven-year-olds are as expected for their age and are above average for 11-year-olds. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were around the national average.
- 164 The school now has a detailed policy and a helpful scheme of work with an appropriate range and quality of resources. The setting up of a computer suite has provided the opportunity for class teaching of timetabled lessons. As a result, standards are rising. The school is implementing plans to improve facilities in the computer room and purchase additional computers for classrooms.
- 165 Year 2 pupils are able to discuss ways in which information and communication technology affects their everyday life. Most pupils can access programs from computers and retrieve, save and print their work. They use a range of appropriate software competently to help their learning. They understand how to control the movements of a floor robot by inputting instructions. They use a painting

programme creatively to produce patterns and carefully choose colours and effects. They are also able to use a word processor to write short descriptions and are beginning to use different fonts, size and colour to enhance their work.

- 166 Pupils in the juniors are developing their skills and knowledge of new technologies in interesting and relevant activities. Most pupils aged 11 are able to design and present information using a range of software, including word processors, databases, spreadsheets and presentation packages. They are able to create and print their own material combining text and pictures. For example using a presentation program, they created slides with special effects as part of a project working in the computer room at the local secondary school. Pupils also have knowledge of loading and accessing information from CD-ROM's, using the internet to search for information and sending information by e-mail.
- 167 Pupils enjoy using the computer suite and other information and communication technology equipment and have a good attitude to the subject. They are able to achieve well, especially in the juniors, because lessons are well planned and build skills progressively. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- 168 Pupils use new technologies to support their work in other parts of the curriculum, such as using a digital camera to record growth rate of plants in a Year 3 science lesson. Teachers sometimes plan work in other subjects, which enables pupils to consolidate and apply the skills they have been introduced to in the computer suite. However, the lack of computers in the classrooms limits this and insufficient use is made of the considerable number of laptops available.
- 169 Information and communication technology is managed well by the co-ordinator who has a clear idea of development priorities for the subject. She is working effectively with the headteacher, governors and staff to further improve provision. Parents have also been very supportive, raising money towards additional equipment. All teachers and assistants have completed national training at the bronze award level and are now starting the silver award training. Regular, effective assessment of pupils' progress in all year groups is made, using a detailed record linked to appropriate levels in the National Curriculum. However, the co-ordinator has not yet analysed this information to identify and tackle shortcomings in pupils' learning.

MUSIC

- 170 Only two lessons of music could be observed during the inspection, both in the juniors, and a lunchtime choir practice. No overall judgements on standards in music are possible on this limited evidence. However, based on these observations, looking at teachers' plans and discussions with staff and pupils, standards in singing are as expected throughout the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average.
- 171 Over the past year since the music co-ordinator has been in post, the provision has improved. Music has a higher profile as larger numbers have been involved in the increasing range of additional musical activities, such as the Christmas carol service, school orchestra and choir and concerts. Links with the partner secondary

school have been particularly effective, with pupils benefiting from specialist teaching and using a wide range of quality instruments; a shortcoming at Pomphlett school as there are insufficient pitched and un-tuned percussion instruments available. Some more able pupils and the few talented musicians receive instrumental tuition and make good progress.

172 Pupils generally enjoy listening to and making music. Pupils in the infants sing with enthusiasm and in tune a range of familiar songs from different cultures. They maintain the beat but are less sensitive to the dynamics. In the juniors, pupils sing expressively with careful attention to others and mostly maintain their own part. By Year 6, pupils express preference for different types and styles of music and explain why, showing an appropriate knowledge and understanding. They enjoy composing and performing, particularly when combining dance with singing. Year 6 responded very creatively to a 1970s' rendering of the Abba pop song 'Thank you for the memories' as part of a rehearsal for their leaving service.

173 Infant teachers do not find the published scheme very easy to follow as they are not music specialists. The co-ordinator is currently exploring how the scheme of work can be improved to be more supportive. In the juniors, teachers find the guidance helps them ensure that pupils have opportunities to cover the full range of musical experiences and provides useful resources, particularly recorded music, to support teaching and pupils' learning. In Year 4, the lesson introducing the class to madrigals as part of a history project on the Tudors was helped considerably by pupils being able to listen to the repeated playing of a short piece with different voice parts being emphasised each time.

174 Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are not consistent across the school and non-specialist teachers do not find it easy to identify and tackle shortcomings. The co-ordinator is able to gain an over-view of pupils' achievement from their performance in the different additional activities and clubs he runs. However, he does not have a accurate picture of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning throughout the school. This makes planning improvements difficult.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

175 During the inspection, only two games lessons and one athletics lesson could be observed. Discussions with pupils and teachers, reading pupils' diaries, photographs of outdoor activities and an examination of curriculum plans have also informed judgements in physical education. This evidence shows that standards are as expected for both seven and 11-year-olds. This is the same as in the previous inspection. By the time pupils are 11, they can all swim 25 metres and are aware of the principles of water safety.

176 The school has maintained a broad range of appropriate learning opportunities for pupils. A thriving range of extra curricular clubs is also offered at different times in the year for junior pupils enriching their experiences. A particularly notable feature for the last two years has been the links with a national ballet company. A choreographer from the company has worked with pupils across the

junior age range, raising the profile of dance and involving both girls and boys in a very positive way.

177 Year 1 pupils enjoy games lessons and concentrate well on their work. They all understand the need to warm up, activities that are modelled effectively by the teacher. Pupils put in sustained effort during their stretches, for example, and have the opportunity to improve their technique through well chosen teaching points. The good teaching in the Year 1 lesson observed had many strengths but her positive and frequent feedback was particularly helpful to pupils. This enables them develop their confidence and skills in throwing and catching skills and make good progress in their learning.

178 In Year 5 and Year 6 pupils respond well to the good and very good teaching they receive. In both the Year 5 games and Year 6 athletics lessons, pupils understood what they had to do, showed responsibility and made thoughtful approaches to their physical education work. They also respond best when there is sufficient challenge throughout the lesson. There were good examples of this in the Year 6 athletics lesson. The teacher set up activities for the pupils to improve their own personal best performances in sprinting, throwing a basketball and jumping. The measurement and recording of personal bests have also been planned in to future mathematics work and data handling using computers.

179 The co-ordinator has been very influential in leading the subject in the juniors but is not as active in the infants in developing teaching and pupils' learning. Assessment in physical education is not consistently carried out so both teachers and pupils are not always aware of what needs to be done to improve performance. The hall and adjacent grounds are well suited for a wide range of physical education activities and used effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

180 Standards in religious education for seven and 11-year-olds are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same as at the previous inspection but there has been considerable improvement in the quality of curriculum guidance and support.

181 Pupils in Year 2 can recall parts of Bible stories from the Old and New Testament and describe what happens at some of the principle Christian festivals. They know that people go to church for important family events, such as Christenings, weddings and funerals. They are aware of other world religions and have a good knowledge and understanding of some of them, such as Hinduism.

182 Pupils in Year 6 express their own views about religion after considering how well known people in the past have been affected by their personal beliefs. They appreciate that they live in a multi-cultural society and that different world religions have similarities and differences. They have a sound knowledge of Christianity and understand the importance of symbols, special places and sacred texts. They have considered their own spiritual development and how their feelings can be influenced by their life experiences.

- 183 The teaching of religious education in the juniors is generally good; insufficient lessons were seen in the infants to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and younger pupils' learning. Teachers make effective use of the recently introduced locally agreed syllabus to plan interesting lessons and, where possible, they give pupils first hand experience. In a Year 2 lessons on Hinduism, a visiting priest give the class an exciting and very informative session covering ceremonies and practices using authentic artefacts. Teachers try out different approaches to involve pupils and relate studies to their own experiences. In a Year 3 lesson on examining their personal qualities, pupils worked hard designing a T-shirt decorated with slogans that described both their positive and negative characteristics.
- 184 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, keen and has been successful in ensuring that the new locally agreed syllabus has been introduced effectively. She has benefited from attending training and contact with co-ordinators from local primary schools. She is aware that staff are not confident in assessing pupils' progress in religious education and is currently investigating ways of helping them be more thorough. As yet, she does not have an informed view of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and pupils' learning.