

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WEST COKER CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Yeovil, Somerset

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123821

Headteacher: Mr. David Foot

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Margaret Hulme  
OFSTED Inspector Number: 3609

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 May 2002

Inspection number: 196131

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Street  
West Coker  
Yeovil  
Somerset

Postcode: BA22 9AS

Telephone number: 01935 862568

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. David P. Phillips

Date of previous inspection: July 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3609	Margaret Hulme	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum Music Religious Education Special Educational Needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13450	Jennifer Madden	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1838	Beryl Pollard	Team inspector	English Art and design Design & technology Geography History	
11848	John Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology; Physical Education Equal Opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Coker Church of England VC Primary School is small village school situated in a green belt village, three miles southwest of Yeovil. The majority of children are from families who live in the village. However, there is a significant proportion that travel from Yeovil and other outlying areas. Few children are from high-income families. There are 99 pupils on roll including 14 in the Foundation Stage. Five teachers of whom one is the headteacher and one is part-time teach them in four classes. The school has grown considerably and is now using the hall as a full time classroom. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language and all are white. There are 11 per cent of pupils identified as eligible for free school meals and 22 pupils have been identified as having special educational needs which includes one with a specific statement of need. For the last three years, children's attainment on entry has been lower than the county average but this has now improved and it is broadly average. There have been a number of staff changes at the school since the last inspection. Most notably there has been a complete change of teaching staff. In addition, there have been two changes of headteacher.

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

This is a very effective school. The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership resulting in good direction for the work of the school. In this he is well supported by staff and governors. Overall, the teaching is good and this has a positive impact on children's learning and the standards achieved. Children achieve well and make good progress, which results in them attaining high standards in National Curriculum tests by the time they leave school. Overall, there are high standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design and design and technology. In the junior classes there are good standards in information and communication technology, music and religious education. Costs are high but the school offers good value for money.

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

- Children achieve well and reach high standards in several subjects and National Curriculum tests.
- The teaching is good and this has a positive impact on children's learning and the standards they achieve.
- The strong and purposeful leadership of the headteacher provides very clear direction for the work of the school and in this he is well supported by the staff and governors.
- Children have very good attitudes to school and their work and behaviour is very good.
- Staff are effective at making the school an attractive place for children to learn and are very effective at encouraging children to think and act independently and to express opinions and ideas in lessons.
- Parents have very good views of the school and are satisfied with the quality of education it provides.

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

- The cramped and restrictive accommodation makes teaching difficult.
- Procedures to improve attendance and child protection.
- The provision for Foundation Stage lacks some essential resources, which restricts the range of learning opportunities that can be provided and the lack of learning resources in some subjects is hampering teacher's planning.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since the last inspection the school has made very good improvement. Standards have been improved in several subjects. The deficiencies noted in design and technology have now been addressed. The science curriculum has been redesigned and a scheme of work developed. Work has been undertaken to ensure that the most able pupils are provided with suitably challenging activities. The facilities for information and communications technology have been transformed by the purchase of a school-wide computer network. The religious education curriculum now includes extensive work on other faiths. Children now change teaching groups for a number of lessons in order that they may benefit from specialist teaching. A more consistent scheme of work for handwriting and presentation is developing. Further development has taken place because once key issues were met the procedures were in place to assess other educational developments needed.

## 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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A*	C	A	A
Mathematics	B	C	B	B
Science	A*	A	A	A

Key	
Highest 5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C D
below average	
well below average	E

Children at the Foundation Stage have made a good start with most likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception and the more able pupils already working at the early stages of the National Curriculum. By Year 2, performance in 2001 National Curriculum tests showed that results were an improvement on the previous three years, particularly in reading. The more able children did well with a higher than average proportion reaching the higher levels in all test subjects. By the time they left school pupils attained high standards in the National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science and these were the same when compared with similar schools. Results show an improvement on the previous year, particularly in English. Good efforts to meet the needs of faster learners is recognised in the proportion of children gaining the higher levels in all three subjects with English and science well exceeding the national average. The school exceeded its statutory targets in English in 2001 but not in mathematics

Apart from tests, children achieve well from the Foundation Stage to Year 2 and by Year 6 they are achieving very well. Overall, the standards of work seen were generally typical of that expected by Year 2 and better than expected by Year 6. In several subjects children are exceeding the standards usually expected for their age and this is a big improvement since the last inspection. The high standards in art and design have been maintained since the last inspection. Standards in design and technology have been greatly improved because teachers now structure pupils' learning so that children refine their skills. Standards in information and communication technology, music and religious education have particularly improved in the classes of older children and are better than that expected for age because teachers have used their specialist skills effectively. Standards in all other subjects: geography, history and physical education are typical of that expected for the children's age. However, there are significant weaknesses in pupils' attainment in gymnastics and dance owing to the lack of indoor accommodation for physical education. The good provision for children with special educational needs results in them being well supported in lessons and the efforts of both teachers and learning support staff help them achieve as well as they can.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. They are interested in lessons and make good efforts because they want to please the teachers. However, a minority arrive late for registration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	It is very good. Children benefit from teachers' high expectations and any small instances are handled well so there is never a sign of disruption.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Staff give children confidence and they are encouraged to work and think independently. They enjoy responsibility and carry out tasks well.
Attendance	Very poor. It is very low in comparison with the national average and there are indications that some parents are not as responsible as they might be.

Children come willingly to school. They work hard and take pride in what they achieve. They take a full part in school life because they know their work is valued and self-esteem is high. The very good behaviour is a key factor in the sustained work and very good efforts. Parents and pupils agree that there is minimal bullying and any instances are dealt with quickly and effectively. The very good relationships that exist between staff and pupils have formed the foundation for learning and efforts are at least good and often very good. The school is

disappointed with the attendance rate and a number of pupils are often late for the start of the day. Although pupils' achievement is good the school considers that an improvement to attendance would make it so much better.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good. Just over half the lessons were good, about a third were very good, four were excellent and one lesson was satisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good and children are taught in a structured and rigorous way. Particular strengths include improvements to teachers' subject knowledge, very good teaching of the basic skills, effective lesson planning that has clear objectives that are often shared with children so they know what to do and what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers manage their classes very well and have high expectations of how children should behave and of what all children can achieve. The establishment of very good relationships between teachers and pupils has been a motivating force for improving learning. Plenary sessions are used particularly well to reinforce learning, make assessments of how well pupils have achieved or to introduce new work ready for the lesson next day. There were a few minor weaknesses identified which teachers quickly put right but a lack of some learning resources in some subjects hampers planning and the cramped and restrictive accommodation makes teaching hard

The good teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning. They are making very good progress at acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding, get on with their work quickly, maintain interest and make good efforts. This results in good outcomes and often, high standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The school meets the needs of all pupils well because teachers plan work with tasks that are appropriate for the majority but are modified for slower learners and extended for those who finish quickly.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Curricular opportunities are good. Provision for activities outside lessons is very good for a school of this size.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The good provision ensures appropriate good quality support for those that need it and this helps children make good progress and achieve as well as they can.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, this is good with improvements to both spiritual and cultural development since the last inspection. Collective worship promotes spiritual development well. Children know the difference between right and wrong and have a growing understanding of the need for social responsibility.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Many aspects of pupils' welfare are good but there are some aspects that are weak and need immediate attention.

The school values the contributions of parents to their children's learning and is keen that they work in partnership with the school. Parents have very good views of the school and are well satisfied with the quality of education it provides. Overall, the statutory curriculum is good but the restrictions imposed by the accommodation make it difficult for staff to provide the full range of opportunities in physical education for Years 1 to 6 and in the physical development area of learning for the Foundation Stage. Many subjects are used well to make pupils aware of their own culture as well as that of others and further development of the multicultural aspect is already identified in the school improvement plan. There is a safe environment for the children and very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and personal development. Assessment has improved and is now good. However, procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are poor and those for child protection are unsatisfactory as staff lack training and are unfamiliar with the essential information they need.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED



Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership and is effectively supported by staff whose management of their subjects and other aspects of the school is having a positive impact on standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is good. Governors are clear about their roles and responsibilities and use a number of ways to keep themselves informed. They are well organised.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is now a good understanding of the school's performance. The improved use of analyses has helped the staff to understand what works well and why. Governors take a keen interest.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources including grants and other funding provided by parents and the school does the best it can within the weaknesses identified in accommodation.

The school has sufficient teachers and support staff who are deployed appropriately but the cramped conditions of the accommodation, together with the limited facilities is poor. It makes teaching more difficult than it needs to be and restricts the range of learning opportunities that can be offered to children. The learning resources are adequate in some subjects but unsatisfactory in others, which hampers teachers planning.

The headteacher inspires staff to recognise their strengths and make the best use of them. The headteacher and governors are keen to ensure that everyone in the school has the same hopes and aspirations and the school's aims and values are reflected in all that they do. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and try hard to ensure that they carry out all their statutory responsibilities. This is generally done well but two aspects: child protection and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance; need some attention. Secure systems are in place to ensure that the financial and administrative work of school management is efficiently carried out. The school works well to the principles of best value and decisions are made with improved standards in mind.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school, are behaving well and are becoming mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Children make good progress and are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed and works closely with parents.</li> <li>• There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents would like more information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>• A few parents were concerned about whether children had enough homework.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Of the 34 inspection questionnaires returned there were seven parents who wanted more information and six who were concerned about homework but inspectors found that the range of information and the homework was at least typical of other schools. Parents' concerns mainly centred on the constraints imposed by the poor accommodation and inspectors agree with the views put forward at the parents' meeting prior to inspection.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children entered this school this year the teacher's assessments showed that their attainment is broadly average which is better than the previous three years. The teacher builds on this knowledge and skill and by the end of the Foundation Stage most children are ready to start their National Curriculum work with a few faster learners having already started it. There is just one area of learning, physical development, where the lack of some resources together with the restrictions imposed by the accommodation restricts how well children attain the early learning goals. However, the school is doing the best in can given these circumstances.
2. By Year 2, children's performance in the 2001 National Curriculum tests for writing and mathematics were above the national average and in reading they were mainly typical of that expected for their age, which is an improvement on the previous three years, particularly in reading. Teacher's assessments in science show results as close to average. The more able children did well with a higher than average proportion reaching the higher levels in all test subjects.
3. Pupils attained high standards in the 2001 National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science by the time they left school and these were the same when compared with similar schools. Results show an improvement on the previous year in all three subjects but particularly in English. The school is particularly pleased that its efforts to meet the needs of faster learners is recognised in the proportion of children gaining the higher levels in all three subjects. Those results for English and science well exceeded the national average.
4. The school exceeded its statutory targets in English in 2001 but not in mathematics. This is the reverse of what happened the previous year and staff and governors are now reviewing the situation because an analysis does not indicate that English targets were too low as was thought at first. Governors have expressed concerns that not all advice is based on what pupils can actually achieve and now intends to give stronger support to teachers' assessments. Comparisons of test results with similar schools has also made staff and governors review outcomes. Although the school accepts that National Curriculum tests results are the same when compared with similar schools this whole area is one identified for review and development within the next academic year.
5. Apart from the test results inspectors observed lessons in a range of subjects and looked at samples of work, often talking to children about what they had done. In several subjects children are exceeding the standards usually expected for their age and this is a big improvement since the last inspection.
6. Standards in English are good at Year 2 and very good by Year 6. Progress is good in all classes because children improve consistently as they move from class to class. There are particular strengths in speaking and listening, reading and writing. At Year 2, children are confident speakers who express ideas and thoughts articulately in discussion and by Year 6 they take part in high level debates expressing coherent opinions with due regard for the views of others. Children read fluently by the age of seven and use their knowledge effectively when reading to others. By age eleven reading is very good and children enjoy taking on the role of a character in a story and are skilled at inferring and deducting meaning of unusual words and

phrases from the context of the text being read. Writing is good by Year 2 when children organise their work well and remember such tasks as using adjectives effectively, punctuating and spelling correctly. By eleven, they are writing very effectively to communicate for a range of purposes. A particular strength is imaginative story writing using a wide-ranging vocabulary and grammatical skills that hold the attention of the reader. Research skills, too, are very well developed and they make good use of information from many sources, including the Internet to produce such items as topic books.

7. In mathematics, standards are typical of that expected at Year 2 and good by Year 6. Attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection and reflects the better results in the National Curriculum tests during the last two years. The main reason for this is that teachers have higher expectations of more able children. About a third of the Year 2 children attain at higher levels. Standards of children aged ten in Year 5 is particularly high and already they understand much of the work expected at secondary school level. Attainment in mental and oral skills is a strength. However, there is some weakness in some classes in handling data.
8. Standards in science have improved considerably since the last inspection when they were judged to be broadly average with very few children reaching higher than expected levels. At present, standards are typical of that expected for Year 2 pupils. About a third of the Year 2 children attain at higher levels. Standards of attainment are well above average for the majority at Year 6 and about a fifth are reaching well above average standards. As in mathematics, the improvement is mainly due to teachers giving greater attention to more able children and providing them with tasks that they find challenging thus maintaining their interest and enabling them to achieve standards compatible with their abilities. The use of scientific enquiry, particularly in applying it to life processes and living things, is good throughout the school. Older children are good at working methodically through a scientific experiment. Some of their experimental work, for example, investigating the best materials for muffling sound, is of very good quality. They demonstrate that they can work systematically, use correct methods and terminology and draw scientific conclusions based upon their findings.
9. The high standards in art and design have been maintained since the last inspection at both Year 2 and Year 6. Children use good art techniques in their work because they have been taught to use a range of media with skill and care. They are particularly good at drawing and painting. Their use of pencil techniques is particularly good and by Year 6 they have learned to use their observational skills well and draw what they actually see, for example, in using shading to give detail to hands and eyes.
10. Standards in design and technology have been greatly improved since the previous inspection since it was then judged to be a weakness in the classes of Years 3 to 6. Standards have improved because teachers now structure pupils' learning so that children refine their skills resulting in the objects they make being more sophisticated.
11. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be typical for the children's age. Now although standards for Year 2 children are typical for age by the time pupils leave school their standards are higher than that expected in most aspects of the subject. Throughout the school, children's ability at finding information and presenting it in response to topics is very good. Attainment is not as high in some other areas of control technology. For example, creating a sequence of instructions to control the movement of a computer based model.

12. Although standards in music at Year 2 are generally typical of that in other schools, by Year 6 they are higher than usually expected for this age. This is because the school now has a music specialist who is a trained musician with considerable experience in teaching the subject to this age of children. The quality of singing has improved since the last inspection. The younger children sing with confidence, are using a wider vocal range and know what to do to prevent them singing out of key. By Year 6 they put greater emphasis on breathing, dynamics and accuracy of pitch. Diction too has improved and over the last two years there has been a marked increase in the number of children now able to sing in tune. The good standards are well supported by instrumental tuition and those who are gifted are recognized and encouraged, for example, in playing the clarinet.
13. Although standards in religious education at Year 2 are generally typical of that in other schools, by Year 6 they are higher than usually expected for this age. This is because the school now has a specialist teacher who is very knowledgeable and has a wealth of expertise. This is having a positive impact on standards, particularly at Years 4, 5 and 6. Discussion sessions are used very effectively because the children express their opinions and views articulately and in being willing to listen to others understand how other views may extend their own knowledge or belief. By Year 6, children have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of the principal world faiths. They recognise unique features as well as common characteristics of several religions.
14. Standards in all other subjects: geography, history and physical education are typical of that expected for the children's age. However, there are significant weaknesses in pupils' attainment in gymnastics and dance owing to the lack of indoor accommodation for physical education. Since the children are unable to use the hall because it is used as a classroom they have no access to the equipment there and the range of learning opportunities that teachers can offer is very limited.
15. The good provision for children with special educational needs results in them being well supported in lessons and the efforts of both teachers and learning support staff help them to make good progress. The good combination of planning and support was seen to extend a child's understanding of how to use hand spans to measure length.
16. The main reason that standards are as good as they are is a combination of two factors. These are the professional knowledge and expertise of the headteacher who provides firm direction for the teaching of the curriculum, and the effective teaching of the staff, who encourage children to have very good attitudes to their work and consequently this results in the efforts that produce high standards.

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

17. Pupils' attitudes to the school are now very good, an improvement since the last inspection when they were good. The majority of parents spoken to during the inspection and in their pre-inspection responses agreed that their children enjoyed being at the school, while pupils themselves give every indication of being happy both in the classroom and during breaks. They settle quickly to the school day moving round the classroom with confidence and purpose. However, a minority of pupils has been arriving late for registration, inevitably disrupting the orderly beginning of the first session. From their first days in school, pupils are interested and willing to take part in lessons and continue to make good efforts and take pride in their work as they move through the school. This was ably demonstrated in a Year 5 art lesson where all the pupils were clear about what they wanted to achieve, taking advice, working independently and

evaluating and adapting their work. This resulted in high standards. All children take a full part in school life where their individual needs are recognised and acted upon.

18. Pupils' behaviour continues to be very good in and around the school, a factor recognised by the majority of the parents who communicated with the inspection team. Pupils benefit from the very good behaviour management and high expectations of the staff. In the classroom pupils behave very well, any small instances, often caused by excitement, being quickly dissipated by, for example, the withdrawal of a smile, and lessons are never disrupted. At playtimes and lunchtimes pupils play well together in the limited space, older pupils taking care with the younger pupils. Most are well known to each other outside school in the close-knit community. Parents and pupils agree that there is minimal bullying in the school and any instances are dealt with immediately. There has been one temporary exclusion in the reporting year.
19. Relationships in the school are very good and have remained so since the last inspection. In the classroom staff are warm and supportive, giving pupils the confidence, in a Year 6 English class, for example, to identify words they did not understand. Pupils follow the lead set by adults and listen carefully to each other taking account of others views. They co-operate well in groups and pairs and with the adults in the classroom. Pupils with special needs are an integral part of school life, having very good relationships with their peers and adults in the school.
20. Personal development in the school is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to work and think independently in the classroom. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson were estimating, finding actual and recording differences between varying lengths of ribbon. In all classes, pupils are given clear instructions, which enable them to continue independently with their work. Pupils are given the opportunity especially in Year 6 to take responsibilities, which they enjoy, especially as they have the opportunity to turn down those with which they feel uncomfortable. In all classrooms including that of the youngest pupils they tidy the classroom and take responsibility for equipment. As yet the school has no school council but is working towards it, and Year 6 pupils have recently been consulted on a number of school matters including the type of extra activities they would like to see. These included a cookery club, starting soon, a lunchtime homework club, cricket and a permanent choir.
21. Children come willingly to school but the attendance rate is very poor. It is very low in comparison with the national average and there are indications that some parents are not as responsible as they might be. At present the attendance is not affecting standards but there is a problem with punctuality and some children are missing the start of the day. The school has realised that improved attendance would make achievement so much better.

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

22. At the last inspection the quality of teaching was mainly sound with a small percentage of both unsatisfactory teaching and very good teaching. That situation is now much improved. Overall, the teaching is good and there was a significant proportion of very good teaching with four lessons that were excellent. This good teaching is having a very positive effect on children's learning and the standards they achieve.
23. Particular strengths include improvements to teachers' subject knowledge, very good teaching of the basic skills, effective lesson planning that has clear objectives that are often shared with children so they know what to do and what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers manage their classes very well and have high expectations of how children

should behave and of what all children can achieve. Plenary sessions are used particularly well to reinforce learning, make assessments of how well pupils have achieved or to introduce new work ready for the lesson next day.

24. The establishment of very good relationships between teachers and pupils has been a motivating force for improving learning. Teachers listen carefully to children who know their contributions are valued and this makes them eager to do their best work. Many children are prepared to make good and sometimes very good intellectual and creative efforts because in all classes the teachers have established a good relationship with the children
25. Teachers plan lessons effectively with clear objectives for what they wish children to learn. In the best lessons these are shared with the children who then have a clear understanding of what they have to do and what the teacher wants them to accomplish by the end of the lesson.
26. The pace of working is mainly good so lessons move on quickly, concentration is maintained and work is completed. Teachers plan lessons in ways that meet the needs of most pupils and group activities are generally appropriate for children's stage of learning. In this way the work set by teachers maintains interest and children get on with the activities they are given to do.
27. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress during lessons is generally used effectively in their planning and verbal assessment on a one-to-one basis with pupils is good. At the Foundation Stage the quality and use of on-going assessment is good. This begins with the baseline work when children enter school and the regular observations during lessons
28. The good teaching at the Foundation Stage gives children a good start towards achieving the early learning goals they need before embarking on the work of the National Curriculum. The good teamwork in this class is of particular note because the skills of the support assistant are used extremely well resulting in a most consistent approach to every activity. The teacher often makes resources herself because there is a limited range of essential items. For example, the teacher finds it more difficult to extend children's understanding that people have different views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect because the class lacks resources to raise children's awareness of ethnic diversity. Toys representing non-western cultures are non-existent. In one lesson children were learning to use maps to plan a route and since the class had no suitable floor maps the teacher had made her own which was extremely effective because it covered a large space and children easily moved Barnaby Bear from one point to another, identifying features on the map and learning how to move from one point to another. This only worked so well because the teacher had provided the most effective resource.
29. In Years 1 and 2, teaching was good in half the lessons, very good in just under half the lessons and satisfactory in one lesson. The teachers are very experienced with this age group and use their knowledge, skills and understanding well in directing, teaching, intervening and involving themselves in supporting the learning of these classes.
30. The teaching in classes 1 and 2 is made more difficult because there is a lack of appropriate furniture and suitable storage that makes the organisation of lessons effective and enables children to become independent learners by taking responsibility for finding what they need and putting the materials and equipment away. For example, some resources have to be stored in large boxes under tables covered with cloths to make the room look tidier and it is an arduous task to find them when needed. This is a poor use of teacher time and is unacceptable. The

younger children find it difficult to maintain concentration because there are few chairs and they perch on stools that are uncomfortable for any length of time and bad for posture.

31. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching is very good overall and ranged from good to excellent. In this part of the school the children have access to teaching from specialists which raises standards, particularly in music, information and communication technology and religious education. The school is keen too in bringing in expertise from outside in order to extend children's skills and understanding. For example, in the project about making a computerised interactive tour of West Coker, children recorded images of village scenes, which was the first attempt by any school in the county. With a special tripod they shot many scenes themselves but had the support of a specialist from outside school. This is now an important historical resource, which is used widely by the community.
32. Pupils with special educational needs learn effectively because of the good quality of teaching and the high level of support that they receive. Teaching assistants are guided effectively by teachers so that they know exactly what they are expected to do to help individual pupils with their learning. There is good teamwork between teachers, classroom assistants and the co-ordinator for special educational needs.
33. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and sometimes very good. All teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. Teachers plan lessons in other subjects in ways that emphasise the use of literacy and numeracy skills. This is effective in reinforcing what has been learned. Teachers have a good knowledge of how to teach basic skills.
34. A good range of methods is used in teaching. For example, the plenary or closing sessions of a lesson are used well to reflect on what has been learned and sometimes to introduce the area of work for the next lesson. When asked children can explain what they have learned and older pupils have a very good idea of how well they have achieved and whether or not they could have done better. The quality of marking is generally good and makes a significant contribution to children's learning. The best examples set clear guidance and generally encourage high standards.
35. Teachers usually make effective use of all resources available to them but in some subjects a lack of some essential equipment hampers efforts. For example, in physical education, the teaching of gymnastics is severely restricted by the inadequacy of indoor accommodation. At the Foundation Stage, children make less good progress in the physical development area of learning because they lack the climbing and balancing equipment they need outdoors.
36. Teachers use homework that relates to work undertaken in class, satisfactorily to reinforce learning and consolidate what has been learned. All classes provide homework that relates to reading and spelling but other tasks are provided too.
37. Support staff are usually well briefed and use their knowledge and expertise well to support children's learning. In all classes the teachers ensure that their support assistant has written instructions for each lesson and knows how to make assessments during the lesson. This is particularly good at the Foundation Stage where there is a very experienced classroom assistant and the teacher has established regular teamwork in supporting children as they move towards attaining the early learning goals.

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

38. Learning opportunities within and beyond the school have improved since the last inspection and are now good. All children have access to a wide range of experiences, which promote high achievement and very good personal development. Other than the provision for indoor physical education, the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Somerset Agreed Syllabus for religious education are fully met. The school has good strategies in place for teaching numeracy skills and those for teaching literacy are very good. These enable all children, including those with special educational needs and the more able, to achieve to the very best of their ability. Learning opportunities are enhanced in some subjects by the deployment of teachers with specialist skills, for example in music and religious education.
39. The curriculum provision for children with special educational needs is good. The school has adopted the new Code of Practice in respect of these children. Individual education plans, with appropriate small steps in learning, are written for all the children the school has identified as having specific learning requirements. These are regularly reviewed and updated and used very effectively to enable these children to participate fully in all learning activities. Children are well supported by classroom assistants and make good progress.
40. There is a balanced and carefully planned curriculum for reception children in the Foundation Stage. A clear policy statement identifies the aim of encouraging children to become interested and confident learners. This is carried out as far as possible but a shortage of some essential resources means that some aspects of the curriculum cannot be taught as well as the teacher would wish. For example, some of the experiences these children require to reach the learning goals in physical development.
41. There is very good provision for learning opportunities and experiences outside lessons. This is particularly commendable considering the small size of the school. These include football, cricket, rounders, netball and country dancing clubs. The school also competes against other schools in some of these sports and swimming and athletics. Educational visits relevant to the curriculum are undertaken, for instance, to Westland's Helicopter Production Plant. There is an annual residential visit for older children. For example, when they visited Beer in Devon children had the opportunity to study rock pools, caves and fossils. The school has regular school productions and joins with other schools in music events such as the Yeovil Music Spectacular. There are a number of beneficial community links, which further enhance the curriculum. For example, involvement with the local Church, the police, Guide Dogs for the Blind and village events. The school has good links with the secondary school to which children transfer at eleven and with other nearby rural schools through the Small School's Association.
42. The school makes sure that all children have equal chances to progress according to their ability and have access to relevant events outside the classroom. Provision for equality of opportunity is very good. This has improved since the last inspection particularly now the school has addressed the issue relating to suitable, more difficult tasks in lessons for the more able children. All lessons now include either a higher starting point or extension work for these children, which enable them to achieve in accordance with their ability.
43. Overall, the provision for personal development is very good. In science and physical education lessons, children learn about the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. Lessons for older children include sex education and the misuse of drugs such as alcohol and tobacco. Themes that bolster self-esteem and focus on the importance of each child in the success of the school



are regular topics in assemblies and Circle Time sessions. For example, reception children select a 'person of the week' and everyone makes a complimentary caption about that person which is mounted around a photograph of the selected child. Following its display in the classroom, the child takes it home to be shared with the family. The quality of personal development results in most children acquiring good independent attitudes towards their learning. For instance, this was seen when older children used computers with a minimum of adult supervision to improve their knowledge and understanding of Hinduism. Personal development is very well supported by the way in which the school cultivates children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills, knowledge and understanding.

44. Moral and social development is very good. Children work sensibly together, take responsibility and understand the hurtful effect thoughtless acts may have upon others. There are golden rules and class rules children have helped to formulate, which are regularly referred to and often form the theme of school worship. For instance, stories from the Bible, such as *The Good Samaritan* and *The Garden of Eden* and others, such as the story of *Androcles and the Lion* reinforce children's well-developed understanding of right and wrong. Older children share books and stories with younger ones and take responsibility for answering the telephone and taking messages. Clubs encourage teamwork and the wide range of educational trips and visits each year helps them to learn to live happily together. The school has a great deal of success in fulfilling its aim of promoting Christian values as an important element of the day-to-day life of the school.
45. The provision for spiritual and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The daily act of worship is a special occasion, rich in opportunities for children to reflect upon experiences, which develop spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. For instance, particularly good use is made of stories from the Bible to illustrate the results of right and wrong actions. The act of worship is enhanced by the opportunities for children to express their own views, to sing hymns and songs about the important qualities in life and join together in meaningful prayer. Children are given an insight into the values and beliefs for example, when they visit the local Church and write about the feelings of calm and security the visit generates and the significance of Church artefacts such as the crucifix. Children's spiritual awareness is also evident when they consider the infinity of distance and time when studying the universe.
46. Children develop cultural awareness through visits to the theatre, participation in local musical events and learning about artists such as Lowry and musicians such as Mozart. They have close connections with the community through such village groups as the elderly persons club, contribute regularly to the monthly newsletter and participate in the annual village fete. They have learnt about the history and geography of the village through their production of an interactive CD-ROM, which includes photographs, commentary and quizzes about the community in which they live. Both the French club and that for performing arts, together with opportunities to play a range of tuned instruments increase children's awareness of cultural pursuits. An understanding of the diversity of cultures is pursued through visits to such places of worship as a nearby synagogue, by learning about world religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Judaism and by finding out about the effect of war on life in other countries. The school knows that more opportunities are needed to develop a greater understanding of the multicultural nature of society and this is planned. However, in some classes, such as Foundation Stage, there are few resources to raise children's awareness of ethnic diversity.
47. The school aims to provide a stimulating environment giving the best possible opportunities for children's personal development and educational progress. It has established a firm foundation upon which to pursue these ambitions.

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

48. Overall, the school takes good care of its pupils, which is in line with the findings at the last inspection. All the staff have a very good knowledge of pupils' needs, in particular in their classrooms, and more generally across the school. There is good provision and support for those children with specific individual needs. Classroom assistants are well briefed and skilled, and deployed in such a way as to ensure all pupils are fully included in lessons and other activities. Work for all pupils is well matched to their stage of learning so all achieve some success.
49. Overall, the school provides a safe environment for pupils. Health and safety is the responsibility of the headteacher. The local authority has provided risk assessments based on information by him and he is well supported by the responsible governor who makes regular checks on the school and during a recent emergency; the local authority supported him. Pupils are well supervised on the school site during playtimes and lunchtimes and there are few accidents in the limited play areas. The school has good supplies of well-positioned first aid equipment but those staff with first aid qualifications have not had any recent training. Child protection was considered unsatisfactory at the last inspection and there has been some improvement since the school now has a brief policy in place based on local area guidelines. However, no one in the school, including the responsible person, has received full training in child protection. This is unsatisfactory and should be remedied immediately so that teachers know and understand the appropriate action to be taken.
50. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are poor. Registers are not marked in line with local guidance and are in some cases inaccurate. There is no designated person responsible for the day-to-day monitoring of attendance nor is there a consistent procedure for contacting parents and following up on pupils' absences although the headteacher does seek the help of the Education Welfare Officer.
51. The school has very good procedures in place to promote and monitor good behaviour. As a consequence of the skilful and at times inspirational teaching, the pace of lessons and the interest created by good planning pupils have little opportunity or the wish to misbehave. The emphasis is always on pupils' positive attributes, exemplified by the brief yet thoughtful 'Golden Rules' of the school and the individual class rules worked out and signed up to by pupils each year. Pupils understand the definition of bullying and are aware that the few instances that do occur should immediately be reported to an adult.
52. Pupils' personal development receives good support as it did at the last inspection and is actively promoted by the school from the Foundation Stage upwards. Each week, in each class, a pupil becomes person of the week; their qualities are discussed and celebrated. In addition, at a weekly reward assembly, a pupil from each class is awarded a small trophy for their outstanding effort. Pupils are encouraged to take part in the range of out of school activities, and older pupils are given the opportunity to increase their social skills during a residential visit. School productions, drama, music and team games with other schools all help to develop confidence and widen interests. Their work with charities such as the local Night Shelter, Mencap and Scope give them a greater understanding of the wider world and needs of others.
53. Assessment at the last inspection was satisfactory and is now good. Teachers assess children entering the school and this information pinpoints each pupil's progress towards the early

learning goals. The National Curriculum tests at Year 2 and Year 6 and assessments at Years 3, 4 and 5 are analysed to discover what works well and why. The school also uses other mathematics and reading tests to add to the bank of knowledge about pupils' achievements in those subjects. On-going assessments of how well children achieve in other subjects are a regular part of lessons and provide information for teachers planning the next lesson. Analysis of this data has resulted in giving more attention to developing and reinforcing key skills.

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

54. Those parents who contacted the inspection team before and during the inspection said they were very happy with the school. In responses to the inspection questionnaire most parents considered that their children are being taught by good teachers who expect them to work hard and as a result make good progress in a school they like and which is helping them become mature and responsible. Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with queries and most consider that the school is well led and managed, children's behaviour is good and teachers provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. They also agree that the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about their child's progress. Seven parents considered that the school was not providing the right amount of homework but inspectors disagree because evidence shows that what happens in this school is typical of other primary schools. Inspectors concur with parents' positive views.
55. The school has very effective links with parents and provides a good range of information. Before their children enter school there are informal meetings for parents where they are given information about school life and the admission process. The early assessments of what children know, understand and can do are discussed in depth with parents in addition to the regular sharing of children's work and their individual needs. This results in parents who take a keen interest in their children's work and are knowledgeable about how well they are doing. The school brochure is well written and informative, weekly newsletters keep parents widely informed about school life and curriculum plans are sent out to help parents support their children at home. The annual reports to parents meet legal requirements and provide a satisfactory range of information. Although there is no opportunity for parents to provide written comment they are able to review reports with staff at the last of the termly meetings to discuss progress. Parents are given every opportunity to talk to the headteacher and the staff informally before and after school, which they fully appreciate. Special meetings are held in March for those parents whose children are taking National Curriculum tests in Years 2 and 6. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and involved in their child's education. They sign individual education plans and keep their own copy to avoid misunderstandings. Discussions with the parents of children with special educational needs showed them to be very happy with the care, support and subsequent progress their children make.
56. The school has recently set up a community wide consultation about the lack of space in the school, which has drawn a great deal of support. Parents are particularly concerned about the lack of facilities for physical education now that the school hall has become a full-time classroom. A range of concerns about the accommodation was expressed at the parents' meeting prior to inspection.
57. The impact of parents' involvement with the school is very good. Parents help in numerous ways on a daily basis including classroom support with reading, information and communication technology and by assisting with school visits to places of interest. One parent, who is a

qualified teacher, has introduced Year 6 children to French and there are sessions each week. The parent teacher organisation raises large amounts of money for the school as well as acting as a social grouping for parents and the village. Events organised are included in the regular school column in the village magazine. The homework policy provides a clear picture for parents of what the school expects children to do and the school has recently introduced home and school liaison diaries to extend information for parents and raise their interest in how well their children read.

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

58. The leadership and management of the school is good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has a clear vision of the direction that he expects the school to take to ensure a quality education for all pupils. He is a firm and caring leader with a good level of professional knowledge and expertise and he has used these attributes effectively to develop and mould team attitudes and values so that all staff shares his understanding of what pupils can achieve. He sets a good example to others through his own teaching skills and takes particular care to ensure that all members of the school team, including the governing body, are consulted and involved in every aspect of the management of the school. In responding to the recommendations of the last report he built on the work of the previous headteacher in addressing the weaknesses identified at that time.
59. The teacher responsible for making decisions when the headteacher is absent from the school is fully supportive and effective in this role although her range of responsibilities in other areas is considerable. Co-ordinators are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and they have a clear understanding of what their work involves. As a result, their contribution is positive and supports both staff and pupil development successfully. They, and the headteacher, monitor teachers' planning of work on a regular basis and, in English and mathematics, they have had a few opportunities to observe and advise colleagues at work. They do not do this in other subjects at present although the headteacher is planning for this to happen when possible.
60. The co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs is new to this role but is gaining a good working knowledge and experience of what is involved in her particular area of responsibility. She is now more familiar with the requirements of the new Code of Practice and the policy identifies clear procedures in place to ensure that this aspect of leadership runs smoothly and effectively. She has been well supported by the local education authority in this new role and ensures that class teachers and teaching assistants are kept fully informed of what is expected for each pupil on the special educational needs list. She is unable to work with pupils on this list since she has only 40 minutes each week away from class teaching to manage her work. This is insufficient but since the headteacher has a heavy commitment to class teaching the school is considering other ways, other than him taking her class, to increase her management time. She is well able to discuss progress with the governor for special educational needs because she too works in the school. They both ensure that parents are kept fully informed of how well their children are learning. The school follows the recommendations of the new national Code of Practice and ensures that targets in pupils' individual education plans are reviewed on a regular basis.
61. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage manages her area well but there are problems associated with the accommodation and lack of equipment, which she cannot resolve. The lack of such essential areas as a cosy, welcoming book corner, construction toys and an imaginative play area restricts learning opportunities in three of the areas of learning; communication,

language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. In addition, there is no designated outdoor area for extending children's skills in physical development and since the hall cannot be used for physical activities she cannot remedy the lack of such learning opportunities easily. Although the co-ordinator tries hard to encourage children to become independent learners her task is more difficult than it needs to be because there is a great lack of the type of furniture needed that allows her to organise activities in ways that allow children to organise their own resources and keep the classroom tidy. Consequently, she and her support assistant spend their time doing what the children could do, which is an unsatisfactory use of adult time.

62. The headteacher and governors are keen to ensure that everyone in the school has the same hopes and aspirations and the school's aims and values are reflected in all that they do. Teachers have a clear understanding and expectations of what pupils of different abilities can achieve in English, mathematics and science and this is reflected in their planning of work. Teachers place considerable importance on the need to develop pupils' self esteem resulting in pupils who feel happy and comfortable about coming to school. There are secure systems in place to ensure that new staff are introduced quickly and professionally to school routines.
63. The governing body does a good job in fulfilling its responsibilities for ensuring that the school runs efficiently for the benefit of all pupils. Governors make regular and recorded visits to the school and are aware of the main strengths and weaknesses and thus are in a better position to make informed decisions. Individual governors have specific class and committee responsibilities and they carry these out successfully and with enthusiasm. They regularly report back to the fully governing body on what they have achieved and observed in classrooms and they are keen to improve their governing skills further by attending various courses suited to their specific needs.
64. The governors take their responsibilities seriously and try hard to ensure that they carry out all their statutory responsibilities. This is generally done well but two aspects: child protection and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance; are not good enough. The child protection policy has an important part missing and staff have not had training. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are poor. The attendance rate is very low in comparison with other schools and there is a problem with punctuality because some children miss the start of the day. There is too much authorised absence. Guidance about marking registers is not clear enough resulting in inconsistencies. This is unsatisfactory because registers are legal documents that must be accurate. Governors act as the headteacher's critical friend and expect to question decisions and receive explanations as to why one course of action is preferable to another. They trust the headteacher but expect accountability in return.
65. The school improvement plan is well focussed and identifies the priorities for the school. It is a key tool used by the headteacher to formally monitor his effectiveness as a head, and the effectiveness of the senior teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and subject leaders.
66. The school is making very good use of new technology although at present there is no information and communication technology suite. The school has found a way to overcome this problem by making use of all the computers in all classes during the afternoon. For example, groups of Year 6 pupils can be found working in each class and a teaching assistant moves from class to class overseeing their work. Although this works well for that particular class, it can prove distracting for the teacher who is working with a class in that same room. At times the small information technology group becomes too noisy as they work and have to be restrained

by the class teacher. New opportunities funds have been used effectively, for example, the headteacher has achieved the platinum training award and can now train other staff.

67. Secure systems are in place to ensure that the financial and administrative work of school management is efficiently carried out. This is due largely to the effective management of the office by the school secretary. All resources, specific grants and other funding are used correctly. The last official audit of the school's finances has been responded to satisfactorily. The school works well to the principles of best value. Comparisons are made with other schools to judge their own performance. The system of monitoring and evaluation allows the school to challenge what they are doing and its effectiveness. Consultation is regular with parents, children, governors and staff and competitive tendering is based on the finance policy. The finance committee is rigorous about getting best value for money on contracts but not just the cheapest option. Staff development necessitates the best nature of training.
68. The numbers, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are generally sufficient given that the headteacher has a part-time class commitment. Teachers are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to co-ordinator roles is good. Training for the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been successful in providing a structured and effective programme of learning that has a positive impact on the quality of both teaching and learning.
69. The accommodation is poor. Currently the school is operating without a school hall because it is a classroom. The absence of a hall makes physical education difficult to teach and one aspect - gymnastics - does not meet all requirements for the National Curriculum. Parents express concern that children are unable to use the expensive equipment evident in this room. At the last inspection the report criticised gymnastics because of the hall and some five years later the situation remains a problem but is now more serious because the need for a classroom has become a greater priority. There is no designated outdoor space for the Foundation Stage to involve themselves in activities related to physical development as recommended in their curriculum. There are cramped conditions in class 2 making it difficult to get to children easily and in both class 1 and class 2 there is a woeful lack of appropriate furniture thus making the storage of equipment and materials extremely difficult. For example, in class 2, cardboard boxes are covered with paper and then serve as bookshelves and several items of equipment have to be stored in large boxes under tables covered with cloths to hide their appearance. When such items are needed the teacher has to crawl under the table and empty boxes until that piece of equipment is found. This is a poor use of teacher time and is unacceptable. The teacher is commended for her hard work in trying to overcome these difficulties but not letting standards suffer. The accommodation is making the teaching harder than it needs to be. The headteacher, staff and governors are now trying to raise funds to extend the accommodation but improvements to the present classes are more urgent. The library is inadequate because it cannot house many books and it is too small for children to work in it. The lack of accommodation for children to be taught information and technology skills as a class has been mentioned earlier. Teachers are making tremendous efforts to overcome these problems.
70. Overall, the learning resources are adequate for most of school's curriculum but there are shortages in such subjects as music and religious education. The co-ordinators for these subjects have identified shortages but these are costly and it is unlikely that there can be anything other than very gradual improvements. However, they improvise, borrow or make their own in the meantime. Information and communication technology suffered until very recently as it lacked the resources needed to teach all aspects of the National Curriculum. In science there is a need for more computer software to reinforce and extend work in some

areas. Resources have improved in mathematics, particularly in respect of basic numeracy items but a shortage in calculators and a need for more computer software to support learning has been identified and ordered. As with the accommodation, the lack of essential learning resources makes the teaching harder than it needs to be.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. To improve the quality of education provided the headteacher, staff and governors should now:
- **Make improvements to the cramped and restrictive accommodation that is making the teaching difficult by:**
    - a) rationalising the way that materials and equipment are stored in all classes;
    - b) ensuring children use appropriate furniture;
    - c) reviewing the ways that the accommodation is used to determine what improvements may be made to make the teaching easier.
  - **Improve the procedures for attendance and child protection to make the care of children better by:**
    - a) providing training for staff in child protection and ensuring that the guidance in the policy makes clear the appropriate action to be taken;
    - b) ensuring there is a designated person to monitor attendance and that there is consistent marking of registers;
    - c) improving the level of authorised absence and the frequency with which some children arrive late for school.
  - **Improve the provision for the Foundation Stage by extending the range of resources that enable teachers to provide the range of learning opportunities that children need to reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning.**

### Minor issues

72. When planning their action plan governors should note the comments about learning resources, particularly in religious education and music and review priorities.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	9	15	1	0	0	0
Percentage	14	31	52	3	0	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 three percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	99
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	22

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

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	9.3
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.3
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	8	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (67)	92 (80)	100 (87)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	12	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (73)	100 (87)	92 (87)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Separate totals for boys and girls are omitted as they are below 10

### 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	9	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	13	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (75)	81 (75)	94 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A (83)	N/A (83)	N/A (92)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Separate totals for boys and girls are omitted as they are below 10

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	85
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.7
Average class size	23.75

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	107

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	238158
Total expenditure	226917
Expenditure per pupil	2388
Balance brought forward from previous year	11520

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	95
Number of questionnaires returned	34

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	52	45	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	50	9	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	12	6	6
The teaching is good.	41	59	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	62	21	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	44	0	6	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	53	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	53	12	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	41	47	3	6	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	59	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	59	6	3	6

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

Parents were very concerned about the poor accommodation and the ways in which it restricts the learning opportunities that teachers can offer to children.

## **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**

73. This year the teachers' assessments of what children know, understand and can do show that when they enter the reception year of the Foundation Stage their attainment is broadly average. Although the last three years have shown attainment on entry to be lower than the county average the improvement this year brings attainment in line with that of the previous inspection. The teacher builds upon this work in class 1 and at the time of the inspection, which was towards the end of the school year, the majority of children were on line to attain the early learning goals in all six areas of learning with the exception of some aspects of physical development. The more able children are laying the foundation for the National Curriculum. Most children are familiar with the routines of the literacy and numeracy sessions and will be ready to participate fully in these when they enter Year 1. Just a few slower learners are unlikely to reach that stage, particularly in communication, language and literacy and the mathematical area of learning. Overall, children achieve well and make good progress. Those with special educational needs are identified early and appropriate support is given so that they too make good progress towards the targets identified for them.

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

74. Children generally make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's concentration spans are often short when they start school but they soon learn to sit quietly when appropriate and because they find the tasks interesting they make good efforts. They have formed good relationships with adults and one another. Opportunities to work as part of a group or class are used well and children learn to take turns and share fairly. They understand that there are acceptable ways of behaving if the class is to work harmoniously and they tell visitors about their class code of behaviour. They know that some behaviour is right or wrong and are beginning to understand why this is so. Most children dress and undress independently and manage their personal hygiene. There is no private space allocated to attend to medical or personal needs but adults manage to do such tasks without upsetting children. The teacher experiences difficulties in helping children become independent learners. Such tasks as tidying up or selecting resources is more difficult because the class lacks the range of furniture needed to make this possible. For example, some resources are stored in boxes under tables, hidden by attractive cloths to make the area look neater when they should have shelving from which children can take them easily. There are few chairs for this class and children have to use stacking stools, which take up more space and are not good for posture. This makes it more difficult for children to develop good concentration and to move around the room.
75. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good. The teacher has a good knowledge of this area of learning and plans for its development as part of the activities. There is a consistent approach by the teacher and the support assistant so children know what an adults' response is likely to be. Good use is made of stories to emphasise the need to show tolerance and care for others and what is right and wrong behaviour. Adults are vigilant and quickly notice if any child is the cause of unhappiness in others. Such incidents are handled well by adults and help children to have a sense of what is fair. Adults are particularly good at creating a feeling of openness so that children learn from one another and each other's family experiences. They try to strengthen the impressions that children have of their own cultures and faiths. However, they find it more difficult to extend pupils' understanding that people have

different views, cultures and beliefs that need to be treated with respect. This is mainly because the class lacks resources to raise children's awareness of ethnic diversity. Such toys as black and Asian dolls, cooking equipment from other cultures and dressing up clothes representing non-western cultures are non-existent.

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

76. Towards the end of the Foundation Stage, children readily talk with others and take turns in conversation. They use both written and spoken language in their play and respond to what they have learned by relevant questions. They are mainly confident when speaking to others and show some awareness of the listener, for example, greeting visitors, using "please" and "thank you" and responding to registration politely. The majority are learning to read and use their knowledge of alphabet letter sounds when trying to read unfamiliar words. When reading together as a whole class they make good use of picture clues and some familiar words to understand the story. They know how to find the title and author. The Foundation Stage share a class with Year 1 and sometimes the text of big books, that is appropriate for the older children, is too difficult for younger ones. At such times only the more able in the Foundation Stage can tackle the text well. Children understand that print conveys meaning and when explaining meanings some pupils show a wide-ranging vocabulary. For example, when reading a book called '*Our whale watching trip*' one child explained that *marine expert* meant *sea scientist*. Children are taught how to form letters but some find difficulty maintaining concentration when they work independently at writing tasks although they do better when working in small groups such as writing in the sand.
77. The teaching of the communication, language and literacy area of learning is good. Lessons are planned in line with the early learning goals and the literacy guidance. The planning builds on previous learning. Both adults have a good understanding of how children learn which is demonstrated in the way they talk with them, the good relationships and interesting activities. The support assistant particularly makes time to listen to children and talk with them. This gives them opportunities to respond and demonstrate what they can do, raising children's self esteem. For example, when learning to write their name they used white boards where errors could easily be removed. They were confident at 'having a go' and most made good attempts although a few still had poor eye and hand co-ordination. Those more able children were well able to write their name, forming letters accurately.

### **Mathematical development**

78. Children are now at the stage where their counting is reliable and they count from any starting point. Using large cards 0-20, they put them in order successfully and count forwards and backwards. When numerals are removed, children demonstrate a good knowledge of which are missing and replace them accurately. They are learning to copy and make patterns by playing look and listen games, which necessitate clear explanations before they can be enjoyed. Small group activities give children opportunities to reinforce knowledge of symmetry by painting and drawing pictures that are symmetrical. They enjoy using mirrors to check efforts. Scrutinising children's written work showed that they have made good efforts to record predictions and outcomes about capacity and there is good use of addition and subtraction in practical activities. They have a good understanding of number sequences and more able children write numerals accurately.
79. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. There is a focus on achievement through practical activities and on using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical

ideas. Some recording of work shows that children are not ready for this because they lack the control to write and although this is not unusual for this age more time is needed to help them improve these skills before they attempt to record their efforts. The National Numeracy Strategy does not emphasise recording at this stage. However, the range of resources is somewhat limited for the teacher to provide a wider range of practical activities.

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

80. Children have many opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They learn about other people and features of the natural and man-made world. They readily talk about where they live and their families. They record days of the week and the weather. Pupils are good at using simple maps to plan a route. When the teacher made a large floor map to show the travels of Barnaby Bear, children identified a river and buildings. They enjoyed moving the bear around the map and found places on it by using their knowledge of letter sounds, for instance Trinity College. They investigate and experiment, for example finding out which torch is the brightest. They use their senses effectively to examine materials when finding those that show up in the dark. When investigating the impact of a slope on speed or using air to make things move they ask questions about why things happen and how they work. They have been introduced to technology through using the listening centre with headphones and used the mouse to control what is happening on the screen of the computer. As they work with Year 1 children they find out more about the uses of everyday technology such as using a password and explain that if the letter 'O' is typed instead of zero it will not operate. Although children make some models such as making a toy that moves they have only a very limited range of construction equipment to build and construct with a wide range of objects, adapting work where necessary. Children are learning about being history detectives and work on display showed an awareness of events in the past and present relation to the Queen's Golden Jubilee.
81. The teaching of this area of learning is good. Effective use is made of children's literacy skills to record the range of work completed and marking comments are mainly positive for good efforts. The teacher has high expectations of what children can achieve and uses her knowledge and understanding effectively when working with small groups. She is very aware that not all can work at the same speed or maintain their concentration for as long as others and modifies or extends tasks as needed. In this way every child achieves success but faster learners get more work done than others.

### **Physical development**

82. Children have opportunities to use a range of large and small equipment. They handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. There are opportunities to cut and stick and make models, use writing tools, construct with small bricks and enable children to extend their co-ordination and control. However, a lack of some essential resources makes it difficult for teachers to provide for this area of learning as well as they would wish. Children need to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when active but the space available provides only limited opportunities for healthy activity by occasionally using the main playground. There is no designated outdoor space for this age group as recommended in the curriculum and since the hall is used as a classroom the facilities there are unusable. This is unsatisfactory.
83. No lessons were seen during the inspection other than that relating to the use of small equipment as part of activities during lessons. No judgement can be made about the teaching of this area



of learning. However, discussion with the teacher confirmed that large-scale movements such as climbing over, under, through, around and between using large apparatus such as climbing and balancing equipment is not possible. The wet weather during the inspection prevented any attempts at outdoor work but photographic evidence showed that the teacher tries to provide appropriate physical challenges when working with the whole class on the playground.

### **Creative development**

84. Few activities were observed so no judgement is made about the quality of teaching but there was sufficient evidence to show that children make sound progress in their creative development. They paint and draw, make patterns, use play dough to create, make and experiment with musical instruments, move to music from a radio programme, sing and play percussion instruments. A particular strength is the close observational drawing when children learn to draw what they see and not what they think an object should look like. Emphasis is on drawing skills and they use special drawing pencils to improve their efforts. This range of drawing was good for children of this age and a few show improving talent. There are only limited opportunities for using imagination in role-play and stories because the class lacks resources. For example, children cannot always engage in imaginative and role-play based on their own first hand experiences or co-operate as part of a group to act out a story. It is frustrating to both teacher and children when ideas emerge and there is no bank of resources such as dressing up clothes or home corner equipment to which they can go for stimulation. This often results in children failing to communicate their ideas and feelings.
85. In the one lesson of creative development observed the teaching was good. Planning had built carefully on previous work and there was a clear explanation of the task. Good demonstration of such terminology as 'outline' resulted in children understanding what they had to do but despite this not all managed to keep to the rules. For example, it was important not to move the fruit so that those drawing what they saw continually looked at the same view but not everyone found it easy and picked up the fruit to take a very close look. Adults worked alongside children, making their own drawings and this interested children who made even greater efforts. The adults proved to be good role models.

### **ENGLISH**

86. Standards in English are very good in all aspects of the subject. By Year 2, many children are reaching standards higher than those typical for the age group and by Year 6 they reach standards that are well above the average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report findings. Progress is good in the infants and juniors as children improve consistently as they move from class to class.
87. By the end of Year 2, children exceed the expectations for seven year olds in speaking and listening. They are confident speakers who express their thoughts and ideas articulately as seen in discussions about their work. They listen carefully to instructions from teachers and take account of what others have said in conversations. Teachers develop these skills through tasks where children have to listen to and then write sentences dictated by adults. Many of them are already using appropriate expression when reading aloud. By the end of Year 6, children's speaking and listening skills are well above average. The eleven year olds are very articulate and can engage in high level debates as they express their opinions coherently with due regard for the views of others. They use a wide-ranging vocabulary, which has increased through studying other subjects such as science, geography and history. They are eager to participate in

discussions and their thoughtful responses to questions show their understanding of issues such as care of the environment and moral dilemmas.

88. During this inspection the reading was good by age seven and it exceeded expectations for this age group. Children read fluently and understood what they read. They have committed to memory a good store of 'key' words and they used knowledge of letter sounds when working out unfamiliar words. They understand how speech marks help the reader with expression and applied this skill effectively when reading to an audience. They are confident, articulate readers. Reading improves further and is very good by age eleven. Children read aloud, prose and poetry, fluently with very good expression. They can take on the role of characters in stories and can read on as shown by the way they are ready when their character speaks. They are encouraged to look up unfamiliar words in dictionaries and their answers to questions show secure understanding of the text. They are skilled at inferring and deducing the meaning of unusual words and phrases from the context of the passage being read and this helps fluency. Good examples of this were seen in a study of a book set in Poland during the Second World War. The very good reading helps children to carry out research for other subjects such as history and geography as they can quickly skim and scan factual books or CD-ROMs to find the relevant information. This skill helps them to work hard and fast.
89. Writing is good by age seven as it is better than average. Children organise their writing into sentences, use adjectives effectively and spelling skills develop well. They write a letter, such as that from Snow White to the Seven Dwarfs, using capitals and full stops and write stories, about a pet, using speech marks. They sound out letters as they print the words and this helps them to spell words correctly. Printing is legible and, generally, letters are correctly formed. By age eleven, children are very good writers who write for a wide variety of purposes in a legible, joined up script using correct punctuation and accurate spellings. A particular strength is the writing of stories from imagination where they make effective use of an extensive vocabulary and very good grammatical skills to hold the interest of the reader. They are very competent at carrying out research on a range of topics from books and the Internet. They make notes and organise writing in different forms for different purposes, such as lists, recipes, poetry and story plans. They produce their own topic folders providing contents, indexes, chapters and paragraphs to aid access.
90. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented as shown by the school's very good results in National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven. Literacy skills are very well developed and help to raise standards in other subjects as children use them to find out about other lifestyles, times and cultures. They use their wide vocabulary to debate social and moral issues such as childhood in Victorian times compared with now. They can read beyond the literal interpretation of text and enjoy the humour of parodies, which require a high level of understanding. Children use information and communication technology very effectively for the presentation of their work and research.
91. Children achieve such good standards because of the high quality of teaching. None of the teaching in English seen was less than good. In the class of Year 4 and 5 pupils it was very good and in the class of Year 5 and 6 it was excellent. Particular strengths include good planning and preparation for lessons where work is provided for the full range of ages and abilities and resources are carefully chosen to motivate children. Another strength is the links made across subjects where children are encouraged to practise the skills learned in literacy lessons. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and their enthusiasm maintains children's interest. A notable feature is the high expectations of teachers and the brisk pace of lessons which means children work productively to deadlines. Support staff are carefully

briefed before lessons and they make a significant contribution to the good progress made by children with special educational needs. Higher demands are made of the faster learners and their tasks are extended if they finish early. All children are included in all aspects of English. Marking of work helps children to improve as they respond to teachers' comments. Homework helps to enrich the work in class as it focuses on reading and spelling. Classrooms are orderly, discipline is very good and this helps to maintain a positive climate for learning.

92. The leadership of the subject is very good. The highly motivated co-ordinator monitors standards in English closely and is well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of evaluations targets are set and action taken. She has a clear vision of what the school does well and where improvements are needed. However, the library is inadequate. It is very small, cannot house many books and there is insufficient room for groups of children to work in it. It is used by support staff to assist small groups of slower learners but it is impossible for children to use it as individuals or in groups for sourcing information or for quiet personal study.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. Overall, standards of achievement by Year 2 pupils are typical for their age but approximately a third of the age group are doing better and reaching a higher standard. By Year 6, most children achieve high standards. This judgement is based on work in number, algebra, space, shape and measure although there is some weakness in some classes in handling data. Attainment in number, especially mental and oral skills, is a strength. For example, Year 5 children quickly and confidently reduced the fraction six-thirtieths to one-fifth, converted it to a decimal and expressed it as a percentage. Attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection and reflects the better results in the National Curriculum tests during the last two years. The main reason for this is that there is more expectation of more able children. Their tasks in lessons usually have higher starting points and more is expected of them regarding productivity, for instance, the analysis of scores to discover and explain any pattern in the results after arbitrarily rolling two dice thirty times.
94. Although the National Curriculum test results in recent years show some discrepancy between the performance of boys and girls this is mainly due to the small size of the age groups, where one child is often equivalent to 10 per cent of a test score. There is no inspection evidence to indicate any significant difference in standards between boys and girls.
95. Children with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and make good progress. For example, careful planning by the teacher and the very good quality of support by the classroom assistant enabled a child in Year 2 to make good progress in understanding how to use hand spans to measure lengths.
96. By the age of seven, almost all children have a sound knowledge of the place value of numbers to 100 and about a third of them, to 1000. Most use this knowledge quickly and confidently when adding, subtracting, doubling and halving numbers. They understand the concept of measurement and use the terms 'centimetres' and 'metres' correctly to find lengths. The majority can name common two- and three-dimensional shapes such as square and cube, rectangle and cuboid and describe the mathematical properties of some of these. They identify right angles in shapes although they do not understand '*angle*' as a measurement of turn. Skills and understanding in numeracy are applied successfully to problems, for instance, finding out the total value of coins in purses, but although answers of more than 100 pence are usually expressed correctly in pounds children are unsure about the definition of the decimal point used

in recording money in this way. Almost all children at this age know how to represent information on simple block graphs but there is a significant weakness in finding information from graphs and charts, for example, knowing how to read the half way point on a graph marked in ones, twos or tens.

97. By the age of eleven, children have a good understanding of large numbers up to and beyond a million. They use fractions, decimals and percentages confidently, particularly when expressing measurements such as centimetres, metres, kilometres, grams and kilograms. The majority have sound mental recall of multiplication tables up to ten times and use them quickly and correctly to find answers mentally to such questions as '*the remainder when 86 is divided by nine*'. Most know how to estimate and use this technique to predict an approximate answer, for instance,  $97 \times 8$ . There is a very secure knowledge at this age of two- and three-dimensional shapes, angles and symmetry. While most children know how to draw a graph that represents data and interpret such diagrams as coordinates drawn in sections involving both positive and negative numbers, there is a weakness in interpreting information from graphs, charts and tables, for example, using words such as *mode*, *mean*, *range* and *median* to describe a set of data. The standards achieved by ten-year-old children in Year 5 are particularly high. For instance, a group has already attained a number of Year 6 targets in the skill, knowledge and understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages.
98. Overall, there is good attention to the use and application of numeracy to problems and investigations. For example, Year 2 children drew lines to join pairs of numbers which added up to 100 in a 'tree diagram' and used letters through which the lines passed to find the name of the famous scientist Isaac Newton. Children in Years 4 and 5 investigated the number of trips needed for a group of people to cross a river in a boat with limited capacity. Year 6 children found out about the frequency with which numbers from two to 12 occur when two dice are rolled and the scores added together. Numeracy is also used in other subjects. For instance, in science Years 1 and 2 used metric measures to record the distance that model cars travel when propelled down a ramp. Years 4 and 5 used time and temperature in an experiment about cold and warm places and Year 6 put the results onto a graph when they found out about the best materials for muffling sounds. In history, children use numeracy when fitting important historical events into time lines. Climatic graphs are studied in geography and careful measuring used when making models in design and technology.
99. The overall quality of teaching is very good and there are no significant weaknesses. Teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy three-part lesson structure. The use of this in planning and the particular attention given to the *coming together* session towards the end of each lesson is very effective in checking to see if the children have achieved the learning objectives. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding in the way they present and discuss mathematics, for example, in a Year 6 lesson when the well structured and interesting nature of the task led to very good learning and the effective use of language associated with probability. In this class, homework is used regularly to support the work in the classroom. Teachers provide a high level of challenge and expectation of children. For instance, when Years 4 and 5 children use their knowledge of common shapes to find the names of three-dimensional shapes such as *icosahedrons*, *tetrahedrons* and *octahedrons*. The excellent teaching in this lesson promoted very high quality learning as children were encouraged to apply their prior knowledge and access sources of information independently to find answers.
100. The weakness in teaching is the inconsistency of marking, some of which is of very good quality and some of which is too superficial. For example, in some books it consists mainly of ticks and

comments such as *Well done* or *Untidy* whilst in others there are constructive comments which support learning, for example, *Now see if you can find the next two numbers in the pattern and show them to me*. In some classes, there is too much reliance on worksheets, which inhibit the development of recording skills.

101. There is evidence that recent improvements in resources, the teacher training associated with the National Numeracy Strategy and the school's focus on more demanding work for the more able children is improving standards. This is evident in the way children enthuse about mathematics lessons and the very diligent way they apply themselves to lesson activities. The leadership of the subject has improved since the last inspection. Good use is now made of tests to determine standards. Results are carefully analysed to identify areas of weakness and track the progress of children as they move through the school. However, as yet, there is no whole school method established for using individual children's test results to set targets for improvement. Resources have improved, particularly in respect of basic numeracy items such as place value aids, but a shortage in calculators has been identified and is currently being addressed, as is the need for more computer software to support learning. The subject co-ordinators are well informed about standards but there has been limited opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

## SCIENCE

102. Standards in science have improved considerably since the last inspection when they were judged to be broadly average with very few children reaching higher than expected levels. While the attainment of the majority of children in Year 2 is now typical for children of this age, the standards of more than a third are higher than this. By the end of Year 6 the attainment of the majority of children is above the expected level and approximately a fifth are attaining well above that. The improvement is mainly due to greater attention being given in lessons to more able children who now have tasks, which enable them to achieve standards compatible with their abilities. For example, in a Year 5 lesson when learning about using keys in textbooks to identify animals and plants, the more able were challenged to produce their own 'branched' keys with particular reference to nutrients and animal diets. Children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. All lesson plans have carefully planned activities to match their abilities and classroom support assistants also help them, for instance, when a group of Year 2 children, through the good quality of questioning and discussion, learnt that animals and plants need the right environment in which to grow. Although the standards of girls and boys fluctuate due to the small size of the year groups there is no significant difference in their performance.
103. Attainment in scientific enquiry, particularly in applying it to life processes and living things is good throughout the school. There is also appropriate attention given to literacy and numeracy skills. For example, speaking and listening is developed through discussion and question and answer and children learn to understand very large numbers when discovering the speed of light. The use of information and communication technology to support science is extending as resources improve. Work has begun in using sensors to explore patterns in temperature changes and to monitor light levels. Results, accounts and conclusions of experiments are also regularly recorded through computer programs. This is shown in the quiz about light compiled by older children, which is enhanced by the high quality of print, colour and layout.
104. By Year 2, children know about the importance of taking exercise and eating the right kinds of food. They sort materials like wood, paper, plastic and metal into groups based on scientific

criteria such as hardness, softness, flexibility and durability. Many can explain the meaning of properties such as transparent, translucent and opaque. All have learnt about the importance of observing carefully when carrying out an investigation, for instance, when using a magnifying glass to discover similarities and differences between insects and spiders. The majority understand how to conduct an experiment, know the meaning of fair testing and can explain that their results will not be true if this is not applied. This was applied when children were very careful to give each model exactly the same starting point in the experiment investigating how far model cars travel along the floor when set off down a ramp.

105. By Year 6, pupils know how to work methodically through a scientific experiment. Most are able to predict outcomes if an element in an experiment is changed, for instance, the pitch of sound when vibrations are increase or decreased. They have good knowledge and understanding of food chains and seed dispersal and know how to classify living things using criteria such as habitat, movement, growth and reproduction. Some of their experimental work, for example, investigating the best materials for muffling sound, finding out about salt and water solutions and whether the length of forearms depends upon height or age is of very good quality. It illustrates that they can work systematically, use correct methods and terminology and draw scientific conclusions based upon their findings.
106. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of teaching science to children of this age. They recognise the importance of practical and first hand experience and are skilled at harnessing the natural curiosity of young children in developing scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well planned; particularly in the way they include activities to match the full range of children's abilities. For instance, in the Year 6 lesson there were high expectations of the more able children to produce a week's menu with a varied, balanced and healthy diet and explain how it meets these criteria. The quality of teaching in this lesson was enhanced by the many opportunities for children to contribute to discussions and improve their literacy skills as in the lesson defining words such as *protein, carbohydrates, fibre, fats and obese*. The very good lesson ended with quick fire questioning during which the teacher assessed the level of children's learning. Very good new learning is evident in the Year 5 lesson when children found out how to use scientific keys to classify animals and plants. There was very good balance in this lesson between direct teaching and children's participation. Relationships are very secure and learning is of a high standard because children are interested and know exactly what they have to do to achieve the aims of the lesson. Teaching in the lesson with Year 2 and Year 3 children was of similar high quality. Very good use is made of the school environment to learn more about animals in their natural habitat, resources are well organised and classroom assistants well deployed to support children's learning. For instance, Year 3 children were supported effectively when finding out about the effect of light, air, water and temperature on plant growth. There was very good teaching about the importance of observing and recording accurately and the lesson is rich in opportunities for children to ask questions and discuss their findings. The teacher knows the children extremely well and uses this information very skillfully to get the best out of them.
107. The subject co-ordinator is well informed about the standards throughout the school. The role includes an overview of curriculum planning and identification of areas for development. For example, whilst most resources are adequate and in some cases good, there is a need for more computer software to reinforce and extend work in some areas. The curriculum is well planned using a nationally recommended scheme of work and assessment procedures to track children's progress are effective.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

108. Standards in both art and design and design and technology are higher than those typical for the age groups at both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained in art and design since the last inspection and have improved considerably in design and technology as this subject was judged a weakness in Years 3 to 6 at the last inspection. All children make good progress in both subjects.
109. In art and design, children have good techniques in a range of media because they have been taught to apply them with care and skill. They experience a variety of activities from stitching bookmarks and painting landscapes to collages using materials such as string and tinfoil and making clay pots and artefacts. Particular strengths are the development of pencil and line drawing and painting skills. Children in Year 1 use pencils to draw outlines of objects and by Year 6 many children display good observational skills and the use of shading to draw hands and eyes. They develop a good sense of the technique of famous artists as they first study their work and then try to reproduce their style. A good example of this was seen in Years 4 and 5 where children painted water lilies in the style of Monet. Children thought carefully about the composition of the picture, with effective guidance from the teacher, and took great pains to mix colours to get the best effect. This resulted in high quality work. Art is used very effectively across other subjects such as religious education, literacy, geography and history. Work on a topic or theme often culminates in an attractively produced folder illustrated by the children in a variety of media including computer-generated illustrations.
110. In design and technology, children are taught to plan, design, make and then evaluate the effectiveness of a range of models, many with moving parts. Standards are good because of the way in which teachers carefully structure learning so that children refine their skills and models become more sophisticated. In Year 1, children were seen making jointed figures from cards and split pins; in Year 2 they made puppets for which they chose, cut and glued fabrics to produce an especially good variety of successful puppets that were operated in different ways; in Year 5 they were seen analysing money containers to decide on the best design before making their own. By Year 6 they can design and make toys using cogs to make them move and are ready to move on to controlling models through a computer. Tools are used safely because of good training by staff.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall in both subjects; it never falls below sound and in one instance, in Years 2 and 3 it was very good in the puppet making session. This is because children are encouraged to be independent when choosing the most suitable materials and they have been taught successfully the techniques for joining together wood, paper and fabrics for design and technology and appropriate techniques a variety of art work. Lessons are planned carefully with clear objectives that highlight what children are expected to learn. These are shared with the class so that children are aware of what they need to do achieve the required standards. Staff are particularly skilled at encouraging children to think about the whole process of producing a model or a piece of art so that they are clear from the outset of what to do and how to do it. Effective questions help children to evaluate the success of their finished product and help them to explain what they would improve if doing the task again. The positive impact of the high expectations teachers is illustrated by the comment of a seven year old while making his puppet; "This'll be good when it's finished" he said and his pride showed on his face because he knew he was engaged in high quality work. All children are included in all activities and additional classroom assistants support those who have special educational needs very effectively. For example, one child was confident to display and talk about her model to the rest of the class.

112. The co-ordinators for the subject are very capable and their effectiveness is illustrated by the high standards achieved by children in both subjects. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and have a clear view about the future developments they want to carry out as a result of their evaluations. Conditions in the Year 2 and 3 classroom are cramped and storage is inadequate. This affects freedom of movement, especially in practical subjects like design and technology, where children need access to a wide range of materials. The teacher is compensating for these difficulties and not allowing them to affect standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

113. Although it was not possible to observe any lessons during this inspection there is sufficient evidence from samples of work and discussions with children to show that standards have been maintained in geography and history since the last inspection as they are still at levels typical for the age-groups at both seven and eleven. Progress is sound in both subjects in the infants and juniors.
114. In geography, discussions with Year 2 children show that they are knowledgeable about their own village and can compare it with places such as the seaside. They can describe the advantages and disadvantages of rural and urban life and have ideas about what would improve their environment such as more parks where they could ride bicycles. They have made simple maps and can explain what maps are used for. Year 6 children can discuss features of the county of Somerset and describe local industries and the rural economy. They have compared their village with one in India and can talk about the similarities and differences in children's lives between the two cultures. The folders they have produced as a result of their studies show a wide range of geographical aspects such as map work, climatic conditions and the identification of significant features such as major rivers. Children understand the ways in which the landscape and weather affect lifestyles and work patterns and they are well aware of issues such as pollution and care of the environment. They make sound progress in reading maps from simple sketch maps to ordnance survey maps with symbols and grids.
115. In history, discussions with Year 2 children show that they have remembered what they have been taught about the Romans and the Victorians. This is helped by visits to Roman sites such as Roman Bath and a Victorian factory. They can recall facts about Queen Victoria and how children lived in times past. They can talk about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes. They are beginning to gain a sense of chronology as seen in a computer game where they had to put events on a time line. Year 6 children have well developed research and information and communication technology skills which they use effectively in history topics, for example, the Tudors, to produce attractive and interesting folders. They understand the validity of firsthand evidence as opposed to secondary sources and they are aware of bias in accounts of historical events depending on the viewpoint of the author. Their sense of chronology has developed well and they can discuss recent and ancient history. They are knowledgeable about the history of their own area.
116. As no lessons were seen it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching in geography or history. However, there is evidence from teachers' planning that the National Curriculum requirements are followed and the school also uses further national guidance for lesson planning and assessments of what children have learned. Teachers are effective at reinforcing learning in other subjects and geography and history make a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children as they learn about various cultures and lifestyles



and the influence of the past on the present. These subjects also make a good vehicle for the development of literacy skills as children carry out research, write accounts of events and debate moral and social issues. Teachers arrange visits to local places of interest and the older children have the opportunity of a residential visit to carry out fieldwork. A noteworthy example of the way in which the school promotes geography and history is the production of an interactive CD of the village.

117. The co-ordinators for both subjects fulfil their duties very effectively and they contribute their ideas to the school's development plan. They have responsibility for a budget and both subjects are adequately resourced.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

118. By Year 2, children are attaining standards typical for their age and by the time they leave school at Year 6, standards are higher than usually expected. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be at expected levels. Throughout the school, finding information, adapting, refining and presenting it in response to such topics as the Victorians is a strength. However, attainment is not as high as in other areas in control technology. For instance, creating a sequence of instructions to control the movement of a computer based model.
119. Children with special educational needs make good progress in this subject. When they use computers in mathematics their learning is improved as they sort shapes into sets and, in English lessons they learn new words when they use the computer to explore what happens in an imaginary situation using a 'My World' activity.
120. By the age of seven, children know how to use technology such as tape recorders and 'listening centres' to support their learning. They know the names and functions of the main components of a computer system such as keyboard, mouse, monitor and printer. Most know how to use a menu, have sound keyboard and mouse skills and understand how to save and retrieve their work. The majority can use different styles and sizes of print, use colour and spell-checking devices and import pictures to illustrate and refine their work. For example, when finding out, which is the biggest planet in the Solar System they downloaded information about the universe from Internet sites and CD-ROMs and presented their findings in accurate and interesting ways. They use the subject well in supporting learning in other subjects, for example, in numeracy when they produce computer based graphs and charts to show favourite pets and fruits and how many times they can skip continuously.
121. By the time they leave the school, information and communication technology is an important learning tool for almost all children. They understand how to store files, use passwords, personalise and retrieve them when working at extended topics, such as aspects of Victorian life. Most are confident users, developing, and refining ideas, for example, the current work being undertaken by Year 5 and 6 children about aspects such as gods, festivals and celebrations of the Hindu faith. They understand the meaning of 'PowerPoint presentation', how to adapt information to suit a particular audience and enhance it through interesting layouts and striking illustrations.
122. The high standards in skill, knowledge and understanding in information and communication technology was recently illustrated when children produced an 'Interactive Tour of West Coker'. Children benefited from the expertise of a professional producer who introduced them to high-level technical processes such as using a digital camera, achieving continuity with

photographs of the tour and editing techniques. They developed the interactive nature of the project through a commentary and associated quizzes. They used desktop publishing to enhance the product and learnt how to work to specific criteria when deciding what to retain and what to discard. The outcome is a very praiseworthy 'virtual tour' of the village. In addition to new learning, the project gave children a great sense of achievement and an insight into commercial implications of the subject

123. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, both taken by the same teacher and linked to a long-term project in religious education presenting information about the Hindu faith. In these the quality of teaching was very good. The planning was good, there was due attention to making sure that children of all abilities worked at appropriate levels and targets were set to support pace and productivity. Most children are very interested in the project and because of the high quality of teacher pupil relationships work extremely well in groups. Although the tasks reinforce known skills, knowledge and understanding the teacher also introduces other criteria to promote new learning. For example, linking the topic to literacy through using text for a particular audience, devising layouts, which will enable the end product to be displayed in slide format and evaluating the work. There is evidence of good subject knowledge in the way questions are asked and the subject discussed. Good use is made of the classroom support assistant to support the subject. The support assistant has been well briefed and uses good techniques to encourage children to develop their ideas and confidence, for instance, in suggesting resources they might access to answer pertinent questions. The plenary session, undertaken towards the end of the lesson, was used well to assess how well children had achieved.
124. Learning resources have improved a great deal during the last two years but there is still a shortage of items needed to teach more about control technology, for instance, for children to learn how to write a program of instructions to control a screen or floor model. Good use has been made of e-mail through links with a school in France and most of the older children are able to explain when it is better than ordinary mail and the inverse of this. The inadequacy of accommodation for setting up a computer suite creates a number of problems. It means that in information and communication technology lessons children have to use resources, which are spread around the school. While the disruption this causes is balanced by children's very good behaviour and sensible attitudes, it nevertheless disturbs teaching and makes the learning tasks more difficult to support by the teacher. The co-ordinator for the subject is the headteacher who, during his two years at the school has raised the profile of this subject and used his expertise to give teachers more confidence and knowledge in teaching the subject. Expenditure for the subject has been high in recent times but this is justified by the explicit impact it is now having on children's learning in many subjects of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

125. By Year 2, standards in music are typical of that expected for age and by Year 6 standards are higher than usually expected for age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Primarily a trained musician, who has considerable experience in teaching music to primary children, now teaches the subject. He has made a very positive impact on the subject both in children's learning and the standards they attain. A particular improvement since the last inspection is the quality of singing during worship. This was observed several times, particularly during a session of praise through music and at times the singing was spiritually uplifting.

126. The specialist teacher has been concentrating particularly on improving singing. In the lessons seen, children at Year 2 were developing their singing voices well. They sing with confidence, are now using a wider vocal range and are beginning to understand how the way that they use their mouths affects the sounds they make. They have strategies to prevent them singing out of key and are now using a 'thinking voice' internalising sounds by singing parts in their head. By Year 6, there is greater emphasis on breathing, dynamics and accuracy of pitch. Some pupils have found it difficult and they are encouraged to practice the use of repeating patterns, such as *ss* and *ff*, which are improving breathing as they sing. Diction too has needed some additional work and phrases such as '*do you chew blue glue*' and '*we three bees need trees*' is raising awareness and improving vowel sounds when singing. Although there are many children developing a strong sense of pitch and rhythm, there are others still working towards these goals. Over the last two years there has been a marked increase in the number of children, particularly at Years 4 to 6, who are now able to sing in tune. Their knowledge of musical terms and general vocabulary has developed well. Children are now much more willing to participate and even take on a solo role. Staff are encouraged by the rapid development of rhythmic and interpretive skills among children. The good standards attained, particularly by older pupils are well supported by instrumental tuition and lessons in guitar, clarinet, keyboards and brass extend their ability and maintain interest.
127. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well whatever their ability. Those who need support receive it but most children were seen to cope well in this subject and interest was maintained. The school identifies those that are gifted, providing appropriately for them too and in this way the needs of all pupils are met. However, the school considers that more information is needed about progress in music and assessment procedures are to be improved to make the end of year summaries more accurate.
128. The quality of teaching by the specialist is very good and sometimes excellent. Although other teachers do teach this subject, for example, composition work, it was not seen during the inspection so no overall judgement is made. In the lessons seen, the very good relationships between the teacher and the pupils became a motivating force for them to make very good efforts and do their best. In one lesson there were two classes together and the good pace moved them on quickly, the range of work and use of interactive whiteboard made the music lesson stimulating and exciting. Particularly expressive use of elements and techniques and the ability to rehearse well with others created a spooky mood to the song, '*Ghosts are very frightening*'. The very good progress during the lesson was evident in the quality of sound and ability to keep in time but they know that now they need to work on longer phrases. A lesson with younger children made very effective use of information and communication technology to which children responded well. The teacher knows the children well and sometimes takes risks but children do not abuse his trust. For example, when learning a song, '*Slowly walks my granddad*', they were encouraged to kick off their shoes and move feet in time with the music but this did not become unruly.
129. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has correctly identified areas for further development, such as more integration between music and mathematics and greater use of technology. He provides good advice to all staff in the development of their own music activities and produces taped music for drama productions or acts of worship. In the last year the greatest success has been extending the range of learning opportunities such as joining with other schools to produce works on a grand scale and taking part in the South Somerset Music Spectacular because children performed musical items to a high standard before a large audience.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but evidence from other sources such as discussions with pupils and teachers, records and reports, indicates that overall standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are generally typical for children at these ages. However, there are significant weaknesses in attainment in gymnastics and dance, which are due to the lack of adequate indoor accommodation for the subject. This makes it extremely difficult for staff to teach important elements of the National Curriculum's Programmes of Study. The problem has arisen since the school hall has had to be used as a classroom. A strength in the subject is swimming and standards throughout the school are high. Children with special educational needs make good progress particularly in swimming.
131. Discussion with groups of Year 2 and Year 6 children shows that they understand the importance of exercise, can describe a simple dance they have learnt and know the basic rules of major games. Older children can explain the beneficial effect that exercise has upon the body and know the importance of warming up before exercising vigorously. Few children can describe a gymnastics sequence they have performed or any specific activity they have achieved on apparatus. In the one games lesson seen the majority of Year 5 and Year 6 children showed average skills in throwing, catching and hitting a rounder's ball. They understand the need for rules to make a game fair and have a sound understanding of the importance of playing together as a team. Evidence from the awards children have achieved in swimming shows that, by the time they leave school almost all children are accomplished swimmers. For instance they can swim 100 metres in good style without stopping using a range of strokes. They can surface dive, tread water and perform a number of safety skills such as swimming in clothing
132. No overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching but in the one games lesson seen, it was good. It was well planned with good attention to an initial warming up session and discussion about health issues linked to exercise. A range of basic skills were taught and practiced before the game was introduced. Resources were well organised and children were quickly involved in improving their throwing and catching. There was good continuity in the lesson with smooth transition into the rounders' game. During this the teacher showed good subject knowledge and understanding when utilising children's performance to reinforce the rules of the game and to emphasise the importance of working together as a team. The introduction of a time factor makes sure that all children have equal opportunity to bat and to field.
133. The resources for physical education. are generally satisfactory but the school has problems with storage and they are not always easily accessible. Some expensive equipment, such as climbing apparatus cannot be used at all, which is a concern to parents. A new scheme of work has been written but there are no consistent assessment procedures in place at the present time. The subject is well supported by the wide range of out of school clubs and the participation in competitions against other schools in sports such as football, netball, swimming and athletics.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

134. By Year 2, standards are typical of that expected for the pupil's age and by Year 6 standards are higher than usually expected for age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The work is in line with the expectations of the Somerset Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator is very

knowledgeable about the subject and has a wealth of expertise. This specialist knowledge and skill is having a positive impact on the standards children achieve.

135. By Year 2, children have a good understanding of the teaching of Jesus, such as that about forgiveness and love and have a growing understanding about how He used stories to help others develop their moral understanding and social responsibility. By Year 4 pupils are discussing moral issues giving their own opinion and views but showing tolerance of the beliefs and views of others. A very challenging subject, '*will being rich make me a good person*' allowed them to view the topic from a Hindu and Christian perspective. They know that teaching about wealth and possessions is found in all religions and some are familiar with such texts in religious books, for example, the Bible. By Year 6, pupils have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of principal religions represented in this country. They recognise the unique features of a religion as well as developing an awareness of characteristics common to it. There is a growing understanding of the use of symbolism and they know how religious belief influences the way its members live their lives. In their studies they take pride in using specialist vocabulary, for example, of Hinduism and willingly explore and discuss questions about such issues as anger, relating them to their own experiences.
136. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well whatever their ability. Those who need support receive it, sometimes linking with the targets on individual education plans if tasks involve written work. Questioning techniques are used to extend the more able and research tasks involve children using both the library and the Internet.
137. The quality of teaching was good in two lessons seen and excellent in the other. This is an improvement since the last report when teaching was mainly sound. In all classes teachers have very good relationships with children, which motivates them to work hard in lessons. Teachers question children carefully to probe understanding and make them think. For example, in one class pupils were asked to explain why money had become an object of worship and in another class of younger children they were asked, "Who was the good neighbour and why"? Plenary sessions were used well. In a Year 2 class, it provided an opportunity for children to reflect on the rules they had generated themselves. They could talk sensibly about the need for rules and discussed words such as *anarchy* and *bullying*. Because they are articulate they hold and maintain good discussion, explaining coherently their ideas and opinions. In the excellent lesson, particularly good use was made of prior learning in information and communication technology. Children are now skilled at using such sources as the Internet to find information and extend their understanding, for example, they now have a greater knowledge and understanding of Hinduism.
138. The management of the subject is good. Although the co-ordinator has only had two terms in post her very good background knowledge of the subject and her expertise has already enabled her to make a positive impact on the subject. Further development is planned. The audit of resources has revealed shortages in artefacts for world religions but until they can be purchased some are borrowed and the school is supported by the loan scheme of the Diocese. More detailed monitoring of children's learning is identified for next year. The greatest success is seen as closer links with the Diocese and local church because they have supported the school in its policy writing, provision of resources, visits to places of worship and advised on giving the subject the status it lacked at the last inspection.