

INSPECTION REPORT

SYMONDSBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bridport, Dorset

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113815

Headteacher: Mrs. C. Bond

Reporting inspector: C.D. Loizou
18645

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 February 2001

Inspection number: 197004

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Symondsbury Bridport Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. E. Tweddle
Date of previous inspection:	30 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18645	C.D. Loizou	Registered inspector	Foundation stage curriculum Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9837	R.Walsh	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?
29989	P. Goodsell	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Science Art Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Complaints Manager

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the small rural village of Symondsbury, which is approximately two miles from Bridport in Dorset. It is an infant and junior Church of England voluntary aided school. Since its first inspection the governors have appointed the current headteacher and all the teaching staff were appointed since then as well. There are 101 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 11 years, which is below average for schools of this type. Almost all of the pupils travel to school by bus or car as some of them live considerable distances from the school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is approximately 5 per cent, which is well below the national average. There are 19 pupils (21 per cent) on the school's special educational needs register, which is below average. There are no pupils in the school learning English as an additional language. All the children under five start school in September part-time for the first term before continuing in the reception class full-time from January onwards. Most of the children have had some form of pre-school or playgroup experience before the reception year. The attainment of the children under five on entry to the school covers a wide range, but it is broadly in line with the standards expected of children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school where the pupils achieve well and the teaching is having a positive impact on the standards they achieve. The headteacher and staff monitor the pupils' work closely and they plan work which is well matched to the capabilities of all pupils. They have worked very hard to improve the school since the last inspection. As a result, standards are rising and the pupils' attainment is in line with the standards expected in English and science and it is above average in mathematics. A small number of pupils take the National Curriculum tests each year, resulting in some fluctuations in attainment from year to year but the pupils achieve well and standards are improving. The school is very well led and managed and is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics, design and technology, music and physical education are above average. Standards in other subjects are rising.
- Pupils throughout the school achieve well, including those with special educational needs. The pupils are very well behaved and attentive in lessons and at other times.
- The teaching is good with a significant amount that is of high quality.
- The curriculum is very well planned and organised. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and used very well to track how well the pupils are doing.
- Parents think very highly of the school and are very involved in its work.
- The school is very well led and managed at all levels.

What could be improved

- Raise attainment in English further, especially the achievement of boys in writing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

After its first inspection the school required special measures. In a short period of time Her Majesty's School Inspectors took the school out of special measures. The school has made

excellent progress. The headteacher, staff and governors have addressed the issues raised, particularly in improving the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learning. As a result, the pupils achieve well in most subjects and standards are rising. The teachers plan their lessons carefully and effectively. As a result of significant improvements to the teaching and the very effective management of the school the trend is one of rising standards. The headteacher and governors have strengthened the teaching in recent years, ensuring that teachers' expectations of pupils are much higher than they were in the last inspection. There are more effective monitoring procedures in place and the staff prepare more challenging lessons.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E	D	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	E	B	D	
Science	C	C	C	D	

The results of the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds show that attainment in English was below the national average and compared with similar schools, it was well below average. In mathematics attainment was above the national average and in science, it was average. Compared with similar schools, mathematics and science standards were below average. Results show that, over the last four years in English and science the pupils made good progress, and this was above average compared with similar schools. In mathematics they made very good progress with well above average improvement. The results of the national tests for 7-year-olds show that attainment in reading and writing was average. In mathematics, it was well above average. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were well below average but in mathematics they were well above average. In science, teachers' assessments show that the pupils achieved very high standards which were well above the national average at age 7.

Standards are improving and are now higher than reported in the previous inspection. This is the result of much better teaching and closer monitoring of pupils' progress. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English and science are in line with those expected at age 7 and 11. The school must continue to raise standards in writing, especially handwriting and spelling, and particularly boys' writing. Attainment in mathematics is above average at the end of both key stages. The pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. They make satisfactory progress in writing but could do better, particularly in spelling and handwriting. Boys' writing is not as good as the girls and the school has begun to address this by providing challenging writing tasks and monitoring boys' progress more closely. The school has improved standards in information and communication technology and the pupils make good progress, achieving the standards expected for their age. In design and technology, music and physical education, standards are higher than expected. In other subjects, standards are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils try hard and are interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils respect the views of others and co-operate with well. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist throughout the school. The pupils respond well to praise, show initiative and enjoy taking responsibilities.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is in line with the national average.

The pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in the very good relationships and their positive attitudes to school and work. They are polite and courteous to each other and to visitors. The school provides well for its pupils in a supportive and encouraging working environment where everyone is valued and their views respected.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good with a significant amount that is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and in eighty per cent of the lessons seen it was good or better, including thirty per cent of lessons where the teaching was of a very high standard. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection because the headteacher and governors have strengthened the teaching. There are focused professional development programmes for teachers and support staff. This has included the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and good improvements to teachers' planning. Consequently, the teaching has good structure and clear objectives for the pupils to strive for. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and their achievement. The most effective teaching sets high standards for both behaviour and attainment with the additional expectation that pupils will record their work neatly and accurately. This is reflected in the continuing rise in standards. The school has rightly focused on improving the standard of writing further. The school is now well placed to make further improvements, including the consistent approach to the way pupils learn to form their handwriting and more support and encouragement given to boys with their writing in order to raise the standard of their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is very good overall. Activities and tasks are very well matched to the abilities of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision is made for these pupils. Their progress is monitored closely and they are well supported in lessons and other times.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. There are very good opportunities provided in lessons and assemblies to improve the pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is very good because pupils can reflect on the world around them and express their feelings and thoughts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good support and guidance offered to the pupils. Their academic progress is monitored closely to help teachers' planning.

The curriculum for the children in the reception class is good. Activities are well planned and appropriate to the needs of children under five. In the rest of the school, the curriculum is balanced and provides very good opportunities for all pupils to have access to a wide range of practical and relevant tasks. These are well matched to the needs and capabilities of the pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their progress is closely monitored and the learning support staff are very well deployed to provide individual support for the pupils in lessons. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities that include sport, music, art, writing and computer work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. She is very well supported by the staff who have clearly defined and appropriate roles that enable them to manage the curriculum and monitor the progress made by the pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide very good support. They fulfil their responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very good monitoring procedures in place which help the headteacher, staff and governors to assess the progress of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. Support staff are well deployed and resources are well organised. The school makes good use of its limited accommodation.

The staff and governors are greatly influenced by the headteacher's inspirational leadership and enthusiasm to succeed and improve the school further. The management of the school is very good with very good procedures in place that enable the staff and governors to monitor teaching and learning. As a result, the governors and staff have a clear programme for school improvement. The school's management and improvement plans set out clear priorities. The school is now very capable and well placed to raise standards further. Since the last inspection staffing appointments have strengthened the teaching and the school's curriculum, resulting in rising standards. Good use is made of the limited accommodation and there are advanced plans in progress to re-furbish the school building and improve facilities further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The management of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about their children's progress. • Homework.

Inspection findings support all of the parents' positive views. There is a good range of homework provided. Annual reports and information about the pupils' progress have clear targets for improvement and explain how well the pupils have done to help parents support their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2000 end-of-Key Stage 2 national tests for 11-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in English was below the national average and compared with similar schools, it was well below average. In mathematics attainment was above the national average and in science, it was average. Compared with similar schools, mathematics and science standards were below average. Test results in English have fluctuated from year to year, reflecting the nature of the small cohort of pupils in some years taking the tests. However, when measuring the progress that the same cohort of pupils made since they undertook the tests four years ago at the age of 7, English and science progress was above average compared with similar schools and in mathematics it was well above average. This has been achieved because the school has improved the teaching significantly and pupils' progress is monitored very closely to ensure they achieve the targets set for them.
2. The results of the national tests for 7-year-olds show that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing was in line with the national average. In mathematics, it was well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were well below average but in mathematics they were well above average. In science, teachers' assessments show that the pupils achieved very high standards which were well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and compared with similar schools, standards were also well above average. Standards in mathematics and teacher assessments in science show very good improvement and the pupils are achieving well. Reading and writing standards have fluctuated, again, reflecting the very small size of the cohort of pupils taking the tests each year.
3. The attainment of children who enter the school in the reception class is in line with the standards expected for children under five. They make good progress as a result of the good teaching and the good level of additional support provided by the classroom assistant. The children are well on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals in all of the areas of learning. By the time they start Key Stage 1, their level of attainment is in line with the standards expected in all areas of learning. Some improvements are needed to ensure that the children remain on task during free-choice activities and learn to sustain their concentration on tasks or when engaged in role-play.
4. In the rest of the school the pupils are making good progress because of the impact of the good teaching, which has continued to improve since the last inspection. This is reflected in the steady and sustained improvement in standards. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have helped to raise standards, with most improvement shown in mathematics and science. In both key stages, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than average levels of attainment in the tests varies from year to year, with some years when the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high. These fluctuating trends have a great impact on the overall standards achieved in the tests. Since the last inspection, the school has improved standards steadily, largely as a result of better teaching and very good management which has focused on measuring trends in test results and acting on any lapses in performance by individuals or groups of pupils. The school is aware, for example, that some boys are underachieving in writing.

5. The pupils make satisfactory progress in English in both key stages resulting in them achieving the standards expected for their age. Standards in speaking, listening and reading are higher than in writing because fewer pupils score the higher levels in the writing tests. One of the contributory factors is the boys are not so well motivated to write and there are inconsistencies in handwriting and spelling standards across the school. Writing standards have improved in recent years because the school now teaches a broader range of writing so that pupils are able to write for different purposes and audiences. However, there are limited opportunities for the pupils to use word banks or dictionaries in literacy lessons and, as a result, spelling rules are not being consistently taught to consolidate the pupils' knowledge of words, letter sounds and spelling patterns.
6. In Key Stage 1, mathematics standards are above the standards expected of 7-year-olds. The pupils have a good understanding of number facts, and utilise different strategies to help them calculate problems mentally and orally. In Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to make good progress, achieving standards that are above average for their age. The teaching is well organised and challenging, enabling pupils of all abilities to improve their knowledge and understanding of numbers, shapes and measures. In science, attainment at age 7 is broadly average. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, standards are in line with those expected. The teaching enables the pupils to plan and organise simple experiments and investigations. The pupils are well supported by Learning Support Assistants and this is particularly effective for the pupils with special educational needs. They understand how to prepare a fair test when undertaking their investigations.
7. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected because the curriculum is well organised and there is very focused teaching, starting in Key Stage 1 where the pupils are taught basic computer skills well. Teachers and support staff have improved their own competence and confidence in the subject with many good examples of work being done in lessons across a range of subjects. As a result, the school provides a balanced programme of ICT, with a combination of focused intervention and support on basic skills as well as extension work when the pupils investigate or search for information as part of topics across a range of subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils can use more complex word processing skills and desk top publishing programs to prepare news sheets, menus, adverts and other good examples where the pupils combine illustration, photographic images and text. Good use is made of the schools *Internet* and *Electronic-Mailing* facilities so that all pupils make good progress sending and receiving *E-mails*, or searching the *Internet* for information.
8. The pupils make good progress in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. They make satisfactory progress in art and design. The school provides a good range of topics and themes with a broad and balanced programme that enables the pupils to develop a good understanding of these subjects, achieving the standards expected for their age and in design and technology, music and physical education they achieve standards that are higher than expected. The school makes very good use of its limited hall space for physical education, and since the last inspection, it has improved facilities further. Music provision is good, enabling some pupils to benefit from specialised instrumental tuition. The standard of singing is high with a large proportion of pupils joining the school choir.
9. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In Key Stage 2 they make very good progress because the intervention is focused and inclusive so that pupils have access to all parts of the school's curriculum. The school has

deployed additional Learning Support Assistants who are timetabled to work in lessons, sitting alongside and supporting individuals or groups of pupils. Individual education plans are well managed and these help to provide a balanced programme of focused support that meets the pupils learning needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils' attitudes to learning and their concentration in lessons is very good. This helps create a climate in which the majority of pupils are enthusiastic to learn and are able to move quickly towards their learning targets. Great pride is taken by the pupils in the presentation of their work and they are keen to complete unfinished work during their free time, in order to enhance its standard. Members of the writing club recently created a series of very informative articles on the school for the local paper, much of this being completed during play times. Lunch time and after school clubs on writing, music and art are popular and the pupils obtain much enjoyment from these. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are enthusiastic about their learning, and are eager to discuss the work they do. When working in pairs or groups in the many practical activities they undertake, apparatus and equipment are shared unselfishly and safely.
11. The children in the reception class are very well behaved and enjoy school very much. They have settled into school routines and are familiar with their surroundings, adults and other children. They are attentive and persevere with tasks, although at times during free-choice and structured play activities, some children find it difficult to stay on one task. The teacher and learning assistant intervene and encourage, enabling the children to complete their work and tasks successfully.
12. Standards of behaviour are consistently very good throughout the school and are seen to have a beneficial effect on learning. The pupils are happy in their school environment and are polite and courteous in their dealings with adults and peers. Behaviour at break and lunch times was observed to be very good throughout the inspection. Pupils are confident in approaching adults with any worries they might have and in lessons they are willing to listen to what others have to say. They understand what is good and bad behaviour and the vast majority exercise good levels of self-discipline. Although some incidents of bullying have occurred in the past, it was noted from discussions with parents that these had been dealt with quickly and effectively.
13. Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are very good and this contributes greatly to the standards achieved by the school. Pupils co-operate well in lessons and are seen to help and support each other in group work and other activities. This was particularly evident in the observation of physical education lessons. Pupils are willing to speak freely about their experiences and enjoy the time they spend in school. They are encouraged to articulate their own views and beliefs by taking part in discussion groups and supporting their representatives on the School Council. The personal development of pupils is very good. Many opportunities are available for pupils to develop their self-esteem and to share their thoughts and experiences with each other. Personal reflection is encouraged in order to help pupils understand the consequences of their actions and to develop individual responsibility. Pupils use their initiative and act sensibly when trust is placed in them, for example the lunchtime monitors help to supervise the younger pupils eating their lunch and organise play equipment in the playground. The School Council is seen as particularly effective, with class representatives putting forward ideas and opinions from their peers, for consideration by the staff. The council has recently been instrumental in obtaining a grant for play equipment for younger pupils and

water fountains in the playground. The pupils play their full part in creating a happy school where each person is valued for his or her contribution.

14. Attendance rates are satisfactory and are in line with the national average for a school of this type and size. The school creates a happy and welcoming environment, which encourages good attendance in pupils. The registration process is often used effectively as a pre-school activity for maths or French, which sets a good tone for the whole day. Pupils settle to work quickly and quietly at the start of sessions and staff treat latecomers sensitively, with any disruption being kept to a minimum. Timekeeping during the school day is good, with lessons starting and ending promptly. Registers are meticulously maintained and controlled, and comply fully with all of the statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. The teaching is good overall with a significant proportion that is very good. Good lessons were seen in all classes and appointments to the teaching staff since the last inspection have improved and strengthened the teaching further. All the staff, including the headteacher, have been appointed after the school's first inspection. As a result, standards are improving; expectations are much higher than they were in the last inspection; and the work being planned for the pupils is very well matched to their capabilities. In all of the lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory and the large majority was found to be good or better. Fifty per cent of the lessons seen were good and in addition, thirty per cent of all the lessons observed were judged to be of high quality. This standard of teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and their achievement in all subjects. The school must now improve the teaching further by continuing to focus on raising attainment in writing, and in particular, the standards that boys achieve in writing. The teaching has improved considerably since the first inspection when the teaching had many shortcomings and weaknesses. These improvements are having a significant impact on standards achieved in national tests with indications of steadily rising test results every year since the last inspection.
16. The teaching of the children under five in the reception class is consistently good. The teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn and provides a good balance of structured and adult-led sessions as well as appropriate free choice practical activities and role play. The classroom assistant and teacher work well as a team, ensuring that work is well planned with clearly defined areas of responsibility for each adult when focusing on individuals or groups of children. The teaching is particularly effective in improving the children's speaking, listening, reading and mathematics skills. The children make satisfactory progress in writing and good progress in other areas of learning because the teaching enables the children to organise their thinking by leading them through the recommended stepping stones in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The children are provided with good opportunities to read and write with many children learning to spell simple words, recognising word shapes and letter sounds. Progress in reading is more rapid than in writing because the children are more motivated by the reading activities provided. The school must address this imbalance by promoting writing more prominently from an early age. Some children find it difficult to stay in role or sustain an activity when choosing from those provided by the teacher. Consequently, an adult has to intervene and provide support for the children to stay on task, leaving less time for adults to plan their own focus or work with other children.
17. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. One in six lessons seen were of high quality and three-quarters were at least good. In Key Stage 2, the teaching is good overall, ranging from

satisfactory to excellent with nearly half the lessons seen being of high quality. Throughout both key stages, literacy and numeracy lessons are well taught with good strategies used to provide work which is closely matched to the abilities of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The teachers prepare challenging and interesting tasks that motivate and sustain the pupils' concentration, enabling them to work hard and persevere with tasks. However, there are inconsistencies in the standards expected of pupils' written work. There are sometimes lapses or gaps in pupils' writing with common spelling errors and inconsistencies in handwriting. A survey of pupils' work shows that the school has begun to address the relative underachievement of some boys' writing. Girls are achieving better test scores than boys in the national writing tests. Inspection evidence shows that boys are less inclined to choose to write extended pieces of work whereas there are some very good examples of writing by girls who achieve standards that are well above those expected for their age.

18. In all the lessons seen, the teaching had a good structure so that time was provided for the pupils to ask questions and explain their methods, for example, in mathematics when calculating number problems mentally and orally. In literacy lessons, during individual and group work in the main part of the lesson, the teachers are clear about the support they are going to provide and ensure that they plan to focus on particular groups of pupils so that all pupils make good progress. The pupils' handwriting shows inconsistencies ranging from very good and well presented work to unsatisfactory and rushed writing that is poorly presented.
19. The teachers use good assessment procedures to monitor the pupils' progress in all subjects. Work is marked up to date. In some classes the marking is of a very high standard because it is clear about what the pupils have to do to improve further. The teachers keep good records of how well the pupils are doing and these regular assessments help to inform their planning.
20. The school has done well since the last inspection, especially in developing and improving the teaching. A significant proportion of teaching (nearly one in three lessons seen) was of high quality. The key features which set this standard of teaching apart from the rest are the pace, challenge and enthusiasm of the subjects being taught. In these lessons, resources are very well used. For example, in a very good literacy lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils used text about landslides in 1839 as a stimulus for reading and writing. The teacher involved all the pupils by getting them to ask challenging questions, enabling them to interrogate the text and take notes which later informed their writing. In a very good mathematics lesson, Year 1 and 2 pupils were provide with challenging number problems. The work set was challenging for both year groups and further differentiated so that higher attaining pupils were set different tasks that enabled them to make good progress. The most common feature of very good teaching is the way that teachers are more alert to the needs of all the pupils, constantly improving their work, marking and supporting as well as deploying Learning Support Assistants so they also question, probe and improve the pupils' performance and standard of work. As a result, these lessons set high expectations and this includes the standard of recorded work so that pupils are clear about what is expected in their writing, drawing, numeracy or recorded work.
21. In the satisfactory lessons, amounting to approximately one in five lessons seen, the teaching did not set the same high expectations in all stages of the lessons, resulting in some pupils becoming restless or fidgety. Explanations were not as crisp as the high quality teaching seen. For example, introductions were too long or teachers laboured a point and consequently some pupils would need reminding if they interrupt or stray off task. In all the good and very good lessons seen, the pupils were more eager to work and try hard resulting in more effective learning and achievement.

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

22. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and includes very good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. The curriculum is very well planned with relevant and interesting activities including lessons in French for the pupils in Years 5 and 6. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good and all statutory requirements are met. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and the curricular opportunities offered to the pupils are now a strength of the school.
23. A key issue from the last inspection was to improve the planning of the curriculum and produce schemes of work in all subjects. This has been successfully addressed. The teachers have carried out a comprehensive review of all the curriculum documentation and, as part of the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, a review and monitoring of the teaching and learning in English and mathematics has been undertaken. In the foundation subjects, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work are mainly being used to plan the work using a two-year rolling programme of topics. The medium term plans are monitored on a regular basis by the headteacher and by the subject co-ordinators. Incorporated into the planning is a good range of individual, group, whole class and practical activities. There are good opportunities planned for the pupils to use and apply mathematics, and to experiment and investigate in science lessons although opportunities for pupils to design their own experiments are more limited.
24. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is well planned. There is a good balance of adult-led and free-choice activities. These include structured play, construction, reading, writing and role-play. All the adult-led activities are well thought through, involving the classroom assistant in the teaching, so that all the children benefit from guided tasks, such as reading, writing and mathematics. There are many opportunities for the children to explore and choose during free-choice time but some opportunities are missed if the designated areas do not specifically define the role or tasks the children ought to undertake. Adult intervention is skilful, clear and appropriate and the planning enables the staff to assess what the children have learned.
25. The school is giving a high priority to developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and it is making good use of the opportunities provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to prepare lessons that provide for the needs of all the pupils. This is having a very good impact on the progress of the pupils in numeracy and is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress in literacy. Over several years the achievement of the girls, especially in English, has been higher than that of the boys. The school is aware of this and has begun to address it.
26. A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which the teachers' planning enables links to be made between subjects. For example, a teacher used the data from a scientific experiment to demonstrate the use of an information technology data handling program. On another occasion a teacher used text about the geology of the local area in the literacy lesson.
27. A strength of the curriculum is the equality of access for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are very well supported by teachers and classroom assistants and the curriculum is well matched to their needs. The pupils' individual education plans are

monitored very closely by a highly skilled special educational needs co-ordinator. She ensures that the pupils are on course to make progress in relation to their prior attainment and this is having a positive impact on their learning. The school has carefully thought through the means by which each pupil is supported. Imaginative use of support staff enables class teachers to introduce literacy and numeracy lessons to all the pupils in their class before support staff intervene and support individuals and groups of pupils as part of the lesson. This ensures that all of the pupils participate and have access to the whole curriculum.

28. There are very good extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils including a very wide range of sports, music, as well as art, writing, advanced maths and gardening clubs. A very good range of residential and day educational visits is planned to enhance and extend the curriculum activities. The pupils are taught French and visit France. They attend an outdoor-pursuits centre for activities such as orienteering, and explore local farms and a nearby island as part of their geography studies. These and many other visits have a very positive and constructive effect on the pupils' learning. The curriculum opportunities for the pupils are further greatly enriched and enlivened by visitors to the school. These include local clergy, many friends of the school, governors, actors, poets and musicians. Together with the good use of the teachers' and pupils' own talents, they provide learning experiences that contribute to the excellent personal development of pupils as individuals and members of the community.
29. The school makes very good arrangements for the pupils' personal development. The work is linked to religious education and personal, social and health education. During the past year the school earned the Healthy School Award. The teaching of personal and social education is good overall, with the pupils gaining skills in talking about their feelings, listening to others and gaining information about how to manage their lives effectively. For example Year 1 and 2 pupils take part in a useful discussion about the issues surrounding a stay in hospital which helps them to express their concerns about illness and what happens if you need to go to hospital. Sex education is taught mainly within the science curriculum, and the school is in the process of incorporating the local education authority guidelines concerning the teaching of drug education into its own personal, social and health education scheme of work.
30. The contribution of the community to the pupils' learning is very good. The school has very strong links with the church and takes part in many village and local events such as Apple Day, performing at the Summer Fete and singing round the Christmas Tree. A local bank has sponsored the pupils' Dazzling Delights business enterprise group who work to raise money to fund the group's visit to Mont St Michel.
31. The school has strong and positive links with partner primary schools and with the two local secondary schools. The cluster of small local schools frequently work together to enrich the curriculum. The pyramid of local schools has been supported by the secondary schools to include French as part of the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 in the primary schools. Year 6 pupils took part in a joint art day with a special school and the Year 2 pupils watched a performance of 'Millennium Magic' by pupils from the same school. All of these links greatly enrich the curriculum and extend the pupils' understanding of the community in which they live.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This shows good improvement since the last inspection. The provision for spiritual development is very good. When pupils assemble for collective worship they do so in a quiet and reverent atmosphere. They know that this is a special time. There is a very supportive and positive

atmosphere in assemblies. All pupils and teachers join in the singing, sometimes with actions, and prayers. There is time for reflection, about sharing, helping and kindness to others.

33. The provision for moral development is very good. All adults involved in the school set a fine example in their relationship with each other and with the pupils. They also make very plain how they expect pupils to behave towards each other. Pupils know clearly what is right and wrong. This is reinforced in assemblies.
34. The provision for social development is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their social skills in school. In many lessons they share in their learning by working in pairs or groups. In most lessons, the way that pupils are grouped enables higher-attaining pupils to share with and help those who are less confident. At the end of lessons, when pupils are given opportunities to tell the class what they have achieved, others respect this and listen attentively. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and are given opportunities to boost their self-esteem. In an excellent dance lesson, the pupils co-operated and worked hard on some complex dance sequences and it was noticeable how well the pupils responded to each other's performances.
35. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn about their own culture through history and geography. They pupils are taught to appreciate other cultures through music and song. For example, the pupils listened to Chilean music in assembly and in a very good music lesson in Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils learned to appreciate the differences and similarities in styles of music originating in different parts of the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school's procedures for monitoring the progress and personal development of pupils are very good. The pupil's annual academic progress reports are informative and comprehensive, and contain feedback sheets for completion by parents. In addition, the school holds an open evening each term, allowing parents and teachers to share information on individual progress and to set targets for improvement. The environment provided by the staff is caring and supportive, which makes a significant contribution to the quality of education in the school. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families well, and deal sensitively with any problems as they arise. Classroom assistants provide invaluable support to individual pupils. This is particularly evident in the help given to those pupils with special educational needs in meeting their personal learning targets. The pastoral care provided by staff is good. Discussion groups are used effectively throughout the school, encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own actions, and also as a vehicle for communicating any fears or concerns in a non-threatening climate. There is a strong feeling of mutual respect between adults and pupils and this adds significantly to the atmosphere created within the school.
37. The school takes advantage of contributions from other professionals including a specialist gymnastics teacher, and a support teacher for pupils with hearing difficulties. It is noticeable from the absence records that a numbers of parents are removing their children from school during term time for family holidays. The school regularly monitors attendance patterns, and parents are aware of their responsibility to authorise and notify the school in the event of their child's absence.

38. The school has a comprehensive and effective behaviour policy, which is applied consistently by teachers and support staff. The policy contains strategies to deal with poor behaviour, including time given to pupils to consider the implications of their actions. A system of rewards and sanctions results in most pupils adhering to the school's clear code of conduct and as a result behaviour throughout the school is very good. An effective School Council exists and meets every month. This allows pupils to communicate their ideas and opinions about the school to the headteacher and staff.
39. The school has an appropriate child protection policy and the staff are aware of their responsibilities for identifying pupils at risk, and are confident that they respond appropriately when the need arises. Health and safety arrangements in the school are satisfactory, and regular risk assessments of the buildings and equipment take place.
40. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and academic progress are very good and this is a strength of the school. The assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and are used very well to track progress, to inform teachers' planning and to set targets for the pupils. As well as the statutory tests in literacy, numeracy and science, the school makes effective use of a range of non-statutory tests to track the pupils' learning and to plan future work. The teachers help the pupils to agree targets for improvements especially in their written work. The good work done in analysing the results of the national tests at the end of both key stages has enabled the school to identify the underachievement by the boys, particularly in reading and writing and to begin to address this issue. The school is also working to match assessments to the learning opportunities in science and in the foundation subjects by the use of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation. Regular assessments and reviews are undertaken of pupils identified with special educational needs. These are very well organised and maintained and the co-ordinator responsible for these pupils monitors closely their progress. Very good communication is established with the pupils' parents so that they play their full part in supporting their children at home.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school's partnership with parents is a strength, the majority of parents view the school in a very positive light. The inspection findings agree with this. Lesson observations find that a high percentage of the teaching to be good or better. The questionnaire results suggest that the majority of parents believe that their children like the school and support the view that parents think the school has high expectations of the pupils in its care, whilst helping their children grow in maturity and responsibility. Parents also believe the school to be well managed. The inspection findings agree with these positive views that parents expressed about the school. A small number of parents feel that the school does not provide enough opportunities for homework and that the information regarding their child's progress is insufficient, however the inspection found annual school reports to be comprehensive, giving parents a clear picture of individual pupils' progress. The headteacher is aware of these views and has already increased the number of open evenings in the autumn term to concentrate on progress issues.
42. The quality and scope of information provided to parents on curriculum topics and other school activities is good. The school prospectus is well designed and contains clear and concise information about the school.
43. The school encourages parents to become involved in the learning process and parents not only help in lessons but also run lunchtime and after-school clubs. This parental help

contributes greatly to the success of the school and to pupils' development and learning. The gardening club run by a parent at lunchtime is well attended. Another parent concentrated on setting up a business enterprise project, allowing the pupils to set up, make and sell the cakes and biscuits made during lessons. Not only was this successful as a learning exercise for the pupils, but it also generated a profit which was used to subsidise the school trip to France. The project was named "*Symondsbury Dazzling Delights*" and also attracted sponsorship from a local business, funds from which were used to purchase a new cooker for the school. A number of parents and helpers run and coach the successful netball and football clubs. The *Friends of Symondsbury* actively support the school and raise funds to buy extra resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The headteacher provides very good, effective leadership. She leads by her very good example in the classroom and this is having the effect of improving teaching, focusing on raising standards and developing all the staff so that teaching is becoming more effective. All of the teaching appointments since the first inspection have strengthened the teaching and at the same time increased the capacity for the school to improve further. There is a determination, which is being greatly influenced by the personal dedication of the headteacher, staff, and governors to help all the pupils succeed. Amongst the many improvements since the last inspection, a major contributory factor is the school's determination to raise standards and support those pupils with special educational needs. As a result, the teaching has improved considerably and standards are rising. The staff and governors are greatly influenced by the headteacher's inspirational leadership and enthusiasm to succeed and improve the school further. The management of the school is very good with very good procedures in place that enable the staff and governors to monitor teaching and learning.
45. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. They are visible and involved in the work of the school and are often seen helping in classrooms. The governors monitor lessons along with the headteacher and subject leaders, and this gives them a clear insight into the work being done and the progress that the pupils are making.
46. Subject leaders draw up action plans and have good plans in place to monitor and support staff in their respective subjects and areas of responsibility. Resources are well managed and the co-ordinators scrutinise the teachers' planning to ensure that there is appropriate work being done. Co-ordinators who have recently been appointed are supported by the headteacher, who helps them prepare an effective curriculum and professional development programme for the staff. The deployment of learning support staff has been successful in helping them to provide highly skilled intervention programmes that involve teaching reading, writing and numeracy as well as inclusive support in other subjects for groups of pupils and individuals.
47. The school's accommodation is limited, particularly for physical education. This limits the extent to which the pupils can use large gymnastics apparatus. The school manages this well, ensuring that in some lessons the pupils are taught in smaller groups and the school uses the facilities of a local leisure centre for games and swimming. Classrooms are spacious, clean and comfortable, offering a bright stimulating environment that greatly aids teaching and learning. There are appropriate outside play areas, including a space for children under five, which is well used and provides daily access to outdoor play. The school makes good use of its limited space and there are advanced plans in place to re-furbish and extend parts of the

existing school building. If these plans proceed then the school will be able to provide for the predicted increase in pupil numbers.

48. Staffing levels in the school are good. The school has an experienced, hard-working and dedicated teaching staff. The school successfully deploys learning support assistants, who are well trained and very effective in supporting the teachers and pupils. The number of administrative, caretaking and cleaning staff are appropriate to the needs of the school and provide very effectively for the smooth running and care of the school. All the staff work very well as a team, supporting each other with well established informal and formal routines, meetings and professional development programmes.
49. Financial planning is good and specific grants are used well. The governors are prudent in their budgeting, and the short-term financial planning is good. The school development and strategic management plans are well set out, showing priorities for further improvement. The well-established finance committee targets specific areas for development and ensures that spending provides value for money. The commitment of the headteacher and governors is reflected in the significant proportion of the school's budget that is used for additional support for pupils with special educational needs. The recommendations of the local authority audit have been acted upon and the school is about to undergo another audit soon after this inspection. Secretarial and administrative support is of a very high standard and this helps the school to operate efficiently and effectively. The school budget is managed well and financial control and administration are good. The full governing body agrees the budget allocations annually and governors monitor expenditure regularly. The local authority supports the school by providing financial statements and good use is made of information technology to support the smooth running of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- * Raise attainment in English further so that:**
 - boys' writing improves more rapidly in order to achieve the same standards in writing as girls;
 - common spelling rules are taught regularly and systematically to all pupils and they are taught to self correct, using dictionaries, word banks or thesauri;
 - the school adopts a common framework for handwriting and this is consistently demonstrated by teachers when presenting writing to the pupils.

(Paragraphs: 1; 5; 15-18; 24-25; 54; 59-69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	27	50	20			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	101
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.2

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	5	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	9	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (81)	82 (100)	100 (75)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	100 (75)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	6	9	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (56)	74 (56)	93 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	9	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (42)	60 (68)	86 (58)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	82
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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)	4.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	190,216
Total expenditure	165,887
Expenditure per pupil	1,659
Balance brought forward from previous year	11,801
Balance carried forward to next year	36,130

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	92
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	5		
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	7		
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	53	4		2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	51	18		2
The teaching is good.	66	29	5		
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	36	14		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	15	5	2	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	30	4		
The school works closely with parents.	55	33	9	3	
The school is well led and managed.	66	27	2	5	
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	31	3		
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	40	5	2	

Other issues raised by parents

The parents are very pleased with the open and friendly atmosphere fostered by the school. They believe their children are well cared for as well as being taught well and as a result, choose to send them to the school for these reasons.

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

50. Initial assessment records show that, on entry to the reception class, children have a wide range of attainment in their language skills, in mathematics and in their personal and social development. On entry to the school, the children's attainment is broadly in line with the standards expected for their age. All the children begin school in the September of the school year in which they are five and most have attended nurseries or play groups. Relationships with parents are good and this helps the children to settle quickly and begin learning.
51. Provision is good in all the six areas of learning which comprise the new Foundation Stage for the early years. Detailed planning has been introduced to ensure that the curriculum is based on the six areas of learning appropriate for reception children. It includes specific learning objectives for all of the activities. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed learning and 'free choice' activities which are structured to allow pupils to develop their creative, imaginative and physical skills.
52. Teaching in the reception class is consistently good and this ensures that all of the children achieve well. This has improved since the previous inspection when some teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. The teacher has a very good understanding of how young children learn and activities are well chosen to achieve the learning objectives. Work is planned to provide challenge for all of the children. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and this is giving pupils a firm grounding in these areas. The teacher and classroom assistant work together as a team; they know the children well and understand their needs. Regular assessments are made of the children's progress and these are used well to plan the next steps in learning. The children with special educational needs are identified early and are given good support. By the end of the reception year most children are in line to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning and some will exceed these.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. It is given a high priority by staff during the first term and they soon get to know the children well. There is a wide variation in the children's development in this area and several show a good degree of independence and confidence for their age. Most can concentrate for appropriate periods in group or class sessions and are enthusiastic about their learning, wanting to share their ideas and experiences, for example when talking about "Teddy Bear's Picnic". They are learning to share and take turns and to say 'please' and 'thank you.' Routines are well established and the children know what is expected of them. Their behaviour is good. They are beginning to take responsibility for themselves and others by helping to tidy up and clear away. When the children are involved in free choice activities, and especially in role-play, the planning could improve further if more structure could be incorporated into the roles that the children take on. Currently, some children find it difficult to stay in role or sustain an activity when choosing from the range provided by the teacher. Consequently, an adult has to intervene and provide a stimulus or idea for the children to stay on task, leaving less time for adults to plan their own focus or work with other children. All the children are in line to achieve the early learning goals in this area and a few have already done so. This is due to the skilful teaching which has

established good relationships, enabling the children to develop their confidence and independence in a secure and stimulating environment.

Communication, language and literacy

54. The children are given many opportunities to speak and to listen, including informal times such as ‘What can you see?’ when they ‘unmuddle’ sentences during shared reading. All of the children are able to express themselves and some use words well for their age, matching rhyming words such as ‘ball’ and ‘wall’. The children enjoy listening to stories and join in the reading of the ‘big’ book together, and some are beginning to recognise words and phrases. They like to discuss the story and to predict what might happen. They are beginning to learn the names and sounds of letters and how to write them. They write their own names but writing development lags behind that of reading. Higher attaining children read simple books by themselves and are starting to tackle new words using their good knowledge of letter sounds. Other children know some key words and ‘read’ stories by using the pictures as clues. In a good role-play session in which the children acted out a ‘picnic’, good spoken language was used and the children responded well. Some children find it difficult to stay in role and show that they need support and encouragement to focus. The children can write and form letters well, indicating that handwriting is well taught. Most are able to copy write words and can form letters correctly but lack confidence when attempting to write independently. Higher attaining children are beginning to write simple sentences by themselves and use their knowledge of letter sounds to spell words. They can find and use simple key words from their own wordbooks. The teaching is good and as a result, by the time they enter Year 1, almost all the children will have achieved the early learning goals, with some exceeding them.

Mathematical development

55. The children make good progress in their mathematical development and the teaching is good. By the end of the reception year most children will have reached the early learning goals and some will have exceeded them. The attainment of the children is variable but work is well matched to individual needs and assessments are carried out regularly to ensure this. Classroom assistants are used well so that children can work in small groups. Children of average attainment can confidently count sets of objects, usually up to ten, and they understand the meaning of ‘one more.’ They recognise numerals up to ten and can write most of them. Lower attaining children are beginning to count accurately with support. Higher attaining children are able to carry out and record simple addition and subtraction sums, using the appropriate vocabulary. Number songs and rhymes are used to reinforce their learning, for example, “Five current buns in the baker’s shop”. As a result, the children are developing an understanding of number, shape and pattern. For example, a group of children use dough and malleable materials to shape their current buns. All of the children know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes and can recognise them quickly. Good use of role-play in the ‘baker’s shop’ was used to reinforce counting skills as two children were observed buying ‘buns’ and paying for them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. Provision for the development of the children’s knowledge and understanding of the world is good and ensures that they all have a wide range of experiences. The teaching is often good because opportunities are not missed to discuss the wider world. The children were observed choosing materials, textiles and resources to dress ‘Teddy’. In another area, some children

acted out the ‘Teddy Bears’ Picnic’, including setting out plates, knives and forks. However, some children find it difficult to stay in role or switch between different roles, leaving other children to follow or re-negotiate their own contribution to the ‘picnic’. The uncertainty of roles disrupted the session with adults intervening to maintain control. In this context, although the teaching is good and sensitive to the needs of all the children, opportunities are sometimes missed if role-play is not sufficiently structured so as to define what it is that the children are to do and the roles clearly defined. In another adult-led session, the children looked at a selection of ‘Teddies’. They enjoyed talking about these and discussed how they could be dressed in different situations or climates. Other activities are planned to develop their wider knowledge and understanding of the world, for example of plants and animals. They build and construct using a range of construction kits and have used boxes, card and a range of material to produce small “feely boxes”. Computers are used regularly in the classroom to support literacy and numeracy and the children enjoy using the computer to observe and listen to stories and to create simple pictures. The children are becoming confident in using the computer’s pointing device to click, drag and re-arrange images or click and point at familiar objects in the storybook programs.

Physical development

57. Despite the lack of facilities caused by the limited space in the school, the physical development of pupils is as expected and most will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. A secure outdoor area allows opportunities to ride tricycles and use play equipment. The children have planned sessions of physical education weekly in the hall, and they participate in activities enthusiastically to develop appropriate skills. The children were observed throwing and catching a large ball with increasing confidence and skill. They listen well to instructions and are able to cooperate in a simple ball game involving patting and catching the ball. Fine and gross motor skills are generally well developed and most children show good control when using scissors and pencils. A range of tools has been used to create models and collages. Children spread glue very carefully when making their own collage. Most are able to use the computer mouse confidently and skilfully.

Creative development

58. Provision for creative development is good and a wide range of activities is provided which allow the children to explore and create. The children sing regularly. They listen to music and play musical instruments. In assembly they sing confidently, along with older pupils, and know all the words and actions to songs. Boxes and other materials are provided to allow them to make models and collages. The children enjoy choosing their own materials by texture or colour and used them creatively to make their ‘teddy’ collages. They enjoy imaginative painting and experimenting with ready mixed paints. The children are making good progress and are in line to achieve the early learning goals because of the good teaching they receive.

ENGLISH

59. The standards the pupils attained in the national tests in 2000 were in line with the national average at age seven and below the national average at eleven. Compared with similar schools, the pupils at the end of both key stages achieved well below average in English in last year’s tests. However, standards in English are improving and are now higher than reported in the previous inspection and higher than last year’s test results. This is the result of better teaching; closer monitoring of how well the pupils are doing; the successful implementation of

the National Literacy Strategy; and the effective grouping of pupils during literacy lessons so that pupils of all abilities are provided with challenging work that is closely matched to their capabilities. The impact of all the improvements made since the appointment of the headteacher and all the teaching staff across the school is beginning to be realised, resulting in standards that are now in line with those expected. The evidence from pupils' work in English books in all year groups shows that the large majority of pupils are achieving the standards expected for their age and they are making good progress. The school has monitored what the pupils know and understand very closely, consequently they have identified areas for further improvement, especially in boys' writing where, in relation to the progress that girls make, needs further improvement.

60. Throughout both of the key stages, the pupils are making good progress because the teaching is good. In particular, when the pupils' end-of-Key Stage 2 results are compared with their results at the age of seven, good progress is seen over the four years. However, an analysis of the results in both key stages over the past four years shows that boys have performed less well in English compared to girls. The school has recognised this and has been addressing it as a priority in the school's development plan. The improvements in the planning, teaching and resources are having a significant impact on the standards that the current cohort of pupils are achieving and consequently, they are likely to achieve the levels expected for their age.
61. A key issue in the last report was to 'continue to raise standards in English, particularly at Key Stage 2, by developing a systematic approach to the teaching of spelling; and improving the quality of pupils' writing for a range of purposes'. Both of these strands have been well addressed. The whole school follows a commercial scheme of work for spelling, the pupils work systematically on the exercises and take spellings home to learn on a regular basis. Although standards of achievement in spelling are now in line with national levels there remain some inconsistencies in the spelling of common words, more frequently by boys. In both key stages, a very good range of opportunities for writing for different purposes is provided and there is an upward trend in the quality of the writing. This improvement is the result of good planning and clear teaching of the skills required, together with the accurate way in which the pupils' work is assessed and new targets set with clear pointers for improvement given.
62. The standards the pupils attain in speaking and listening are above those found nationally. By the end of Key stage 1 the pupils know what is expected of them in literacy sessions, they are very interested in their work and in making contributions to the class's discussions about stories and non-fiction accounts. Throughout the school, both boys and girls respond well to the texts they share in whole-class work and class discussions are an important part of literacy lessons. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils are able to work co-operatively when, for example, they listen to each other's suggestions as they write instructions from the pictorial versions to help them construct simple models. By the age of eleven, the pupils make useful contributions to the introductory and plenary sessions of lessons. In a lesson on 'explanations', they confidently answered questions about both the subject matter of the text and how the writer explains technical terms connected with earthquakes. Across the curriculum, good opportunities are provided for the pupils to use speaking and listening skills. In assemblies the pupils express their opinions about the stories they have heard and in the Year 5 and 6 French lessons all the work is oral and the pupils participate confidently in conversations about themselves, their families and pets.
63. The school's successful implementation of the literacy strategy is beginning to have a positive impact upon standards and the pupils are making good progress in reading as a result. Attainment in reading is above the standards expected and in general, boys and girls do equally

well. Overall the pupils are enthusiastic readers. They enjoy reading a wide range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction books. They find information from reference books, dictionaries and computer software quickly and efficiently. The most able infant pupils know how to use the contents and index and glossary sections to help them locate information. The junior pupils review the books they have read and explain why they like particular authors or types of books. When the pupils read aloud they use good expression and show a very good understanding of the plot and characterisation, they can support their views with examples from the text. The Year 5 and 6 pupils scan text efficiently and are able to pick out relevant parts to identify in which style and form the piece is written. The progress seen is due to good reading habits which are formed by the partnership between work in school and the help given by parents and other adults. The pupils regularly read to parents and other adults, the parents come in before school starts to choose books with their children to read at home. The pupils who come to school by bus are well supported each morning by a teaching assistant who ensures that they choose suitable books for home reading. 'Reading Grannies' come into school on a weekly basis and give valuable assistance in hearing the pupils read regularly. The pupils make good use of the attractive and well-organised library to support their reading although few pupils have developed an understanding of the way to use the classification system for finding information books.

64. The pupils are beginning to make progress in developing the appropriate writing skills, however their standards of attainment are still in need of improvement. In particular the attainment of boys is not as good as that of the girls. The boys are not so well motivated to write as the girls, but the school has begun to address this and provide opportunities for the boys to write at length. By the age of 7, the pupils are able to use capital letters and full stops. They understand the use of some words as connectives and the most able can identify opportunities to use a range of connectives, that is, joining two sentences without using a full stop. The pupils are beginning to make good progress in word and sentence work throughout both key stages. The Year 3 and 4 pupils are able to write instructions for making models or how to play word games. These activities show good progress in the development and use of relevant vocabulary. The older pupils make useful notes after hearing an account of the reasons for the land slips on the local coastal path; they then draft a clear account of the information. By the age of 11, the pupils, and especially girls, are able to produce writing of a high standard. One pupil's poem, following a lesson on personification, exemplifies some of these qualities when she describes the moon and entitles her writing: *'The Eye Above the World'* and writes *'I am calm. I watch you with my naked eye, I am as quiet as the creatures of the night, I can hear the hooting of an owl. Slowly I blink: Slowly I wink; I clench my fists tightly, I wave goodbye... As the golden sun argues me away.'*
65. Overall the pupils' presentation of written work is good, but not all of them have yet developed a fluent joined script and use it consistently. The writing at both key stages shows that the pupils are beginning to pay attention to the spelling of regular or common words, however some are still spelt incorrectly and inconsistently. The boys' achievement is below that of the girls.
66. The teaching is good across the school and there were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing, they are very clear about what will be learned in lessons and plan work that builds successfully on what the pupils of all abilities already know and can do. They choose texts that will appeal to the boys as well as the girls. The teachers use the proper terms for language and encourage the pupils to follow their example. They ensure that the pupils have access to a rich and wide vocabulary to promote the use of interesting descriptive words. The teachers understand the need for the

pupils to think through their ideas before they begin to write. The discussion in the Years 3 and 4 before the pupils write their instructional leaflets leads to a clear understanding of the form the writing will take and results in the challenging task being completed successfully. The teaching makes effective use of the 'Twice-a-Term' writing books enabling the pupils to focus on developing their skills. The work is accurately and carefully assessed and individual targets are set with clear links to the national curriculum levels. The school makes good use of a local poet to promote the pupils' interest in reading and writing poetry and a visiting author recently supported work in script writing and performing. A weekly writing club is held at lunchtime when the pupils have opportunities to write in a range of forms and to discuss their work and how it can be improved.

67. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and work rate and the pupils settle quickly and complete their work. In a very few lessons, the learning is not so successful. This is because the pupils are not clear about the work they are to carry out individually or the initial task is insufficiently challenging or the teacher has overly high expectations that the pupils will remember features from a previous lesson to help them in the present one. The pupils are now being taught common spelling patterns and to learn spelling rules, however some pupils do not yet have strategies to identify their errors and correct them. Not all the adults in the school use the agreed script when modelling writing for the pupils and the handwriting programme lacks some consistency in its application.
68. The pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual action plans, these are followed carefully and the teaching is well focused on the areas for development. The pupils are very well supported by teaching assistants within the literacy sessions and they work confidently and make good progress. The pupils who attend the additional literacy support sessions receive very effective input from the teaching assistant.
69. The subject is well managed. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and has identified areas for development. She has been able to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in other classes. The good work of her predecessor ensured that the teachers have confidently implemented the Literacy Strategy through effective training. The resources are plentiful and well organised to support the literacy lessons and there is a good range of reading books for the pupils to use at home.

MATHEMATICS

70. The pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, as measured by the National tests for seven-year-olds last year, was well above the national average and compared with similar schools it was also well above average. Inspection findings confirm that attainment is above the age related expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results over the last four years have fluctuated, reflecting the small number of pupils taking the tests each year. Inspection findings confirm that the majority of pupils are likely to reach the standards expected of them and standards are above average as a significant proportion of pupils are likely to exceed these standards at the end of the year. The picture is one of steady improvement since the last inspection, and the pupils' learning, including those pupils with special educational needs, is good. There is no significant difference between the progress and attainment of boys and girls in mathematics. The achievement of the pupils throughout the school is closely related to the very good teaching seen in all classes.

71. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are able to explain and use a variety of strategies when counting in twos, fives and tens. As a result of their good knowledge of numbers, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 can sort and order numbers and calculate addition and subtraction facts mentally and quickly. They have a clear understanding of number patterns and can accurately count and work out totals as a result. The majority of the pupils can explain the value of each digit in a three-figure number. Because of the challenging teaching and the limited time set by the teacher, the pupils are learning to use a wide range of mental and oral strategies to calculate number facts quickly and can explain their methods clearly. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive very focused support provided by learning support assistants who are particularly good at involving them in class discussions. As a result the pupils are able to participate in the mental and oral part of numeracy lessons, achieving well and as a result, they are consolidating their learning.
72. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is above average. The pupils continue to make good progress and the teaching is successful in matching challenging tasks to the wide range of abilities in each class. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils are able to calculate number addition facts quickly, using individual handheld white boards to write down how they calculated numbers to 50 and beyond. The teaching is well organised so that the pupils are arranged into ability groups, this is helping all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. This is best illustrated in the way the pupils explain the efficient methods they have been taught, for example, by breaking down two-digit numbers into tens and units and then adding each part before putting together the numbers as a whole. The pupils have a very good understanding of symmetry and use this knowledge in their work on rotational symmetry shape. In Years 5 and 6, the teaching challenges the pupils to think and in one lesson they grasped how to calculate equivalent fractions using multiplication and division methods. Higher attaining pupils were given a more challenging task and the majority of pupils demonstrated a very good knowledge of improper fractions. Again, the pupils with special educational needs and those who were finding the concepts difficult to grasp, were fully involved because of the very good support provided. As a result, all pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of numbers, fractions and more complex mathematical operations.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall because the teachers make good use of time by ensuring that the opening session is sharply focused with a range of mental activities and clear teaching points made for the activities that follow. Pupils receive positive feedback for both their oral and written contributions. Particularly good use is made of the learning support staff. In all the lessons observed, the pace was brisk; the pupils were provided with many opportunities that reinforced their understanding; and they were able to share their work with others at the end of the session. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and, as a result, lessons are planned very well. Good attention is given to providing time for the pupils to explain their methods so that different problem solving techniques are taught and learnt.
74. Assessment and target setting is used well. Testing is used to pinpoint areas of weakness and to assist with the grouping of pupils by ability. This is helping to raise standards. Good use is made of the learning support assistants who work with individuals or groups of pupils, enabling them to participate fully in all mathematics lessons. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, which found that pupils were given little opportunity to use their skills in practical investigations. The role of the co-ordinator has been enhanced and teachers' expectations of the pupils have been raised. The implementation and co-ordination of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped the school to provide consistent methods across the

school, which is raising standards and improving the teaching. Planning is very good and it is set out so that teachers can focus on whole class activities and tasks that are matched to the progress and capability of all the pupils.

SCIENCE

75. Overall, the attainment of pupils in the national tests is in line with those for all schools, but is below that achieved by pupils in similar schools. In the work seen, standards are in line with the expected levels at the end of both key stages. There has been a good improvement in all aspects of the subject since the inspection in 1997 and the key issue in the 1998 inspection, to improve the planning of the curriculum and produce schemes of work, has been well addressed. The school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority science scheme of work and has established a two-year cycle of topics to ensure continuity and progression in the learning of scientific knowledge and skills. Standards are improving and this is being brought about by the improvements in the teaching, the consistent approach to the planning of work, the good management of the subject and the effectiveness of the support given to the lower and higher attaining pupils.
76. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to science and their behaviour and learning are good. In the most effective lessons, the pupils enjoy practical investigations and are motivated by the work. They are able to work co-operatively during investigative work and recording their results.
77. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils are beginning to develop their skills in carrying out investigations. They are able to identify what is likely to happen, based on their increasing knowledge, and can carry out fair tests with support from the teachers. In Key Stage 1 classes, the pupils investigate the reflective properties of different materials. The pupils make predictions about which of the materials will reflect light. They show understanding and skill in carrying out investigations and are able to record their results. They give thoughtful reasons for the results even if they are not always accurate. They can describe a good range of light sources and know that the moon shines because it reflects the sunlight. The pupils know that plants grow from seeds and need light, water and soil to grow successfully. They can explain how an electrical circuit can be constructed. They have a growing knowledge of the properties of a variety of materials such as plastic, metal and wood.
78. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of experimental work, although opportunities to design and carry out their own experiments are limited. This restricts the pupils' progress in developing higher skills of scientific enquiry. The teachers help the pupils to record the results of their investigations and their work shows some use of mathematics. The pupils make good use of information and communication technology to find information and are beginning to use data handling programs to support their science work. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils learn how the tilt of the Earth causes the different seasons. They predict and investigate the changing length of shadows at different times of the day and know that a shadow is formed when light will not pass through a material. Good work is done to test metals to see if they are magnetic and to design tests to test the strength of a magnet. The older pupils develop skills in carrying out fair tests when they investigate the rate of evaporation of water in different places, although few of the pupils are able to explain what has happened to the water in scientific terms. A small group of pupils design their own investigation but most plan with the teacher how the test might be carried out. They understand how to carry out fair tests but although most of the pupils successfully carry out

investigations, they are less secure in understanding how to analyse their results in order to draw conclusions about what they have observed.

79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good work seen. The teachers plan the lessons carefully with an appropriate balance of practical activities, discussion and recording of the work done. In most lessons, there is good interaction between the teacher and pupils, which challenges the pupils to think about their suggestions and check their results. In the most successful lessons, the teachers have appropriately high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour, which motivates the pupils. The teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use scientific terms correctly and ensure that these are reflected in the pupils' explanations of what they see and deduce. Where the less successful lessons are seen the expectations of the pupils are not high enough, and the pupils are not challenged to think for themselves. An appropriate assessment scheme has recently been introduced to help the teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject.
80. The subject co-ordinator provides highly effective support for her colleagues. She has a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards further, and has identified ways in which this can be carried out by extending the monitoring she does to include the teaching and learning in investigative science in both key stages. Overall, the resources for science are sufficient to allow the teachers to develop the planned work in accordance with the curriculum, they are well organised and stored. The grounds of the school and the local environment are well used to support the pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

81. By the end of both key stages, standards are in line with the expected levels. All pupils have equal access to the art and design curriculum and build satisfactorily upon the work carried out as they progress through the school. No lessons were observed, but the displays of pupils' work, their art folders and sketchbooks, as well as the teachers' plans indicate that a satisfactory range of techniques and media are used. The work in art and design is often related to the topics being studied in other subjects such as English, design and technology and information and communication technology. The pupils are proud of their work and keen to talk about it. The displays that celebrate their achievements are carefully presented and enhance the school environment.
82. The pupils explore their ideas confidently, refining them as they work. The pupils in Year 1 and 2 create clay plaques of scenes around the school. They model the shapes confidently after observing carefully and use tools to create patterns and texture. Using a range of media they explore colour in pattern making. They learn to mix bright colours when they paint vegetables and flowers. The pupils produce detailed paintings of faces showing careful attention to the features such as eyes.
83. The Year 3 and 4 pupils working with a digital camera create extraordinary and beautiful photographs of objects and people using unusual angles on the theme of dream sequences. This work is followed up by extracting interesting parts of the photographs and depicting them using painting techniques, such as 'splattering' and adding more water to a mixed colour. The pupils create repeating patterns after designing a motif. They access a computer 'paint' program to devise a pattern and transfer it to cloth, which they then use the fabric to make a purse. Sketching, drawing and painting techniques are developed well in Years 5 and 6. The

pupils use delicate watercolours to depict beach scenes and use charcoal to draw dramatic portraits of one another.

84. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection. Attainment is now in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and teachers' subject knowledge has improved throughout the school. The school is making good use of the recently implemented Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work. There is a popular after school art club run by the art co-ordinator. At the art club, the pupils have opportunities to experiment with other materials and media such as tie-dying and three-dimensional mask making. The pupils take part in collaborative projects such as making mosaics. These are displayed in the school and show work of high quality. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and talented co-ordinator and art is making a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. Only one design and technology lessons was observed during the inspection in Key Stage 2. Evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of the pupils' previous work, some of which is displayed around the school or recorded in books or folders, and from discussions with staff and pupils. Standards at the end of Key Stage are above those expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection because the teaching is much more effective. Planning has improved so that teachers prepare lessons that enable the pupils to evaluate simple designs, exploring ideas and improving the finished products. Design and technology is also linked to other subjects or topics.
86. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress because the work is planned so that topics and skills are re-visited every two years. Year 5 and 6 pupils were observed designing and making moving toys. They explore simple cam mechanisms to produce moving models, for example pop up toys which convert rotary movement to linear movement. The teaching has enabled the pupils to follow a structured programme through the exploration of ideas and sketches through the investigation and experimentation of the effects of different cam mechanisms. The pupils then choose which is appropriate for their design, for example, some pupils have chosen a story board or a sporting scene with "pop up" characters in the foreground set against a pre-designed scenario. Very good use is also made of computers, some pupils choosing to scan an image to produce a photographic backdrop to their model. The attention to detail and the accurate use of tools and measuring equipment has produced some very good results.
87. The teaching observed was very good. It included the contribution of a parent governor and classroom assistant who worked with individuals and groups of pupils, providing them with very good focused support. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has ensured that a scheme of work is used to help teachers plan their lessons.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

88. Standards of attainment in history and geography are in line with those expected. Two lessons were observed in geography and one in history during the inspection; judgements are based on the lessons seen, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussions with the

pupils. In both key stages, the pupils are interested in history and geography and make good progress.

89. In Key Stage 1, in geography the pupils learn about maps, find the routes to places and study different modes of transport. They learn to identify the differences between their own locality and a contrasting one. They know the features of islands in different parts of Britain and they begin to consider the problems and advantages of living on an island. In Key Stage 2, the pupils learn about the local area, and contrast it with the lives of people living in Chembakolli in southern India. The Year 5 and 6 pupils use atlases to find the position of European countries and their capital cities. Independently using the *Internet*, and other information sources, they find out about Chile and its geographical features. The pupils' understanding of the polar, temperate and equatorial regions of the world is linked to lessons in science about the solar system.
90. In history, the Key Stage 1 pupils learn about the past when they compare their own toys and games with those from the past. They look at a number of teddies and try to identify which is the oldest and give reasons for their ideas. In Key Stage 2, the pupils study the Victorians concentrating on the discoveries and inventions of Victorian times. In lessons, they learn about the Ancient Greeks and features of Greek life and society. They show an understanding of how to use evidence from a range of secondary sources such as photographs and pictures. They make good progress in their ability to interpret the information from these sources and are able to suggest explanations for historical events and changes.
91. The teaching of history and geography is good overall. The pupils are given carefully planned and interesting opportunities to consider issues surrounding human and physical features of places, and consequently make good progress in their geographical knowledge and understanding. In history the good subject knowledge of the teacher is used to good effect in a lesson on Greek foot soldiers and relevant comparisons made with the Roman army. A key issue from the 1998 inspection was to develop schemes of work for all subjects and this has been addressed. The school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work for both subjects and has a well-structured long-term plan which helps to ensure there is progression and continuity in what the pupils learn. Good use of information and communication technology was observed in both key stages. The younger pupils use a computer program to design an island, whilst the older pupils use the *Internet* to research the equipment and daily life of a Greek hoplite. The school makes effective use of visits to a range of places, which support the geographical and historical topics being studied. Work in both areas is often linked to other subjects and this extends the pupils' geographical and historical understanding and knowledge. Both subjects make a very good contribution to the social and cultural provision for the pupils. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, leads the subjects effectively and enthusiastically. There are plans to improve resources for the subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages. The school has improved its provision for ICT since the last inspection. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with good opportunities to use computers and other new technology and this is enabling them to make good progress in every strand of the ICT curriculum.

93. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 the pupils make good progress using a simple data handling program to show their "Favourite Foods" represented by simple charts. In Year 2, the pupils have produced some good pictures of animals, using a graphics program. The pupils enjoy the challenge of having to type in simple commands or control the computer's pointing device to draw shapes, colour in areas using the "fill" command and experiment with different techniques to produce a range of effects. Throughout Key Stage 1 there is evidence of pupils' printed work showing that they have made good progress using word processors to produce poems and rhymes.
94. In Key Stage 2 the pupils continue to make good progress in all aspects of the subject. As a result, attainment is in line with that expected for their age with some good examples of word processing, graphics and desk top publishing skills. Year 6 pupils have produced their own images using the scanner and can combine text and illustration to produce some good effects using simple desk-top publishing techniques. The school is successful in combining ICT work with the work that the pupils do across a range of subjects and topics. There are good examples of printed texts and graphics throughout the key stage but the pupils are less secure with advanced turtle-graphics and control technology.
95. The quality of teaching is good and has continued to improve since the last inspection. The school provides a balanced programme of ICT and teachers have become accustomed to planning work which will enhance and extend the pupils' learning in many subjects. As a result, the pupils enjoy using computers, scanners, robotic devices, cameras and tape recorders. This is also having a positive effect on the professional development and competence of the staff. The pupils are allowed time to experiment, sometimes learning from their mistakes. The pupils are able to self-correct, edit and re-organise text, use graphics and control technology, including the use of spreadsheets and data handling programs. Although standards are broadly in line with those expected, the pupils across the school are less secure in the use of simple carts and spreadsheets but increasingly they are becoming more aware of the use of *Electronic mailing* and the *Internet*. For example, the pupils in Key Stage 2 can search the *Internet* for information about Ancient Greeks as part of their history topic; two pupils were observed importing "clip-art" images and re-sizing these to fit into their text; and very good work has been done using the school's multi-media program to present their own page of reports similar to a "web page". The pupils also enjoy "e-mailing" their friends and have established a small network of "*e-pals*" in a neighbouring school. This broad range of experiences is a reflection of the good teaching and the rising standards in ICT.
96. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well organised. Resources are well matched to the needs and capabilities of the pupils as well as to the demands of the ICT curriculum. Teachers are undergoing training and this has ensured that spending on new resources is efficient and improves standards. The school has continued to raise standards by giving a great deal of thought to the way that ICT can be used to support the work being done across the curriculum.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

97. The teaching of French has been introduced since the last inspection. The school has clear aims and objectives which are to give the pupils a systematic and enjoyable introduction to the basic skills of speaking and listening in a modern foreign language.

98. The pupils are making good progress in learning a basic vocabulary, and in being able to hold simple conversations about themselves, their families and their pets. They are enthusiastic and confident about speaking a foreign language. By the time they leave the school the pupils are able speak words, phrases and short sentences competently with very good intonation.
99. French is very effectively taught to the pupils in Years 5 and 6 for half an hour each week by the headteacher. The teaching is very good because the teacher is herself bilingual and delivers the lesson in a lively and engaging manner. She concentrates on teaching listening and speaking skills and is adept at involving all the pupils in the lesson and ensuring that they all have turns to speak and answer questions. In addition, she takes opportunities to extend the learning of the more able pupils by using them to lead parts of the lesson. A very good variety of activities are prepared and carried out, visual aids and games such as 'lotto' maintain the pupils enthusiasm and participation in the lessons.
100. The headteacher organised a residential visit to France last year and intends to do so on a two-year rolling programme. This visit was very much enjoyed by the pupils and gave them an insight into life and customs in another culture. The subject makes a significant contribution to the social and cultural education of the pupils and to their personal development.

MUSIC

101. The attainment of pupils in music exceeds the standards expected for their age and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Only two direct music lessons were observed, one in each key stage, and judgements are also based on the standard of singing and specialist music playing performed by some pupils who have chosen to play recorders, violins and guitars.
102. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are learning a range of songs. They sing with good pitch and clear diction. Their singing is of a high standard for young children. This was evident in their singing of new songs in school assemblies. In the Year 1 and 2 class, the pupils listened attentively to the music of "The sorcerers apprentice" (music from "Fantasia"). The learned that music can be used to tell a story as they close their eyes and imagine the mood and tempo of the music creates different effects. In Key Stage 2 the pupils sing confidently and are able to adjust pitch and tempo to the type of song. They hold notes well and can sing in parts. In a very good Year 3 and 4 music lessons, the skilful intervention of the teacher and motivational techniques used, encouraged the pupils to enjoy and appreciate music by focusing on the contrasting styles of two pieces of music. Very good opportunities were also provided for the pupils to imagine how the music makes them feel with good links to spirituality and the cultural influences that music making have. For example, the pupils listened to a recording of "The death of Ase" from *Peer Gynt* by Grieg. They discussed how the music made them feel and the sombre mood which it evokes in its theme. The pupils then listened to a recording of Paul Simon's version of "El Condor Pasa", and the contrasting style and mood of the music was discussed. The class then made a very good attempt at singing the song accompanied by the teacher's guitar playing.
103. The quality of teaching is good. The lessons seen were well planned with clear learning objectives which ensured that all pupils were fully involved in listening and appraising music. The positive relationship between teacher and pupils resulted in motivated and interested learners. Challenging questions were asked at the end of the lesson to establish what the pupils

had learned. The pupils' positive attitudes make a good contribution to their learning. They become very involved in the tasks and work with enthusiasm. Pupils throughout the school enjoy the opportunities to sing.

104. The provision for music is good. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to, and to discuss, a range of music and this make a sound contribution to their cultural development. Planning is detailed and covers all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Some pupils receive specialist instrumental tuition. This includes guitar playing, taught by the co-ordinator and visiting peripatetic music tutors who teach violin and recorders. During the school year concerts are held when pupils can perform for their parents and members of the local community.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and only two were observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Standards are above the standards expected for pupils aged 11 years. In Year 3 and 4, a visiting gymnastics specialist was teaching the pupils. They applied themselves well to the tasks, using apparatus to move and jump using correct landing techniques. In an excellent Year 5 and 6 dance lesson, the pupils were challenged with the task of developing a sequence to interpret part of the story of the "Ancient Mariner" using the theme of "Sea Serpents". Most pupils responded well to the rhythm of the music, showing good improvisation and body control. As a result of the challenge and excellent development of the lesson, the pupils achieved a high standard of performance and they were able to combine their movements to music, creating different interpretations through gesture, of the changing moods in the music and its tempo.
106. The school uses its limited hall space imaginatively, ensuring that for some lessons only half a class is taught by the visiting gymnastics and dance specialists. Good use is made of the outdoor facilities and the pupils are offered a good range of sporting and extra-curricular activities.
107. The headteacher, staff and coordinator have worked hard to raise the profile of the subject. Teachers give their own time to provide a good number of extra-curricular activities such as football, netball and cricket. Planning is monitored to ensure that pupils are receiving their full entitlement and are making progress. Residential visits to Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre and day visits to Dartmoor for older pupils provide good opportunities for a range of outdoor and adventurous activities. These include team-building and challenge tasks; orienteering; climbing and abseiling as well as basic caving.